

INSPECTION REPORT

LOUGHBOROUGH C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Loughborough

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120233

Headteacher: Mr K Wilson

Reporting inspector: Mr M H Cole
3369

Dates of inspection: 1st – 5th October 2001

Inspection number: 217081

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed primary

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: William Street
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs R Griffiths

Date of previous inspection: 11th October 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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3369	Mr M H Cole	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Science Design and technology Geography Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19338	Mr G Ellis	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
28170	Mr I Chearman	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	
30144	Mr E Hastings	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage English as an additional language English Art and design History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average size junior and infant school serving 226 boys and girls aged four to eleven. Children start in the reception classes in the September preceding their fifth birthdays. As a church school fairly near to the centre of Loughborough, the school draws pupils from a wide variety of neighbourhoods, some of which show significant social deprivation. Inspectors judge the social and economic circumstances of pupils' families to be very varied but broadly average overall. The attainment of children starting at the school is also quite varied but broadly average overall. Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils has fallen by about nine per cent and the overall ability of new pupils is a little lower. The number of new pupils recruited this year has returned to a normal level. About 12 per cent of pupils are of minority ethnic background. Many of these have learnt English as an additional language but all have a sound basic competence in English. The proportion of pupils (19 per cent) identified as having special educational needs is average. However, there are six pupils with statements of special educational needs, a high proportion.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pupils leave the school having achieved overall satisfactory standards in their work, their attitudes and their behaviour. This results from good teaching and good achievement by pupils at the foundation stage¹ and in Years 3-6. Satisfactory leadership and management of the school is improving the quality of education but this has not yet fully resolved all concerns from the previous inspection. The teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2 shows some improvement, but is a continuing weakness, as are the standards these pupils achieve. Overall, pupils' achievement, and the quality of their education, are satisfactory. This is accomplished with an average level of funds, making the school satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well at the foundation stage, thanks to good teaching and a well-planned curriculum.
- Good teaching also helps pupils achieve well in Years 3-6, especially in some aspects of English, mathematics and physical education.
- Pupils display positive attitudes, good behaviour and harmonious relationships, and their level of attendance is good.
- Good provision for pupils with special educational needs helps them to progress well.
- Good provisions are made for pupils' spiritual and moral development, and for the promotion of good behaviour.
- School governors have a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are making a very good contribution to the leadership of school improvement.

What could be improved

- Pupils achieve unsatisfactorily in Years 1 and 2; the standards of their attainment and their results in National Curriculum tests are lower than they should be.
- The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory; it does not challenge pupils sufficiently and there are weaknesses in the management of pupils.
- Too little time is given to the curriculum as a whole and in particular to writing and some aspects of mathematics, science, geography, history and information and communication technology.

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

¹ **Foundation stage:** education before pupils enter Year 1, ie in the reception classes.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At its previous inspection in October 1999, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses, especially in the unsatisfactory teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2. In the two years since then, there has been satisfactory overall improvement and the school as a whole no longer has serious weaknesses. The standards achieved by pupils about to leave the school are gradually improving. The progress made by pupils between Years 3 and 6, which was previously judged unsatisfactory, is now good. This is because teaching has improved from satisfactory to good quality in Years 3-6. The good quality of teaching previously found in the foundation stage has been maintained. Much has been done to tackle the unsatisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2 and there has been some improvement so that the proportion of satisfactory lessons is considerably increased. However, there has not been enough improvement to make teaching of these classes, or the achievement of pupils in them, satisfactory. Previous strengths in the school's provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development have been maintained, as have good standards in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance. Clear improvements have also taken place in other areas of concern at the previous inspection. The management of behaviour and planning for the teaching, which were previously unsatisfactory, are now generally good. Assessment of pupil progress and management checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning have improved to become satisfactory. The overall leadership and management of the school, which was unsatisfactory at the previous inspection, have improved under the new headteacher who had been appointed very shortly before the previous inspection. Leadership and management are now satisfactory overall, with some good and very good features. The headteacher and school staff show good teamwork and commitment to improvement. Together with the strong lead given by governors, this gives the school a good capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools ¹
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	A	C	C
mathematics	E	B	D	D
science	E	A	E	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

¹ Similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

In 2001, the oldest pupils' results, compared with national scores, were average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. The school came close to the realistic target it had set for English but fell some way short in mathematics. However, the results of a single year are of limited value as a guide to standards in this school where the profile of ability varies considerably between different year groups. Results had been considerably better in 2000 when the school won a national award for the improvement in its results. The difference between the 2000 and 2001 results is largely explained by differences in the profile of ability and the levels of pupils' special educational needs in the two classes. Though lower than the previous year, the 2001 results were still a little better than in the four years before 2000. Taking the evidence of the last two years' national tests together, the standards of the oldest pupils appear to be rising gradually, in line with the national trend. This is also borne out by the more recent evidence from the work seen during the inspection, which was judged to be of average standard in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' test results compare satisfactorily with those in similar schools in English, but unfavourably in mathematics and science. However, inspectors regard comparisons based on free school meals as misleading in the case of this school and judge that a better guide to pupils' achievement is the comparison with their earlier attainment when they took tests at age seven. This points to good achievement and this is also what inspectors found in lessons in all subjects, with pupils responding industriously to challenging teaching. Work seen during the inspection was in line with the attainment expected nationally in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and music. In physical education, attainment was above the expected level. (Religious education is subject to a separate inspection).

The youngest pupils start at the school with attainment which is average or a little below, but good achievement in the foundation stage brings their attainment to a comfortably average level when they start Year 1. Achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 so that attainment at age seven is lower than it should be. In the 2001 standard National Curriculum tests, the results of pupils at the end of Year 2 were well below average in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing. All results are well below the average for similar schools. Over several recent years, while national results have risen steadily, the school's results for seven-year-olds have remained static. In all other subjects of the curriculum inspected, the work seen showed attainment in line with the levels expected nationally.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils show interest and endeavour in their activities at school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in the great majority of lessons and generally around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show good responsibility and independence and they make harmonious relationships with fellow pupils and adults. Boys and girls, and pupils of all ethnic and social backgrounds, work and play well together.
Attendance	Good; attendance is above average and there is no unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Unsatisfactory	Good

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

- Teaching of both English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy skills, is good in Years 3-6 but unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2.
- Strengths of the good teaching in Years 3-6 are high expectations, effective planning and methods and, in particular, the very good management of pupils. This leads to good pupil attitudes, behaviour and effort as strengths in learning.
- Particular weaknesses in Years 1 and 2 are: (i) the low expectations of how well pupils could work or behave, and (ii) sometimes weak management of pupils. The results are unsatisfactory concentration, productivity and behaviour as weaknesses in learning.
- The teaching generally provides satisfactorily for the full range of pupils' abilities and needs but provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	All the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught but overall too little time is devoted to them, with particular shortfalls in some aspects of mathematics, science, geography and history. Teaching time is not always used in the most beneficial way.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, well-managed provision. There is good support for pupils from well-qualified teaching and support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils have equal opportunity, are fully included in the work and life of the school and progress as well as other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, with spiritual and moral development the main strengths. The school is effective in encouraging pupils to reflect on values and their relevance to their own lives and behaviour.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Mostly satisfactory, and promotion of good behaviour and attendance are strengths, but child protection procedures are inadequate.

Lack of time for the curriculum is also evident in the fact that pupils do too little writing and make insufficient use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. The school's partnership with parents is of uneven quality: a good number of parents lend practical help to the teaching and curriculum but communications with parents do not please a significant minority of them.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall and improving significantly. A good deal of well-considered action has been taken to improve the school, with success in the majority of areas. Management of the foundation stage, the work in Years 3-6 and the provision for special needs is good, but management of the work of Years 1 and 2 is a weakness.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are meeting their responsibilities for guiding the school very well. They are very supportive but also willing to hold the school firmly to account. They are very well informed about the school's performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory, and much improved, with many direct checks on teaching and learning in action, and improving use of assessment of pupil progress.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are planned and managed well by the headteacher, bursar and the governing body. They adhere to principles of providing for 'best value'.

The school has adequate resources of staff although there is a general lack of expertise in music. Learning resources are satisfactory for most subjects, except in music where there is a limited range and number of quality instruments. The school's accommodation is also adequate.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>The overwhelming majority of parents say that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their child/children like school. • behaviour in the school is good. • the school helps pupils become mature and responsible. • they feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. 	<p>A significant minority of parents would like to see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better homework arrangements. • more information about progress. • a better partnership with parents. • more activities outside lessons.

Inspectors' observations support the positive views of parents. On homework, inspectors judge the school to have a generally satisfactory system but note that communication with parents about homework, including pupils' reading in Years 1 and 2, has not been clear enough, so that parents have found difficulty in supporting the arrangements. Parents report inconsistencies in the quality of communication between teachers and parents and inspectors agree that improvement would make for a better partnership between school and parents. The school acknowledges that there has been some reduction in activities outside lessons in the last two years but inspectors judge that the provision is still satisfactory and typical of primary schools in general.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Attainment of pupils at age eleven as they leave the school

1. In the summer of 2001, pupils aged eleven in Year 6 took standard National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science. Compared with the national picture, their results were average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. However, the results of a single year are of limited value as a guide to standards in the school. Data from several past years and inspectors' observations show that the profile of ability varies considerably between different year groups, and more so in this school than in most. This makes trends in standards difficult to measure.
2. Following the previous inspection, results improved markedly in the 2000 national tests in all three subjects of English, mathematics and science. Results were well above the national average in English and science and above average in mathematics. The school won a national award for the improvement in its results. In 2001, results were lower. The difference between the 2000 and 2001 results is largely explained by the presence of an unusually high proportion of more able pupils, and a correspondingly smaller proportion of low ability pupils, in the 2000 year group. In contrast, the 2001 year group included more pupils of lower ability, including two pupils (a relatively high proportion) with statements of special educational needs. Though lower than the previous year, the 2001 results were still a little better than in the four years before 2000. Taking the evidence of the last two years' national tests together, the standards of the oldest pupils appear to be rising gradually, in line with the national trend. This is also borne out by the more recent evidence from the work in these three subjects seen during the inspection, which was in line with the standard expected for the pupils' ages.
3. Work seen during the inspection was also in line with the attainment expected nationally in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and music. In physical education, it exceeded the expected level.

Attainment of pupils at age seven

4. When seven-year-olds towards the end of Year 2² took the 2001 standard National Curriculum tests, their results were well below average in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level of attainment, Level 2, was about average.

² Terms used in this report:

Foundation stage: education before pupils enter Year 1, ie in the reception classes.

Years 1 and 2: pupils at 'Key Stage 1' of the National Curriculum, formerly referred to as 'infants'.

Years 3-6: pupils at 'Key Stage 2' of the National Curriculum, formerly referred to as 'juniors'.

However, the proportions reaching the highest band within Level 2 or attaining the higher Level 3 were much lower than average, reducing the overall profile of results.

5. Overall, there was a small improvement in results between 2000 and 2001, but generally they were no better than in the four years up to 1999. In a period when national results have risen steadily, the school's have remained static.
6. Work seen during the inspection was consistent with the recent test results. Inspectors judge attainment to be well below average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. Very few pupils achieve above the average. Pupils have average skills of speaking and listening, although they are not always well used in lessons because the teaching does not manage pupils' attentiveness and contributions to discussion well enough.
7. In science, teachers' own formal assessment of pupils aged seven, made in the summer term 2001, was that pupils' attainment was very low by national standards. Inspection findings are that standards are below average. Pupils are able to show orally that they have some sound knowledge and understanding but there are gaps in their knowledge and they have weak skills of undertaking and recording simple scientific observations or measurements.
8. In the other subjects of the curriculum, work in Years 1 and 2 seen during the inspection was broadly in line with the level of attainment expected nationally.

Attainment of pupils in the reception class (the 'foundation stage')

9. On entry to the reception class, the skills of most pupils in speaking and listening, and in knowledge and understanding of numbers, is average or a little below. Their levels of personal development and independence are also barely average for their age. However, good teaching promotes good progress and the children achieve well in their year in the reception classes so that, by the time they are ready to start Year 1, the great majority show comfortably average attainment. They attain all of the 'early learning goals' for the six areas of learning defined nationally for the age group.

Achievement throughout the school

10. When pupils' test results are compared with those in similar schools, as defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the school's results for eleven-year-olds are below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Results for seven-year-olds are well below average in all three areas of reading, writing and mathematics. However, inspectors regard comparisons based on free school meals as misleading in the case of this school. The proportion of the school's parents who have declared their eligibility for free school meals is below average. Normally, this would be accompanied by the finding that pupils begin at the school with above average attainment. However, this is not the case in this

school where the school's testing, using national criteria, and inspectors' own judgements show that pupils begin at the school with broadly average attainment.

11. A better guide to pupils' achievement in this school is to compare pupils' attainment at the beginning of each stage of their education with their attainment at its end. Using this yardstick, pupils achieve well in the foundation stage, unsatisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, and well again in Years 3-6.

12. Pupil's test results in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 compare well with those gained four years earlier, at the end of Year 2. Almost all pupils achieve at least the expected result at age eleven, and a significant number exceed the expectation, especially in English.
13. These observations are consistent with inspectors' observations of the quality of the teaching and learning in the different parts of the school. In the foundation stage and in Years 3-6, teachers set high expectations, provide challenging work, and manage pupils well so that pupils try hard and concentrate well on their work. But, in Years 1 and 2, the work is generally not sufficiently challenging, especially for the more able pupils, and the management of pupils is not consistently able to persuade pupils to concentrate. As a result, pupils' achievement during Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory. They make less progress than they should considering their attainment when they commence this stage of the school.
14. Taking several years' test results and inspectors' observations into account, there are no clear and consistent differences in achievement between boys and girls, or between pupils from different social or ethnic backgrounds. Able pupils achieve less well than others in Years 1 and 2, but this pattern is not noticeable in later years. Pupils for whom English is an additional language show a range of achievement which is similar to that of other pupils.

Progress of pupils with special educational needs

15. Pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Progress is best in the foundation stage and in Years 3-6 where these pupils benefit from the generally good teaching of these classes, but progress is also satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are keen to learn and take full advantage of the good opportunities offered by the school which has a good provision of teachers and support staff to work with pupils both in class and occasionally in small groups withdrawn from classes.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' behaviour is good. They have very good attitudes to their learning. Their relationships are good. Parents consider that behaviour in the school in general is good. Pupils are well motivated in the majority of lessons showing good levels of interest and involvement. The overall attitudes and behaviour of pupils are strengths, making good contributions to a positive learning environment and the quality of life in the school. Attendance is good.
17. Most pupils enjoy school and speak well of it. They usually show enthusiasm and application to their work. Most pupils are outgoing and lively with a keenness to present their ideas and engage in conversation. They enjoy their activities and talk positively about their experiences. In the foundation stage and Year 3-6 classes, they have very good attitudes to learning and make good progress. They display good standards of self-discipline and work well without close supervision. However, in Years 1 and 2, pupils' attitudes are

less positive. Here, weaknesses in the teaching mean that pupils do not always concentrate well and, in a minority of lessons, their attitudes and behaviour are unsatisfactory.

18. Except for this minority of lessons, the school is an ordered community where behaviour is frequently good and sometimes very good. The overall standard of behaviour is good. The code of conduct is generally understood and accepted by pupils who are aware of the standards expected of them and respond with courtesy, consideration and respect. They move around the school sensibly and carefully and lessons are able to start promptly. In lessons, overall standards of behaviour are good. In most lessons, pupils are fully involved, delight in challenge and maintain high levels of concentration for sustained periods. However, in a minority of lessons, there are significant levels of inattention though this generally reflects ineffective management of behaviour. In most lesson discussions, pupils listen carefully to each other. They are able to explain what they are doing and ask thoughtful questions.
19. Behaviour in the playground and around the school is good. For example, on formal occasions such as assemblies, they arrive and wait patiently and conduct themselves sensibly on the street journey to the local swimming pool. Play is sometimes boisterous, but pupils are careful to avoid accidents and no aggressive, bullying, racist or sexist behaviour was observed. There have been no exclusions.
20. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their work, with good levels of sustained concentration. They are well integrated and work well with other pupils.
21. Pupils enter school with varied social skills, which are satisfactory overall. Some are confident, mature and independent, while others are less so. Generally, they have satisfactory levels of self-esteem. Many express themselves knowledgeably with assurance and articulation. Overall, pupils display a satisfactory level of initiative. They willingly undertake routine duties and respond satisfactorily to the limited opportunities to exercise responsibility and independence. Generally, girls are more confident and are quicker to display initiative and take on responsibility than boys. Pupils are caring and tolerant, showing respect for the feelings and values of others.
22. Pupils are proud of their school, taking care with equipment and resources, which they willingly share. They work together happily and harmoniously, collaborating well in group activities. They are trustworthy, considerate and are pleased to celebrate the achievements of others. Relationships amongst pupils themselves, and between pupils and all adults, are good. Pupils feel valued by teachers whom they consider approachable and supportive and they respond accordingly with respect. Boys and girls, and pupils of all ethnic and social backgrounds, work and play well together. The good relationships are a strength of the school.

23. Attendance is above the national average and is therefore good. Unauthorised absence is negligible. Registers are completed promptly and efficiently. Pupils are punctual in their attendance and lessons are able to start on time. There are no significant absence or attendance problems.
24. The previous inspection report stated that overall attitudes were generally satisfactory with good relationships and standards of behaviour in the foundation stage and the classes in Years 3-6. Personal development was good. However, both behaviour and attitudes in Years 1 and 2 were unsatisfactory because of the unsatisfactory management of pupils' behaviour. The current position is that all the

positive features have been maintained. However, while there has been some improvement, behaviour and attitudes in Years 1 and 2 remain unsatisfactory in some lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

25. The overall quality of the teaching in the school is good. There is good teaching of children under five at the foundation stage and good teaching of pupils aged seven to eleven. However, in the classes for pupils aged five to seven, teaching is unsatisfactory. The majority of parents completing the pre-inspection questionnaire thought that teaching was of good quality and inspectors agree that, in most classes, this is the case.

Foundation stage

26. Teaching of children at the foundation stage was consistently good in the lessons seen during the inspection. Activities are planned well to promote all the forms of development recommended nationally for the age group. Teachers organise learning resources well, helped by effective teamwork with support staff, so that pupils are constantly engaged in productive learning and available time is well used. They show high expectations of the children and manage them sensitively and effectively. As a result, children show interest and enthusiasm, and they generally concentrate and behave well.

Teaching of pupils aged seven to eleven

27. During the inspection, 76 per cent of lessons seen in these classes were of at least good quality and about a third of these were of very good quality. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen.
28. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are teaching, except in the case of music where the school acknowledges that there is a general lack of expertise, as at the previous inspection. Teachers use their knowledge to plan appropriate activities which have clear objectives for pupils' learning. Effective use is made of national guidance within the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, and national guidelines in other subjects are also being used to increasingly good effect. Planning of lessons has clearly improved since the previous inspection and has been much helped by the headteacher's introduction of agreed approaches and formats for planning across the school. Similarly, improved assessment of pupils' progress means that teachers are now largely successful in matching the work to pupils' previous attainment. The weakness noted at the previous inspection that more able pupils were insufficiently challenged by the work has been mostly resolved. Evidence of this is seen in the 2000 standard National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven, where a relatively high proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. Nonetheless, inspectors found a few instances during the inspection where a small number of the ablest pupils were not

- sufficiently challenged by the work. Although generally good, a weakness of planning is the under-use of information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum. This largely reflects the school's current state of resources and staff expertise in the new technology; these are beginning to enter a phase of significant development.
29. Teachers have begun to adopt a good practice of sharing with pupils the objectives of their lessons so that pupils can join in evaluating their own success, and the school is in the process of extending this to provide precise targets for individual pupils' short-term progress. Marking of pupils' work is efficient, and some encouraging comments and criticisms are made, but precise guidance and targets for future improvement are not commonly found apart from some very good practice in mathematics in Year 6.
30. A particular strength of the teaching of pupils aged seven to eleven is the skilful management of pupils. Teachers make clear to pupils the boundaries of acceptable behaviour and they use encouragement and reward successfully to motivate pupils. This is a particular strength in Year 4 where a few pupils with inherent difficulty in behaviour are very sensitively managed through well-chosen strategies of reward and through effective and collaborative support from classroom assistants. In all these classes, the stimulating work planned and the warm and caring relationships the teachers make with pupils also play their part in making pupils into interested, well-behaved learners who concentrate well on their tasks.
31. Teachers' very good skills of managing pupils are particularly beneficial in this school where the open-plan accommodation means that classes are often working at different tasks in very close proximity and with no physical barrier between them. Teachers in these classes respond to this challenge well. Good use is sometimes made of small unfurnished rooms adjoining the teaching bases if the teacher wishes to gather the class closely by sitting them on the floor. Provision of these spaces is a good improvement brought about in answer to recommendations from the previous inspection. However, the accommodation continues to inhibit teachers' full promotion of pupils' independence. Compared with most schools, teachers direct lessons more closely through talking to the class and provide a little less opportunity for pupils to learn independently through practical or oral activity. Significantly, however, this was not evident in the one class taught in an entirely separate room, a 'temporary' mobile classroom. Consistent with this pattern is inspectors' observation, when talking to groups of older pupils, that pupils showed a greater reticence than usual to express themselves.
32. There is a basically sound system for homework but communication with parents has not always been clear enough for them to understand and therefore support arrangements. Regular learning in basic skills, for example of spellings or tables, takes place. There are few invitations to pupils to research information or for more able pupils to extend themselves, though there is some good practice in mathematics homework in Year 6.

Teaching of pupils aged five to seven

33. There have been several improvements in the teaching of these classes since the previous inspection but the overall quality continues to be unsatisfactory. The proportion of individual lessons judged unsatisfactory in this part of the school has fallen considerably from 69 to 15 per cent. However, only one of 13 lessons seen was of good quality, representing a much lower proportion than in most schools. In addition, evidence from examination of pupils' past written work shows low expectations of the amount, quality and level of work pupils should do and it indicates that pupils do not make as much progress as is to be expected. This is particularly so for the more able pupils for whom the tasks provided are not sufficiently challenging. Other documentary evidence of shortcomings are found in the weak monitoring of pupils' reading and the lack of effective means of promoting pupils' reading through encouragement of parents' involvement. Some use is made of homework in these classes but arrangements for communication with parents, especially over pupils' reading at home, are weak. Pupils' reading diaries, where they exist, are used minimally. Little homework in mathematics appears to be set. The overall evidence of the quality of teaching seen is consistent with the poor results seen in the standard National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in the last three years.
34. Planning of lessons shows some improvement since the previous inspection with the introduction of formats agreed for use by the whole school. Use of these is, however, sometimes ineffective. Planning sometimes shows a lack of clear understanding of exactly what is to be taught. Teaching and learning then lacks a clear focus on specific knowledge, understanding or skills. The stated objective for one lesson seen was 'to read a range of poetry', an objective too vague to be useful since it could apply to children (or adults) of any age or ability. In another lesson, supposedly devoted to literacy, some pupils spent a good deal of time drawing rather than developing their reading or writing. Assessment of pupils also shows some improvement but it is not sufficiently used to ensure that all pupils, and especially the most able, are always challenged by work that takes them forward from previous attainment.
35. A key issue from the previous inspection was the need to improve the management of behaviour in these classes. Establishment of a new whole school policy for managing behaviour, supported by relevant training, has led to a more systematic attempt to use appropriate strategies. However, while the strategies are applied skilfully and successfully in other parts of the school, this is not the case in the classes for pupils aged five to seven. Sanctions are sometimes threatened but not followed through and rewards are not always used with enough consistency or clarity to act as incentives and to show pupils how to please. On other occasions, very noisy behaviour, occasionally of a deliberately silly kind, is ignored or tolerated, with the result that pupils are led to believe it is acceptable and worth repeating. It is not that pupils in these classes are 'naughty', for they are generally well behaved, but rather that the teaching gives them insufficient guidance and encouragement to be attentive to the teacher or to concentrate on their work. Too much time

is spent in a significant minority of lessons on gaining order at the expense of teaching and learning.

Teaching of pupils with special educational needs

36. The teaching of these pupils is good in the foundation stage and in Years 3-6 and it is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The differences reflect the general differences in teaching in these three areas of the school. Work is set by the teachers to meet the specific learning targets set out for pupils in their well-constructed individual education plans. Teachers regularly consult with the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Assessment is used well to determine pupils' success levels against targets and to inform teaching strategies. Pupils with statements receive a high level of individual input supported frequently by the co-ordinator or a teaching assistant. The co-ordinator uses information technology very well to give pupils systematic practice with basic skills in literacy and numeracy and to monitor their progress. Other assistants provide good input for other pupils with special needs, working skilfully within groups of pupils to give the greatest benefit to all learners needing extra support, and integrating those with special educational needs well. The teachers' organisation of assistants for learning is good but they were not frequently seen to use them during whole class teaching, for example, to aid ongoing assessment by monitoring pupils' learning or responses.

Pupils for whom English is an additional language

37. These pupils' learning needs are assessed on entry along with all the new intake of pupils through the school's assessment procedures. The school then uses that information to determine any specific learning needs they may have. Currently, no special arrangements are necessary to help any of these with their learning. They benefit from the school's normal practice of teaching pupils in ability groups throughout the school and this enables them to make progress appropriately for their age.

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

38. The school teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum but there are still some weaknesses in breadth and balance as there were at the time of the last inspection. The total time allocated to the curriculum falls below the recommended amount, and insufficient time is given to the teaching of history and geography in particular so that some topics are treated superficially. The subject of information and communication technology is underdeveloped throughout the school. Pupils have too few opportunities to practise skills of organising, analysing, presenting or researching information through use of the computer. In mathematics, younger pupils have too few opportunities to sufficiently develop their understanding of using and applying mathematics, and insufficient emphasis is given to extending all pupils' own writing skills in

English as well as in other subject areas. Pupils are given few opportunities for independent research in most subjects. As a result of these shortcomings, pupils do not receive their entitlement of full access to the curriculum. At the same time, the sessions currently timetabled for individual reading and for story are not well used in some classes and have limited benefits in others compared with the investment of time.

39. The foundation stage teaches the six areas of learning according to national recommendations so that children achieve the 'early learning goals', and children are well prepared to begin the National Curriculum by the time they arrive in Year 1.
40. All subjects have policies and are now planned against the guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This is an improvement on the last inspection when some schemes of work were in need of revision. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and are being used satisfactorily to develop pupils' basic skills, though to clearly better effect in Years 3-6 than in Years 1 and 2. Booster classes have been provided in order to raise standards in English and this is having a positive impact on pupil progress. A sound range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, drama, design and technology, choir and art and design, usefully enriches the opportunities for pupils. There is satisfactory provision for personal, social and health development including

sex education that is taught to Year 6. 'Circle time', when pupils can take turns to express and discuss personal views and concerns, is being introduced for some of the younger children but this is not yet common practice in the school.

41. Work for pupils with special educational needs is defined in individual education plans which are effective in promoting good levels of learning. The school's organisation and practice in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs is good and they receive a broad and balanced curriculum. The level of inclusion is good and these pupils have full access to what is offered by the school. Records and documents show that annual and transitional reviews of progress in relation to the individual plans and to statements of pupils' special needs fully meet the requirements. Contacts with external agencies working with the school are good. There is very good contact with the local authority's peripatetic teacher for pupils with Aspergers' syndrome and the 'circle of friends' structure offers excellent support for these pupils and also enriches other pupils' social development.
42. The school has satisfactory links with the local community. There are very good links with many local churches with ministers taking assemblies on a weekly basis. Effective use is made of the local environment, for example for geography project work. There are regular visits to the wider area which are related to curriculum themes. There are good links with the local senior citizens' group. There is an effective commercial link with Astra Zeneca whereby one of its staff assists in school every week. Older pupils are involved in residential visits.
43. The school has good relationships with partner institutions. There are effective transfer arrangements with the local secondary school and particularly good links with other primary schools as part of the Loughborough Development Group. There are good links with the local colleges and the local private secondary schools with regular visits by students.
44. The previous inspection found that the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was good. At this inspection, it is a similar picture except that the school's provision for social development has not moved forward sufficiently in line with higher national expectations for developing citizenship by extending opportunities for pupils to take up personal responsibilities within the school community. Social development is now satisfactory rather than good.
45. The provision for spiritual development is good and is effectively supported through the religious education curriculum and acts of collective worship. Assemblies are led well by teachers and whole school assemblies regularly led by local ministers. There is a planned programme to develop spiritual and moral values and celebrate Christian and other religious festivals. Pupils are given good opportunities to relate to the beliefs and values of others. For instance, the Year 2 teacher led an assembly for Key Stage 1 pupils in which the importance of recognising others' efforts for all, by remembering to say 'thank you', was of good quality. The ideas were first explored through their

personal experience and then related in a religious context to Jesus' healing of the lepers. Pupils were able to express their feelings and ideas and joined in prayer and well-constructed reflection that consolidated the strong moral learning in the school. Pupils visit Christian and other places of worship to celebrate festivals to consolidate learning and experience in the school.

46. The very good quality of the pupils' relationships with each other and with staff reflects the good moral code that is fostered in the school. At the last inspection, the school lacked an effective behaviour code. This is now in place and reinforced constantly by most staff to set clear behavioural expectations which most pupils strive to meet. Most teachers fairly and consistently apply the rewards and punishments within the code. The clear emphasis is on the positive reinforcement of good behaviour and pupils take pleasure in having their own good work and acts recognised, and celebrating others' success. For instance, when pupils receive the Star of the Week award in an assembly, they have genuine pride, and others are observed to enjoy sharing their achievements. The religious, and personal and social education provisions, are well structured to help pupils develop a good sense of fairness and justice. The curriculum gives good opportunities to reflect upon goodness and, through famous people, to explore its root in Christian values and those of other faiths and beliefs. The school is a community where all pupils are valued and staff takes every opportunity to build positive self-images and high self-esteem.
47. The pupils' social learning is developed by a satisfactory range of school activities. Pupils respond well to the opportunity to take responsibility where it is offered. For instance, they help with sound and projection equipment in assemblies, with jobs in the classroom, and in sharing play with reception pupils. A few are able to participate in the high quality 'circle of friends' that helps pupils with special needs to adjust successfully to school life. A good example of social involvement in art and design was seen when groups of four pupils co-operatively created integrated tile patterns which were then assembled meaningfully into a class display. There are insufficient structured opportunities for pupils, especially boys, to be involved in the day-to-day running of the school. However, the school plans to introduce a school council to give experience of democratic processes within the school community and offer a wider range of pupil participation in the school's affairs at a level appropriate to pupils. The broad range of groupings employed by teachers in the classroom is used successfully to develop social and co-operative skills. However, the range of opportunities available for pupils to develop independent choices and avenues of enquiry for themselves is limited. In subject teaching, opportunities for independent or collaborative investigation are limited, and especially so for the higher attaining pupils. Older pupils are able to extend social learning through residential visits and all pupils are justly proud of their social learning and behaviour when the curriculum takes them out of the school and into the community.
48. The school has developed sound links with the community. A large local company supports information and communication technology in the school

by sending an employee with skills to tutor pupils. They visit local churches for special services, and the choir sings for senior citizens in the congregation and at the town concert. Local people have visited the school to tell pupils of their experiences as wartime evacuees for their history project. The school has developed a link with the LOROS Hospice and pupils raise money for charities such as the Friends of the Earth and the Royal National Institute for the Blind. The National Children's Homes were amazed at the wonderful level of support they received from the school.

49. The school has made sound provision for pupils to explore their own cultural traditions through visits to the theatre and visits from local poets and artists. Pupils responded with imagination and great enjoyment by participating in readings by a poet during the inspection and teachers are good role models in sharing this experience and in using it for learning. They visit locations such as Calke Abbey and Leicester University for history and science. They attended the National Skipping Festival and this was the spur to forming a rhythmic skipping club. They listen to music of famous composers and consider the work of famous artists. The school is developing well the understanding of the traditions of other cultures and pupils representing these in school share their experience and knowledge in this respect. Displays are mounted to illustrate other cultures and world religions. Opportunities are provided in the religious education curriculum to study other faiths and customs using a good range of resources including artefacts. They learn about daily life in an Indian village in geography.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

50. The school provides a caring, supportive and well-supervised environment for learning and personal development. The headteacher and staff have good knowledge of pupils which is acknowledged and valued by parents. The previous inspection report stated that there were some inconsistencies in the application of procedures. While there have been general improvements, child protection arrangements continue to be unsatisfactory. Educational and personal support and guidance is satisfactory.
51. There are good procedures for monitoring and supporting behaviour. The school has adopted a good health and safety policy and internal responsibilities are well defined and understood. There is good, frequent monitoring of health and safety requirements involving members of the governing body. There are effective risk assessment arrangements. There are good arrangements for the care and support of pupils who are taken ill at school, for first-aid and for recording accidents. Supervision of pupils at breaktimes is good. The school building and grounds provide a safe and healthy environment.
52. The previous inspection report stated that child protection arrangements at the school were not clear and required to be remedied urgently. There is still a weakness in that the school lacks a separate child protection policy of its

own, relying instead on general guidelines. There is a designated staff co-ordinator who is well experienced and has received the appropriate training. However, there are no systematic arrangements to ensure that all staff receive timely briefing and updating in the relevant procedures and guidance. Current arrangements for child protection therefore remain unsatisfactory.

53. Pupils' personal development and general welfare are effectively monitored and supported. Satisfactory pastoral arrangements are provided based on good staff knowledge of pupils. There are satisfactory arrangements for support of pupils throughout their time in school. Pupils' commitment, self-esteem and enthusiasm for learning are satisfactorily encouraged and successes in their work are effectively praised. Staff provide good role models and their balanced approach successfully motivates pupils to act responsibly as is demonstrated by their good behaviour in and around the school and their good attitudes to learning.
54. The school satisfactorily monitors pupils' personal and social development. Although there is no systematic formal monitoring of all pupils, informal checks are carried out throughout the year. Pupils are effectively prepared with satisfactory maturity and personal development for their next stage of education, but there are no systematic arrangements to provide pupils with opportunities to exercise responsibility. Although pupils carry out duties in classes and older pupils also undertake more responsible positions such as assisting in assemblies, these are undertaken on a voluntary basis. They do not, therefore, benefit the less confident and reticent pupils. Additionally, the volunteers tend to be predominantly girls resulting, unintentionally, in less support for boys' personal development.
55. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour, and very good measures for eliminating oppressive behaviour. Parents feel that the rewards system promotes a good standard of behaviour and that the behaviour management has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The school's approach to behaviour and discipline is well understood and is consistently applied by the majority of staff who use opportunities well to promote and reinforce acceptable standards. There are very good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. No oppressive behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection and when incidents arise, which is very rare, they are resolved quickly and effectively.
56. The positive integration of pupils with special educational needs into the school, and its activities, ensures that they share fully the good ethos and good relationships seen. Pupils with emotional needs are well supported. The co-ordinator for special educational needs checks that pupils with such needs are identified at an early stage of school. Later, screening of all pupils on the special needs register takes place at regular intervals so that emerging learning needs are properly tracked and identified.
57. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic progress are

satisfactory and meet requirements, as they did at the time of the previous inspection. The school has a regular programme of assessment to monitor pupil progress in each year group. However, there is no detailed formal analysis of pupils' performance to look for any differences in the performance of boys and girls, and in pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, and this is a weakness. The school is beginning to make better use of its assessment information but its use to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning is still at an early stage of development. In English, mathematics and science, clear targets for all pupils are set systematically on the basis of the tests at age seven, in order to raise and monitor achievement. They are closely monitored and adjusted in the light of further assessments using standardised tests annually. Assessment in the other subjects has been introduced this year using the national guidelines as a basis for ongoing measurement of progress but, as yet, no information has been recorded. Standards of writing have been agreed so that teachers can identify the National Curriculum levels being achieved by pupils. There is a marking policy agreed by the school to enable day-by-day assessments to be made, but this is not always followed consistently.

58. Teachers are beginning to promote pupil responsibility and motivation by encouraging pupils to evaluate their own learning. Teachers share their learning objectives with pupils in lessons, enabling them to make a personal assessment by referring back to the objectives at the end of the lesson.

59. There is good monitoring and promotion of attendance. Accurate attendance information is checked on a regular basis and the school has good liaison with the education welfare service. This helps to achieve the school's good standard of attendance and punctuality.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

60. The previous inspection report stated that, overall, the school had a satisfactory partnership with good parental involvement. Overall, information for parents was satisfactory. Broadly, this situation remains. The school values its partnership with parents and maintains satisfactory relationships with them. The school's links with parents are satisfactory. Parents provide good general and financial support to the school. They are generally satisfied with what the school provides and achieves and they have a sound involvement in the work and life of the school. Overall, the quality of information for parents is satisfactory.
61. The school communicates frequently with parents. The quality of information, though generally satisfactory, contains both strengths and weaknesses. The governing body's annual report to parents is well produced and informative while the current prospectus is satisfactory. There are frequent general newsletters. These are produced in a friendly style and provide a useful regular source of information for parents. This general information is supplemented by other communications and regular contact between parents and class teachers. However, the school does not provide parents with routine information about the curriculum and the topics pupils are studying.
62. At the parents' meeting, most parents were dissatisfied with information on progress and this was also the view of a significant minority of parents in the questionnaires. The annual reports to parents are satisfactory. They contain information on all subjects and the areas of work that pupils have covered. They generally provide good information in English and mathematics with detailed comments on pupils' progress, what they know, understand and can do. The information in science is variable and reports are even less informative in other subjects. Reports include targets for future development. These are generally sound, but would be of greater benefit to parents if they were more specific, especially for older pupils.
63. However, information for parents about their children is frequently broadened by discussions with staff both throughout the year and at consultation evenings. There are two opportunities for formal meetings as well as a third opportunity following the issuing of pupils' annual reports in the summer term. These are very well supported by parents, who value such interaction with staff but report some inconsistency in teachers' openness in discussions.
64. A significant number of parents are concerned with homework arrangements. There is a homework policy, but it is couched in general terms and does not provide practical information and guidance for parents. There are systematic

homework arrangements, but these are not always clearly communicated to parents and do not provide for their consistent involvement. Opportunities are therefore missed for them to make a significant impact on their children's education. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept informed of annual reviews. They are invited to attend and participate in meetings with school staff and outside agencies.

65. Parents' perceptions of the school vary but, overall, they are satisfied. Most consider that the school provides a caring environment for their children. However, there are mixed views on whether the school is sufficiently active in encouraging parental support. Parents' views are also varied on the effectiveness of the school's openness and the degree to which it works closely with parents. However, in the questionnaires, comments were generally positive about the support provided for the foundation stage and older children and also for the approachability of the headteacher.
66. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. Parents give good general support to school activities and there is good direct involvement by a number of parents in lessons, for example helping with information and communication technology, design and technology and swimming. There is an active Parents' and Friends' Association which provides valuable financial assistance to the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

67. The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall, and there are some areas of strength. They have significantly improved since the previous inspection.
68. In the two years since the previous inspection of the school, there has been satisfactory improvement and the school as a whole no longer has serious weaknesses. The standards achieved by pupils about to leave the school are gradually improving. The progress made by pupils between ages seven and eleven is now good, whereas it had been judged unsatisfactory previously. However, the unsatisfactory teaching of pupils aged five to seven, and their unsatisfactory achievement, remain as significant concerns. Much has been done to tackle these concerns and there has been some improvement, but not enough to make matters satisfactory. Previous strengths in the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have been maintained, as have generally good standards in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance. The school staff and governors work consistently and effectively together in pursuit of its aims in these aspects of its work, and in pursuit of equal opportunities for pupils. The great majority of parents completing the pre-inspection questionnaire considered the school to be led and managed well.
69. The headteacher was appointed just over two years ago and just a few weeks before the previous inspection. He has led his staff well in their response to the findings of that inspection and through an anxious and busy period of

efforts to tackle weaknesses. He has won the support and respect of staff, not least by his own support for them. The result is a good spirit of staff teamwork and commitment to improve the school. Expectations of what the school should achieve have been raised and there is a more systematic and consistent approach to the school's work. The headteacher currently supports teaching in a direct sense by teaching half of the very large Year 5 class (of 38) for literacy and numeracy.

70. The headteacher is well supported by his deputy who also supports the management of the classes for older pupils. Work at the foundation stage is also well managed. In contrast, co-ordination of the work for pupils aged five to seven is not proving sufficiently effective in improving teaching and raising standards. In line with previous inspection findings, the role of subject co-ordinators has been developed so that they now have a sound awareness of their responsibilities for managing the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Progress has been best in the subjects where time and resources have been mainly focused, as in mathematics. In other subjects, co-ordinators are keen to monitor teaching in lessons when time is made available as in the school's plans for the future.
71. Although the co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) was absent during the inspection, it was apparent from documentation and from the procedures in place that she gives good leadership to the work and manages a good level of provision for pupils. She is well qualified and her good relationships with external support agencies offering expertise and resources to the school ensure that pupils receive appropriate support. Teachers and classroom assistants work closely with the SENCO to provide effective support for pupils. The school has invested heavily in teaching assistants and to good effect. There is a policy for identifying and meeting the needs of the more able pupils but, currently, no register of such pupils identifying their individual needs.
72. The school responded appropriately to the previous inspection, planning relevant action to tackle weaknesses and with a fitting sense of priorities. Inspectors judge the actions taken to have been well designed, even where they have not so far proved entirely successful. Whole school approaches to planning the curriculum and teaching, and to the management of pupils' behaviour, have been introduced with a good measure of success in most classes. A start has been made on using systems of information, for example tracking pupils' progress from year to year, to contribute to checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Much progress has been made in developing direct checks on teaching and learning through observations of lessons by senior staff and, occasionally, by visiting local authority advisers and by governors. Many lessons, mainly in the priority areas of literacy and numeracy, have been systematically monitored and evaluated. There are plans to develop these practices further in other subjects. There is now an effective openness amongst staff, and involving governors, in evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses. All of these developments have shown some success but the benefits of improved teaching and raised standards

have been greatest in Years 3-6. Improvement has been more modest where the need has been greatest: in Years 1 and 2.

73. Close appraisals of teaching have been accompanied, as far as the school's finances have allowed, by provision of relevant training opportunities for teachers and support staff, for example in managing behaviour. Teachers have been given good opportunities to observe good practice in other schools and to observe model lessons in their own school given by visiting teachers. The school's arrangements for compliance with new national procedures for managing teachers' performance have met with the approval of an independent assessor. Teachers new to the school in the last year have been successfully inducted and supported and have come quickly to make a valuable contribution to the school's work.
74. Good use has been made of local authority personnel in regular reviews of the school's progress, including evaluation of teaching, since the previous inspection. School governors, in particular, have taken good advantage of this in fulfilling their

own responsibility for overseeing the school's improvement. Governors established their own inspection action working party and have met on several occasions with the local authority personnel.

75. School governors have been especially active, with the full encouragement and co-operation of the headteacher, in monitoring the school's improvement over the last two years. Governors are assigned to take particular interest in different subjects and aspects of the school's work. Representatives visit the school regularly, record their observations in a format agreed with the school and discuss their observations, firstly with school staff and then with the governing body at their meetings. Governors are very supportive of the school but also willing to raise challenging questions about its performance. In discussions with four governors during the inspection, inspectors were impressed with their detailed knowledge of the school, of its strengths and weaknesses and of its progress. Governors are meeting their statutory responsibilities well and making a very good contribution to the leadership of school improvement.
76. School finances are managed well and monitored by the headteacher, bursar and the governing body. Principles of achieving 'best value' from the school's resources are applied well. The school uses the additional funding available to it for specific purposes efficiently. The extra money the school receives for work with pupils with special educational needs is put to use effectively in providing additional support for these pupils and enabling their good progress. The drive to improve standards of literacy is supported well through the use of booster funds. Other school priorities are targeted by the school development plan and additional funds have been successfully bid for to develop a new teaching area, the establishment of a school library and Internet access in the classrooms. Currently, the school is operating with a deficit budget brought about by the costs of staff sickness and falling pupil numbers. The school has agreed a formula with the local authority to resolve this situation within the next five years. No adverse effects of this situation are currently experienced by pupils.
77. The school has recently received a number of special grants, for example to fund improvements to the building. Normally, though, its income is similar to that of the majority of schools. Taking account of the level of funds, the achievement of pupils and the quality of education provided, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
78. Computers are used well to provide essential information, including financial reports to governors, and for communicating with parents. The school has recently acquired a number of new computers to assist in the development of pupils' skills in information and communication technology.
79. The school is adequately staffed with teachers. There have been a few changes in staff in the last two years. The school now has a blend of some younger and some more experienced teachers, with a suitable range of curriculum expertise to meet the current needs of the school. There are

- particular strengths in the areas of special educational needs, design and technology, information and communication technology, and art and design, but a weakness in music which hinders learning. The number of support staff to work in classrooms and provide for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well trained and briefed and make a valuable contribution.
80. The school has adequate resources for most subjects except in music where there is a limited range and number of quality instruments. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory for the school's needs. The main school building is modern, bright and welcoming with attractive displays. The building and the grounds are very well maintained by premises staff. The overall provision of classroom space for the number of pupils is satisfactory. The original wholly open-plan accommodation has been modified to produce more self-contained classroom areas – an improvement since the previous inspection. However, shared teaching areas for the Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 classes remain with limited space, though the effect of this is largely offset by the good use made of adjoining areas. Recent provision of a new library area is a valuable development. The outside areas are spacious, with a good sized, well-maintained playground and attractively landscaped areas.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

81. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education the school should:

1. Improve pupil achievement in the Years 1 and 2 classes to raise standards, especially in reading, writing, and mathematics:

- by strengthening processes for managing the work of this part of the school.

(Paragraphs: 4-8, 13)

2. Improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2:

- by developing teachers' understanding of the levels of attainment pupils should be achieving and raise their expectations of the work pupils should do;
- by raising teachers' expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour, especially their attentiveness to teachers and concentration on tasks;
- by improving teachers' skills of managing pupils, in particular by more thorough use of the school's agreed strategies for rewards and sanctions;
- by increasing teachers' use of close assessment of pupils' progress to ensure that work planned is always challenging for all pupils;
- by increasing the pace of lessons.

(Paragraphs: 33-35)

3. Give more time to the teaching of the curriculum as a whole:

So as to increase time for:

- writing, across the curriculum, and especially in geography and history;
- science, in particular the teaching of investigative skills to older pupils;
- the 'using and applying mathematics' element of the mathematics curriculum in Years 1 and 2;
- the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum, as in the school's plans for development;
- pupils' skills of independent research and problem-solving.

(Paragraphs: 31, 38, 110, 114, 116, 124, 141, 147, 150)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

To:

- Improve procedures for child protection. (Paragraph: 52)
- Improve communications with parents about homework and about pupils' progress. (Paragraphs: 32-33)
- Monitor pupils' reading in Years 1 and 2 more rigorously and communicate more fully with parents to facilitate their full co-operation in supporting their children's reading. (Paragraphs: 33, 108)
- Press ahead with the plans to develop further the monitoring and evaluation of lessons, extend them to all subjects, and ensure this is followed up with effective action to improve teaching and learning. (Paragraph: 72)
- Continue to develop the use of assessments of pupil progress to indicate strengths and weaknesses in learning and to plan improvements. (Paragraph: 57)
- Improve the level of staff expertise in music and the range and quality of resources for teaching and learning in the subject. (Paragraph: 159)
- Extend the examples of good practice in marking and target setting with pupils that are found in Year 6 mathematics. (Paragraph: 120)
- Analyse information from assessments of pupils' progress in terms of pupils' gender, ethnic background and use of English as an additional language. (Paragraph: 57)

- Enhance pupils' personal and social development through more opportunities to bear responsibilities, ensuring boys participate as fully as girls in these. (Paragraph: 47)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	22	19	2	0	0
Percentage	0	12	45	39	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	226
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	43

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	18

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	11	16	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	14	13	13
	Total	25	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	93 (74)	85 (42)	90 (74)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	7
	Girls	14	13	10
	Total	24	23	17
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	85 (77)	85 (58)	63 (42)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	13	19	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	10
	Girls	16	14	17
	Total	25	22	27
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	78 (83)	69 (70)	84 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	10
	Girls	17	16	17
	Total	26	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	81 (63)	75 (93)	84 (93)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	13
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	1
White	165
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	28.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	185

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	437,516
Total expenditure	456,444
Expenditure per pupil	2,020
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,458
Balance carried forward to next year	-16,470

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	226
Number of questionnaires returned	84

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	42	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	34	49	13	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	18	64	8	2	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	14	48	27	7	4
The teaching is good.	25	57	12	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	39	24	6	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	40	7	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	37	48	11	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	27	42	27	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	31	44	12	1	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	51	9	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	38	15	11	15

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

82. The previous inspection report stated that the provision for, and the teaching of, children under five was of high quality. Children's progress was good and levels of attainment were higher than national expectation. It is still the case that children make good progress but they do not achieve the high levels because there has been some decline in the attainment of pupils joining the school in recent years. The overall quality of provision and teaching continues to be good in all the areas of the curriculum, and this is a strength of the school.
83. On entry to school, most pupils' skills in speaking and listening, mathematical and personal independence are average or a little below. However, they achieve well in their year in the reception classes and, by the time they are ready to start Year 1, the great majority show comfortably average attainment, having attained all of the nationally defined 'early learning goals'. Those pupils who have special educational needs also make good progress towards individual targets set for them.

Personal, social and emotional development

84. Most children enter the foundation stage with underdeveloped personal and social skills. Due to the skilful teaching and the atmosphere of care and security that is created, children develop in confidence and, by the time they leave the reception class, they are achieving the early learning goals in this area.
85. Teachers and support staff give children good opportunities to learn to share and to take turns during all activities, and to be aware of the needs of others. In circle time, each child takes a turn in saying what makes them happy and what makes them sad. They listen carefully to one another, sustain attention and speak with confidence in front of the others.
86. They establish very good relationships with all adults who provide good role models in extending courtesy, kindness and understanding to all. Children develop the ability to work independently and co-operatively as their confidence grows. They learn to be responsible for putting away equipment and resources at the end of lesson activities.

Communication, language and literacy

87. In the reception classes, children enjoy listening to stories and share books in the book corner with other children and adults. In shared story sessions, they listen intently and respond excitedly to the teacher's questions, and are keen to offer their own ideas. They join in with the stories and rhymes they know and say the words along with the teacher. They recognise rhyme and join in

saying rhyming words. Teachers encourage children to talk and also to listen, particularly in circle time and shared time. They take on different roles and use talk to negotiate who is to take on the roles of customer, waiter or cook in the café role-play area. They discuss what is on the menu and make choices. On national poetry day, the children received a visit from a local poet, and they participated with enthusiasm repeating certain lines all together, as part of the shared experience.

88. In reception, they have introduced elements of the literacy hour, and children are beginning to recognise a small number of words in their sight vocabulary. They also know a number of sounds of letters of the alphabet.
89. Writing materials are available for all children, and teachers use a range of strategies for encouraging them to write their own names and other letters and words. Exercises in pencil control are regularly carried out.
90. As a result of the good teaching they receive, most pupils will achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

Mathematical development

91. By the time they reach Year 1, most children are likely to have achieved the goals for this area. Already, many can count up to ten with confidence, and can identify from memory nursery rhymes that contain the number three, ie 'Three Blind Mice', 'Baa Baa Black Sheep'.
92. The children are able to recognise the four main two-dimensional shapes of square, rectangle, triangle and circle with some accuracy. They enjoy discussing the pictures of everyday objects and then identifying the appropriate geometrical shape. They can identify examples of these shapes around the classroom, and in the outdoor playground environment from photographs taken by the teacher. Children demonstrate their counting skills by counting up the number of squares they have sorted from a box of shapes. Teaching is good and finds a stimulating range of enjoyable but systematic activities through which pupils can learn effectively.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

93. Teaching provides good experiences for children that are effectively linked to other areas of their activities to refine and reinforce their learning. For example, in a lesson designed to teach them about using a range of tools to make biscuits, they also learned about weighing and measuring. They said 'Stop' when the scales had balanced level. They observed the effect of mixing a variety of ingredients together, and noticed how the consistency changed as more were added. The children use pastry cutters quite skilfully to cut out squares, rectangles, triangles and circles. They make accurate observations about the change to the texture of the biscuits after cooking.
94. In work on the local environment, children are shown maps of the area around the school, and they are able to point out and identify signs and

labels such as *William Street* (the school address), *no entry*, *school* and *beware of the dog*. They are aware that signs with words carry meaning. In this lesson, they consolidate their knowledge of street furniture. They understand that houses have a number and that it is part of the address. In circle time, they are encouraged to tell the class where they live.

95. The children experience and develop their knowledge of how plants grow by planting seeds in the school grounds and observing their growth. This work is extended when they are able to cut and slice root vegetables to examine the inside for themselves to see how they are formed. They are able to build models of aeroplanes or helicopters using 'duplo' and 'mobilo', and towers using bricks and lego-type materials by joining them together, often working in pairs.
96. Teachers are effective in their discussion with, and questioning of, pupils, taking all available opportunities to reinforce children's progress in knowledge and understanding. By the end of the reception year, most pupils reach the expected level because of the wide range of learning experiences provided for them, and because of the good quality of the teaching they receive.

Physical development

97. Pupils make good progress in the development of physical skills both inside and outside the school building. They show good progress in physical control and co-ordination on the climbing frame and slide, and in throwing bean-bags. They show good levels of co-operation and the ability to follow instructions with accuracy when successfully inflating the parachute. They also show good levels of independent activity within their working groups.
98. Development of careful manual skills is pursued through a range of activities including sewing and threading, cutting out shapes, and fitting small 'mobilo' people to baskets, and interchanging their hairstyle. The areas of physical development are well taught, with a good range of activities provided and, as a consequence, all children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area of their education. Teachers challenge children to extend their skills but in an encouraging and supportive way.

Creative development

99. This is another area where children are very likely to achieve the goals because of the good quality of teaching they receive. Teachers provide a stimulating range of activities and materials. Children enjoy the experiences of mixing different thickly textured coloured paints together with their hands and fingers to see the effect as they change. They study the effect carefully to identify the newly created colours. Moving their fingers carefully through the paint, they create lines and patterns, and explore the different effects created by drawing a comb in curved lines through the paint.

100. All children contribute to the class frieze of the rainbow fish. They experience the various effects of spraying thinned down paint to create a watery background, and how marbling can be used effectively to represent swaying fronds. Handwriting patterns used with paint and brushes create movement in the water, and different coloured cut-out triangular shapes curled and glued produce the rainbow fish.
101. Children have the chance to become involved in role-play activities and are able to use props and resources with imagination and some skill. They benefit from effective adult support in modelling the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, and developing their roles in the doctor's surgery, the hairdresser's salon, or becoming the mechanic in the car workshop.

ENGLISH

102. Results in national English tests since the last inspection have been subject to fluctuations from year to year. Results in the 2001 standard National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven show that the oldest pupils achieve results similar to the national average and to the average for similar schools. The quality of work seen during the inspection supports the view that standards are average. Results were lower than in 2000, reflecting different levels of ability in the two year groups, but the long-term trend is one of gradual improvement. This is consistent with improvements in teaching which are found to have taken place since the previous inspection.
103. At the end of Year 2, pupils achieve test results that are well below the national average in reading and below average in writing. In 2001, a higher proportion of pupils than before reached the expected level for their age but fewer pupils achieved the higher level of attainment, Level 3, than previously. The long-term picture is of overall standards staying at a low level. Work seen during the inspection confirms the view that writing is below and reading well below the national standard. However, pupils' skills of speaking and listening are in line with the national standard. Although there has been some improvement in teaching in Years 1 and 2 since the previous inspection, it has been insufficient to become satisfactory or to significantly raise standards.
104. Pupils enter school with average levels of attainment in speaking and listening. The school provides many opportunities to help pupils develop in this area. In Years 1 and 2, however, not all pupils listen attentively to their teachers during the literacy hour. Some are easily distracted, and lack concentration. This has a poor effect on their learning as well as that of others in the class. Older pupils respond to questions in a positive and confident manner speaking in complete sentences. They listen to stories with interest and with good levels of concentration. Literacy lessons provide regular opportunities for pupils to contribute orally especially during whole class discussions. They are encouraged to share the work they have been engaged in with the other members of their class. In circle time, younger

pupils speak confidently, clearly articulate information to their group, and discuss at good levels of speaking their experiences about a walk to the post office. In a Year 6 history lesson, drama and role-play is used very effectively to allow pupils to extend their spoken language in a creative manner to reflect the relationship between a Victorian schoolmaster and a pupil. Opportunities are provided regularly across the curriculum to allow pupils to respond to questions, to offer ideas and to make contributions to class discussion.

105. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading is well below average. Fewer than usual reach the higher levels of attainment. Most pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about the story they are currently reading. They generally read with some expression and use a variety of strategies to read words that are unfamiliar to them such as 'sounding out' words, or finding clues in the meaning or the pictures. However, a significant minority are hesitant and rely upon adult support to help them. Only a few express a preference for a favourite book or author, and a good many are uncertain about terms like *title*, *author* and *illustrator*. Older pupils in Years 3-6 progress better and most, by Year 6, read confidently and use expression that conveys the full meaning of the text. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and books that they read at home as well as in school. The less confident readers read rather mechanistically and with little expression, and tend to read only in school during reading periods. Skills of researching information from books are underdeveloped, reflecting previously poor library facilities. The school has recently constructed a new library to extend pupils' opportunities in this area.
106. At the end of Year 2, attainment in writing is below average. The quality of written work varies according to the different ability groups but, again, fewer pupils than usual exceed the expected level of attainment. Pupils are provided with opportunities to write for a limited range of purposes including writing about their own experiences, re-writing of well-known stories, and developing story endings. Generally, the use of punctuation shows inconsistencies in the accurate use of full stops and capital letters. Spelling competence is developing with a sound range of words being spelt correctly, and incorrect words are attempted phonetically. Handwriting is generally well formed and of a consistent size, with a good cursive style being developed through from Year 1. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress in the development of their writing skills and achieve average standards for their age. They experience writing for a wide range of purposes including persuasive arguments, letters, stories, and newspaper articles. Work is usually clearly written in an interesting way with imaginative use of vocabulary designed appropriately for different purposes. One pupil writing about the apprehension felt by a footballer before an important game wrote, 'All morning Greg stalked around the house like a caged tiger. Breakfast passed him by!'.
107. Pupils' overall achievement in English is good in Years 3-6 but unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Pupils begin Year 1 with broadly average attainment but their progress over the next two years is unsatisfactory so that they perform

poorly in the standard National Curriculum tests at age seven. This is the result of teaching which does not challenge pupils sufficiently or manage their behaviour well enough. By the age of eleven, they have made up the lost ground. The good progress they make is largely due to the effective and challenging teaching in Years 3-6 to which pupils respond with good attitudes, behaviour and endeavour. In 2001, about a third of pupils achieved test scores at age eleven higher than expected on the basis of their earlier results at age seven. All others achieved the expected result. These results represent good achievement and are an improvement since the previous inspection when achievement was judged unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are supported with individual education plans and receive additional good quality support from learning support assistants that ensures they make good progress. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language make average progress, since they usually enter school with average levels of spoken language and have their needs catered for by the normal arrangement of ability groups in each class. Insufficient progress in writing for all pupils is an issue the school needs to address.

108. The quality of teaching seen in lessons in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection was barely satisfactory and, with additional evidence from pupils' past work, it is judged to be unsatisfactory overall. Although generally appropriate work is planned, expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they could achieve, in quantity and quality of work, are too low. Poor management of pupils results in them losing concentration so that they often do not make as much progress as they could during lessons. Too little is done to monitor pupils' reading or to involve parents in supporting pupils' reading at home. The use of reading diaries is inconsistent and, in some instances, none are kept.
109. However, it is happily a different picture elsewhere, with pupils in Years 3-6 receiving good quality teaching. Here, the literacy hour is taught well. Basic skills are taught effectively, and time and resources are used well. Support staff are employed effectively across the school and make a significant contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are very well managed and very good relationships exist between staff and pupils. This contributes positively to pupils' learning, and most are well behaved in lessons with good levels of concentration and application. They settle quickly at the beginning of lessons and listen intently to their teacher. They contribute eagerly to class discussion and respond thoughtfully to questioning demonstrating their involvement and interest. They work co-operatively in groups during the literacy hour and enjoy good relationships with their teacher.
110. Too little time is given to opportunities for pupils to practise writing sentences and paragraphs outside the 'literacy hour' lessons or in subjects other than English. Teachers provide some opportunities for the development of skills in information and communication technology, especially in wordprocessing. At present, these are limited and need to be extended further, particularly in the area of developing research skills. The practice of providing individual

reading sessions each afternoon is subject to inconsistency in its use and management and, in some cases when pupils' concentration is weak, the time is not productively used.

111. The monitoring of pupil progress through the analysis of assessment data is used to set targets for future attainment. Long-term targets are set for the older pupils against which the school measures their progress over time. The school has a marking policy that is used for day-to-day assessment, and is generally used appropriately to give pupils some indication of their progress and to help them to improve. However, there is no systematic setting of short-term targets to keep pupils informed of their own progress, and identify just what they need to do to raise their own levels of attainment. Teachers generally set clear learning objectives for literacy lessons, and revisit these at the end to assess learning. Occasionally these are not sharply focused and, consequently, pupils are unclear about what it is they are being expected to learn. The school does not make sufficiently detailed study of assessment information to identify issues concerning gender and ethnicity and to identify specific areas in which groups of pupils require development.
112. The management of the subject has shown some improvement since the last inspection and is satisfactory. The National Literacy Strategy is firmly established, is adequately resourced and taught well overall. The co-ordinator now monitors the teaching and learning of literacy across the school, and provides support for her colleagues by keeping them informed of new developments. She has ensured that the improvement of writing is an issue for the whole school and that it is included as an essential area for development in the school improvement plan so that standards can be raised further.

MATHEMATICS

113. After the last inspection in 1999, the standard National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils in 2000 showed much improved results reflecting greater numbers of more able pupils. However, in the standard tests of 2001, the results for the eleven-year-old pupils were below the national average in mathematics. In 2001, there were more pupils of average and lower ability. Looking at the results since 1997, it can be said that the school's results are improving overall in line with those nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that the pupils presently in Year 6 are likely to achieve standards better than those of 2001 and in line with national averages.
114. The results of seven-year-olds in the standard National Curriculum tests of 2001 were below average. Whereas the results for pupils at eleven have improved in line with national standards, results for pupils aged seven have not improved and are no better than in previous years. The tests separate out elements of the National Curriculum into three components, using and applying mathematics, number and algebra, and shape, space and measures. The 2000 results show that pupils' scores in the first category are

nearly 50 per cent below that for the other two. This indicates that their mathematical vocabulary and problem-solving ability is weak. At the last inspection, similar judgements were made and there has been no improvement in standards since then.

115. When compared with similar schools, the oldest pupils' results are below average. For pupils at the end of Year 2, also, they are below average. However, inspectors judge that, for this school, a more appropriate comparison is with pupils' previous attainment. This shows that achievement in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory but that, in Years 3-6, pupils regain lost ground, achieve well and attain satisfactorily in all areas of the subject.
116. By Year 2, most pupils are only able to perform limited operations with numbers and have a rudimentary understanding of 'tens and units' leading to low confidence in addition and subtraction. They have weak knowledge of halving and doubling, and scrutiny of their past work shows that they have little recorded practice in using calculation strategies that would develop sound number skills. Very little work was seen on shape and space and pupils did not demonstrate good shape vocabulary in the work seen. Likewise, work on time and measure was limited and demonstrated only low levels of experience and understanding. No recorded work other than a simple table was seen for data handling. Pupils' ability to write down findings for themselves and to record their solutions to problems was of a low standard. No evidence was found of the use of information technology to enhance learning such as when they might record findings on a graph.
117. By the age of eleven, pupils have recovered lost ground and most of their work demonstrates enthusiasm and pride. Knowledge of multiplication tables is strong. They use a comprehensive range of vocabulary to describe their solutions and work in number and measure is of a satisfactory standard. For instance, many are confident with the addition and subtraction of decimals and they know the meaning of the word 'equivalent'. Their understanding of number operations enables them to understand simple ratio. They can convert to percentages with understanding. They have a full range of knowledge to explore data handling up to line graphs for conversion values, and co-ordinate geometry in investigating shape and space. Little work was seen on group problem-solving work relating mathematics to real life situations, except for worksheets completed by all. Nor was there challenging additional work for the more able pupils to develop learning to a higher level or to include writing about mathematics and solving problems. Information technology is not used effectively to support learning in the subject.
118. The teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is overall unsatisfactory. Of the three lessons seen, one was unsatisfactory and two just satisfactory. However, the scrutiny of work in both Year 1 and Year 2 showed it to be of poor quality both in standards and in teachers' evaluation. A marked feature of all lessons was a slow pace of learning because of high noise levels and, in some instances, poor control of pupils. This is a similar situation to that at the last inspection. Learning objectives were sometimes shared with pupils but,

because of the slow pace and pupil noise, they were seldom reviewed at the end of the lesson. The school has introduced a behavioural strategy as a tool for teachers to improve control and motivate pupils to behave as good learners. This is used well in Years 3-6 and standards of behaviour are good. It was not seen to be used effectively in Years 1 and 2.

119. The teachers' lesson plans in Years 1 and 2 are sound but skills in short-term assessment to identify the appropriate level of challenge in the work set for different abilities is poor. For instance, in an unsatisfactory Year 2 lesson, the mental warm-up session was flat and dull because of lack of challenge. Pupils used number fans to illustrate unit differences from 20. The more able could do it easily and were bored. The pace was slow and did not encourage rapid response. Pupils were allowed to shout out and no-one was given the opportunity to talk about their ideas or compare calculation strategies to develop understanding or vocabulary. Some more able pupils knew already what the teacher planned they should learn. In another lesson, the teacher's questioning of pupils did not identify that some pupils did not know the properties of a square, and that they needed this to learn about cubes. The only group of pupils to make satisfactory progress is that of those with special educational needs. They are well supported in their learning by classroom assistants. The National Numeracy Strategy has been adopted but this has had little effect on learning and behaviour. There was no evidence of structured homework being given to pupils.
120. In Years 3-6, the quality of most teaching is good and, in some lessons, it is very good; there is no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, and it is contributing strongly to the raising of standards, and to the sound progress made by most pupils. Generally, the work is challenging, though there are still a few occasions when the most able pupils are not fully stretched by the tasks presented. Well-managed additional teaching support in Year 5 is giving good input to raise standards for those of lower ability in this large year group. Teachers plan work carefully within the national strategy and there is good communication to ensure that pupils progress logically through the steps in learning. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and use resources well. They share learning objectives with pupils and review progress towards them both at the ends of lessons and in marking of their work. Pupils have self-set targets that often have mathematical content or skills in them. Pupils have high levels of concentration, are enthusiastic, and are keen to learn. This is because of the good relationships, pace, and the good levels of challenge and encouragement. For instance, in a very good Year 4 lesson, the teacher shares targets for learning, and explores pupils' knowledge and vocabulary in discussion before setting the learning task. Questioning on solids and their nets is skilfully used, challenging all abilities and praising achievement. Pupils are eager to answer and are consistently stretched in their thinking. Tasks are set for all abilities based on good assessment and pupils clearly know what is expected. They help each other and share ideas. At the end of the task, a concluding whole class session reviews learning and gives feedback to pupils on what they have learned. The best short-term assessment and marking was seen in Year 6. Pupils receive very good evaluations in their exercise books leading to the next step in learning. They also set themselves highly challenging targets against the teachers' high level of expectation. They have a system of happy/sad symbols on faces they draw in their books to give the teacher rapid feedback and them ownership, so that he can quickly support to maintain high levels of confidence. Relationships and trust levels are very good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their

learning and teachers organise experience to help them meet targets in their individual education plans. An overall weakness is the very limited use by teachers of information technology to widen learning opportunities. Pupils receive regular homework according to age. The content of that given to Year 6 is challenging to all abilities, and well monitored by the teacher.

121. Leadership of mathematics is satisfactory overall and has strengths and weaknesses. There has been obvious successes in leading the work in Years 3-6 and a lack of success in Years 1 and 2. The co-ordinator has been in place for only just over a year and has other demanding responsibilities but he has been able to strengthen the use and adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy. Assessment procedures to evaluate standards are now in place and are used effectively for the required target setting. However, the use of assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning as a basis for planning the curriculum and teaching is weak. The co-ordinator has exploited good opportunities to monitor teaching in Years 3-6 but reports only one opportunity in Years 1 and 2.

SCIENCE

122. It was possible to observe four lessons in science during the inspection. Judgements are based on these, together with evidence from examination of pupils' written work over the last year, and on discussions with groups of pupils and with staff.
123. Following the previous inspection, results improved markedly in the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven, as they did also in English and mathematics. This was partly due to the presence of an unusually high proportion of able pupils, and a smaller proportion of low ability pupils, in that year group. In 2001, results were lower, being well below the national average and the average for similar schools. They were still better, though, than in the four years before 2000, suggesting a trend of gradual improvement. Averaging the school's 2000 and 2001 results puts them around the national average. The standard of work seen during the inspection confirms a picture of average attainment.
124. As at the previous inspection, the oldest pupils show some sound factual knowledge, for example about processes of living and growth in plants and animals. They often record this knowledge with well-drawn observational drawings and with accurate diagrams. However, their understanding of scientific cause and effect and their skills of investigation are underdeveloped. Year 6 pupils, asked to discuss an imaginary scientific test, had some difficulty identifying reasons why the test described to them was 'unfair'. Their understanding of the need to control and change variables in a test systematically was weak. Overall, though, the achievement of the oldest pupils is satisfactory, an improvement since the previous inspection. They generally achieve the results to be expected from their previous attainment because they apply themselves soundly to appropriately challenging work.

Achievement is not as good as in English or mathematics mainly because of imbalances in the curriculum coverage, especially in Year 6, and because too little time is devoted to the subject overall. Time allocated is less than in the great majority of schools.

125. Teachers' own formal assessment of pupils aged seven, made in the summer term 2001, was that pupils' attainment was very low by national standards. Inspection findings are that standards are below average. In discussion, pupils are able to show orally that they have some sound knowledge and understanding, for example of the

conditions that plants need if they are to grow. However, there are gaps in their knowledge and their written work is insubstantial and shows that they have not learnt to record simple scientific observations or measurements.

126. Of the four lessons seen, three showed satisfactory, and one good, teaching. Appropriately planned work was effectively taught in generally well-managed lessons to which pupils responded with interest and satisfactory endeavour. An improvement since the previous inspection is that more able pupils are now better challenged by their work. Good collaboration with support staff was a feature of lessons seen and this was especially effective in giving support to pupils with special needs. One consequence of the lack of time given to the teaching is that pupils' learning is given insufficient reinforcement, for example through writing detailed accounts of their own investigations which could help consolidate their understanding and their ability to analyse, interpret and explain findings. A potentially useful standard format for recording investigative work has been introduced but this rarely results in pupils writing at length. In Years 1 and 2, pupils do too little recording and writing, for example of their observations and measurements in investigations. In these classes, teachers' low expectations, and a lack of time effectively given to the teaching, especially the written aspects, result in unsatisfactory achievement by younger pupils.
127. Evidence from planning documentation shows that most of the work is soundly planned. Some well-designed and appropriately challenging investigations are carried out in Years 3, 4 and 5 but written work in Year 6 consists largely of copied or dictated notes and does too little to extend pupils' investigative skills. Pupils have little opportunity to design their own experiments or use information and communication technology to record, analyse or present data. The Year 6 teacher has made a useful analysis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses as revealed by their answers in the most recent standard national tests and has appropriate plans to adapt the work offered to pupils accordingly.
128. The co-ordinator for the subject was absent through illness at the time of the inspection, but documents show that improvements in the school's procedures for planning, assessment of progress and monitoring of teaching have recently begun to take satisfactory effect in science. The co-ordinator has attended training in processes of monitoring and evaluation. These developments are too recent to have yet had a significant effect in improving standards. The school's main focus for improvement has been on English and mathematics, and science has not benefited from the additional staffing support provided in those areas. This, and the lack of time given to teaching of the subject, explains why the achievement, curriculum and teaching in science are only a little better than at the previous inspection.
129. The co-ordinator has ensured the provision of sound resources of equipment to support the teaching and learning. A good feature of the leadership of the subject has been the organisation of opportunities for pupils to visit places of scientific interest and take part in a wide range of events in connection with

the Department of Education and Skills '2001 Year of Science'. Years 5 and 6 pupils, for example, visited the Challenger Space Centre for a day of problem-solving activities, while all pupils benefited from an afternoon on energy conservation and environmental issues sponsored by Powergen.

ART AND DESIGN

130. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 show attainment in art and design at the level expected for their ages. They are provided with a sound range of experiences using a variety of different materials. Some of their work is directly linked to other subject areas, or based upon the work of many well-known artists such as Manet, Pissaro or Van Gogh. With pastels or chalks, they produce with care self-portraits using similar techniques to emulate the effect of the old masters. In addition, work linked to their science topic involved sponge printing with a variety of colours that create the effect of texture. They draw pastel figures representing children of long ago to connect with a history topic. Using different sized brushes and a range of bright colours, they produce some very effective Aboriginal hand-prints which are also part of their art and design topic focusing on self and experience. Although only one lesson was seen in these classes, the standard of teaching is satisfactory taking into account the quality and range of the work produced by pupils. Their skills and techniques are developing, building on the firm foundation created in the reception class.
131. Similarly, pupils in Years 3-6 are also given an appropriate range of experiences in which their skills, knowledge and understanding are developing at a level appropriate to their age. In Year 3, pupils demonstrate an ability to cut, fold and print in a variety of ways with sound accuracy for their age. Examination of Year 4 pupils' work on display reveals co-operative and careful work using their painting and sponging skills to produce a class frieze of the village in India they are learning about in geography. Careful and accurate brush strokes ensure that the desired effect is produced. Further linking is made with a 'fish frieze', made of recycled household objects very effectively coloured blue, to a topic on protecting the world's ocean. Evidence of art and design appears on display in the form of clay tiles all interconnecting in design to portray relationships. Year 5 pupils investigate visual and tactile qualities for materials that take them through stages of design. They use natural dyes from everyday fruit and vegetables successfully to colour materials on which they are to print a design from a block made of card, string and cut drinking straws.
132. Few lessons in art and design in Years 3-6 could be observed but the quality of the experiences provided for pupils, and the quality of the work they have produced in those lessons, reflect satisfactorily on the teaching, the learning and on pupils' positive attitudes to the subject. Occasionally, pupils employ information and communication technology in their work, for example to construct patterns, but generally use of this technology is underdeveloped.
133. The subject is satisfactorily managed. Adequate resources and support are provided by the co-ordinator who is well trained in the subject and knows it well. The school has adopted the national guidelines recently that links art and design into other curriculum areas. Interest and enthusiasm are fostered by displays of good quality artwork around the school, but also in the local

council's offices. The sound standards reported at the previous inspection have been maintained, while planning and teaching show some improvement.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

134. Because the inspection took place early in the school year and pupils had mostly taken home the products of their work in the previous year, limited evidence of pupils' attainment was available to inspectors. However, judgements are based on good photographic records of past work, on a small number of samples of items pupils have made, on pupils' design sketchbooks, on two lessons seen and on discussions with pupils.
135. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactory standards. They use card and paper with sound skills of cutting, shaping and joining and they make successful large constructions in plastic and wood from kits of parts. Older pupils in Years 3-6 use an appropriately wider range of materials and techniques. They use pneumatic devices successfully to make parts of a mask move, and use gears and electric motors to propel vehicles. Some samples of items pupils have made show a high standard of accuracy and quality of finish. Slippers made by older pupils, for example, show accurate cutting and assembly of parts, neat stitching and attractive decoration. In a lesson seen in Year 3, pupils showed a good understanding of the ways they could use plastic tubes and bottles to construct a pneumatic means of moving parts of their 'monster masks'. Their understanding of the forces involved gave good support to their science work. Year 4 pupils also exceeded the attainment expected for their age in their ideas for designing a money holder and for evaluating alternatives. They understood well the need to consider carefully the functions their design might serve and the need to reflect this in the materials, fastening methods, size and shape of the item. Discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils showed a satisfactory understanding of processes of designing and evaluating the things they make. Overall, the work seen during the inspection was of satisfactory standard, but with some examples of good attainment. Pupils achieve satisfactorily, making the progress to be expected and responding well to appropriately challenging work. Pupils generally show enthusiasm for their work in this subject.
136. The teaching in the two lessons seen, in Years 3 and 4, provided examples of good and very good teaching. Planning was very good, showing a very clear understanding of the subject and setting challenging and stimulating tasks so that pupils responded with much interest, enthusiasm and good concentration. Clear explanations and good questioning of pupils reinforced their understanding. There were some good examples of pupils showing independence in making their own imaginative suggestions about designs. Teachers managed pupils well and good support was given to pupils with special needs, in some cases through effective collaboration with classroom assistants. Other evidence of teaching, from teachers' planning and from pupils' work, indicates satisfactory quality. However, teaching in this subject makes little use of information and communication technology.

137. Provision for this subject is good and well managed by the co-ordinator. The co-ordinator and one other teacher have particular expertise in the subject which they share with their colleagues to provide a stimulating curriculum in the subject. The co-ordinator leads the work with enthusiasm and efficiency. Planning is well led and good resources of equipment and materials have been well organised. An improved format for assessing pupils' progress has recently been adopted. The co-ordinator has a good awareness of the need to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning. A programme of lesson observations is planned for the coming year in line with the school's plans to extend such practices, which have so far focused mainly on English and mathematics. Lesson planning, assessment of pupil progress and extension of the co-ordinator's role are areas of some improvement since the previous inspection. Taking pupils to places of technological interest has successfully stimulated interest in the subject and a small group entering a regional competition won first prize for their design and construction of a bridge. The Year 6 design and technology club led by a volunteer helper provides a valuable enhancement of pupils' opportunities to learn. Almost all pupils take their turn to participate in small group projects, for example designing and making wooden toys using jigsaws. They produce some high-quality results.

GEOGRAPHY

138. Two lessons in geography were observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on these, on examination of pupils' past written work and on discussions with pupils.
139. The quality of work found during the inspection is broadly in line with the level expected for pupils' ages throughout the school. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. In Years 1 and 2, pupils recognise key features of their local environment, including some differences. They can identify and name different types of housing using terms like 'flat', 'detached' and 'semi-detached'. They can talk about differences between the town and the countryside, contrasting the kinds of buildings and the uses of land to be found in each locality. They can trace a route around the school on a simple plan. However, their past written work shows that they have too little opportunity to make their own simple maps and plans.
140. In Years 3-6, pupils develop some sound geographical knowledge, for example about weather and its effects on the land, occupations and people's lives. Some sound work is completed on the geography of the town in which pupils live, including surveying people's views on environmental changes like pedestrianisation of streets. There is satisfactory development of an understanding of the place of water in the environment, and of the water cycle, which is supported by a visit to a water treatment plant. Pupils find places which they are studying, or which are in the news, on world maps and they trace international routes. Although pupils refer to maps quite often, the oldest pupils are not clear about the use of grid references on maps.

141. Teaching in the two lessons seen was satisfactory in one case and good in the other. In the better lesson, the teacher explained the objective of the lesson clearly, set challenging tasks, managed pupils very well and set a lively pace for the learning. Other evidence of teaching, for example from examining pupils' past work, shows that too little time is devoted to written work, especially in Years 1 and 2. When pupils in Years 3-6 do writing it is usually very brief, for example providing labels for diagrams or filling boxes with single words on worksheets. This limits pupils' opportunities to practise their writing skills as well as reducing the consolidation of pupils' knowledge and understanding. The effect of this was apparent in discussion with pupils when they had some difficulty recalling work previously undertaken. Examination of pupils' past written work showed only one example was found of pupils using information and communication technology in connection with their work in geography.
142. Inspectors made no judgements at the previous inspection about standards or the quality of teaching and it is not therefore possible to comment on improvement in these respects. However, the subject co-ordinator has given a satisfactory lead to developments in planning of the work in line with recent national guidance and planning is improved since the previous inspection. A new format for assessing pupils' progress based on the revised curriculum has recently been adopted. New resources for teaching and learning have been acquired so that resources are of good quality though still barely adequate in quantity and range. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to check the effectiveness of teaching and learning more directly but, as yet, time has not been allocated to this in geography while other subjects have had priority. The school's plans provide for this to happen in due course.

HISTORY

143. No judgement was made on standards at the last inspection because no lessons in history were seen. This time, on the evidence of two lessons seen, a scrutiny of pupils' work and a discussion with some of the pupils, attainments in history throughout the school are judged to be in line with the levels expected for pupils' ages. Pupils achieve satisfactorily.
144. By the age of seven, the pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past by comparing their own homes of today with those of people who lived about a hundred years ago. They compare pictures and identify the similarities and differences of kitchen areas, and make astute assertions about the energy sources required to enable the different appliances to work, for example the washing copper, and the cooking range. The work is successful because of the accurate subject knowledge of the teacher and the appropriate use of original artefacts which challenges the pupils' thinking and develops their learning satisfactorily. Some sound teaching ensures that their sense of time is well developed through the opportunities they have to talk about their parents and grandparents.

145. In a Year 3 class, pupils develop a sound knowledge of ancient history with a study of the Egyptians at the time of the Pharaohs and the pyramids. The teacher very skilfully links the subject to other curriculum areas through the use of maps, and careful observation of the patterns painted on the tombs of the Pharaohs.
146. By the age of eleven, pupils have developed a satisfactory sense of time and knowledge of key events in British history. Their learning has been well reinforced by visits to places of significant importance at differing times in history, for example the local environment, Tamworth Castle and Calke Abbey. The good teaching in Year 6 makes effective use of role-play that has given pupils the opportunity to explore the relationship that existed between the Victorian schoolmaster and his pupils based upon the reading of an extract from Charles Dickens' novel 'Nicholas Nickleby'. Effective use is made of developing pupils' literacy skills who produce samples of the kind of dialogue they imagine would have taken place. 'You boy! If you disobey me, how would you like a visit from 'Mr Leather'?'.
147. The quality of teaching is enhanced by the enthusiasm of the teachers and the effective links that are made to other subjects. Good use is made of artefacts and this has considerable impact upon pupils' interest and understanding of the subject. The use of information and communication technology is being used to enable pupils to research information about their topics on CD-Roms and the Internet, but is generally underdeveloped across the school. Relatively little written work of substance is undertaken, reflecting the fact that the amount of time devoted to the teaching of history is also relatively small.
148. The subject manager has ensured that the national guidelines have been adopted and topics have been allocated to each year group appropriately. Resources have been improved since the last inspection, and the school has access to high-quality resources and artefacts from the local museum and library. An up-to-date policy provides clear subject guidance for teaching staff, but no classroom observations have yet been undertaken to monitor the quality of teaching in the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

149. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and the standards of pupil attainment at the end of Year 2 and again at the end of Year 6 are both broadly in line with those expected nationally. As there was no pupils' work to see from last year except some wordprocessing by the previous Year 6 pupils, judgements are also based on the evidence drawn from discussions with pupils and current pupils' work.
150. The previous inspection reported that pupils' attainment in the subject was in line with the standards expected nationally but that control technology was weak. Also, that, as technology moved forward and the expectations of pupils nationally

increased, the school was being left behind. The school has worked hard to stay up with developments with a good measure of success in difficult circumstances. Not the least of these were the more important priorities set for school improvement in other areas, and the departure of the effective co-ordinator. The most important area for the school to address in this subject is its use to support learning in other subjects. In five out of nine subjects, its effective contribution to learning was judged to be unsatisfactory.

151. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have sound keyboard skills and are able to enter and then modify text using the mouse and the screen toolbar. They can print their work. They are seen to use programs in mathematics to build knowledge of numbers and shape and to model using a paint program. They are learning to control a programmable robot. Older pupils, in Year 4, are able to send and receive e-mails using well-developed keyboard skills. By Year 6, pupils model graphical patterns, operate CD-Roms and interrogate the Internet, most of them using search programs competently. Some pupils have experience of control using technical construction kits and an interface, but it was not possible to obtain the evidence to judge the level of attainment. Wordprocessing is the strongest element in attainment.
152. It was only possible to observe two lessons, one in Year 2 and one in Year 4. In the former, the pupils learned about control technology. Although the lesson was noisy, the teacher's planning and pace utilised the pupils' natural interest so that pupils learned the basic principles of controlling the robotic toy. Some pupils showed amazement and wonder when the robot performed a set routine. More able pupils were given the task of planning a route for the robot, but some of them did not have sufficient guidance on how to command the robot to make turns. The classroom assistant was used well by the teacher to support learning for the less able pupils. In the good Year 4 lesson, the learning was restricted by the poor resources – just one computer for the whole class connected to the Internet. The teacher's good knowledge and understanding, good planning and very effective questioning of pupils ensured satisfactory learning on receiving and sending e-mails. They were very responsive and listened carefully to the teacher's instructions about paired-working during the week, wanting to be included and keen to learn. They were encouraged to phrase questions and talk about their project to consolidate learning. Computers are distributed around the school and teachers organise learning in small groups, skilfully managing classroom assistants and volunteer help to ensure pupils have equal access. In Year 5, helpers were seen to manage pupils well and explain processes with understanding as they operated graphical modelling, Internet access, CD-Roms and e-mail on computers. Teachers lack skills and experience in using a networked computer suite to teach large groups. Display of pupils' work is used well to promote learning, for instance the hall display on world-wide e-mails. The school project on e-mail experience for pupils that involves parents and thus contacts all over the world is of good quality and encourages good learning.
153. The provision for pupils with special needs is supported very well by information technology. The co-ordinator uses computers and digital cameras effectively to widen the good learning opportunities and to assess their needs. Parents receive a wordprocessed copy of their child's individual education plan plus updates.

154. The new co-ordinator has been in place just a few weeks and has good skills and knowledge to make an impact on the use of the proposed computer suite and organise the forthcoming training for teachers. However, there are no plans to allow her to monitor teaching. The school has adopted a national scheme of work to ensure a comprehensive and progressive curriculum. This contains an assessment structure to record the skills and knowledge acquired by pupils to assist evaluation and planning. Record sheets for individual pupils have been introduced this term. The headteacher has produced a comprehensive development plan, and obtained government funds to facilitate the purchase of new equipment and for teachers training in using the new opportunities to be available.

MUSIC

155. One lesson in music was observed during the inspection. Other evidence was collected from observing pupils singing during assemblies and from discussions with groups of pupils, in which they also demonstrated some of their skills. Only limited evidence of a small sample of pupils' attainment could be obtained but this showed a satisfactory standard across the age range. This represents some improvement since the previous inspection when no judgement of attainment had been possible for Years 1 and 2 pupils and Years 3-6 pupils' attainment had been unsatisfactory.
156. In the one lesson seen, Year 1 pupils showed a satisfactory awareness that musical sounds can be high or low, long or short, and loud or quiet. They could identify these differences in sounds played to them and a few were quick to explain instrumental sounds as 'caused by vibrations'. Most Years 1 and 2 pupils are well aware of differences in pitch, though they show some confusion in terminology, often mixing up 'high' and 'low'. A representative group of Year 3 pupils were also able to identify important musical differences. They could also repeat rhythmic patterns played to them with reasonable accuracy. They knew the names of most of the percussion instruments they use and could explain the variety of ways instruments make sounds such as scraping or plucking strings, hitting and blowing.
157. In assemblies, pupils' singing is of a satisfactory standard. The school has responded to observations made at the previous inspection about the use of these occasions to teach and reinforce musical concepts and skills. Teachers now give pupils guidance, encouragement and feedback on their performance and this leads to some progress in the quality of their performances. Singing is satisfactorily tuneful, accurate and expressive.
158. In discussion, a group of the oldest pupils showed a satisfactory awareness of some orchestral instruments. Asked to think about composing a piece of film music to accompany a given scene and to create a particular mood and effect, these pupils showed they understood that the tempo, rhythm, dynamics, pitch and instrumentation of the piece need careful consideration.

They then make appropriate suggestions for exploiting this range of musical differences to achieve the desired effect.

159. In the one lesson seen, the teaching was satisfactory. The intended learning was clearly explained and demonstrated and pupils, though occasionally inattentive and restless, generally listened with interest and they responded with a hushed awe to some of the special effects the teacher demonstrated. Too little other evidence of teaching was available for an overall judgement of its quality to be made. The school acknowledges that there is a general lack of staff expertise and confidence in the subject. The subject co-ordinator manages the provision satisfactorily within the limited resources at her disposal and does have some musical expertise which she is able to share with her colleagues. Teachers have been provided with a thorough scheme of work and resource pack, devised by the local authority, which give teachers detailed guidance on lesson planning. This guidance is currently being updated in line with national developments and a corresponding process for assessing pupils' progress is being introduced. There has previously been no formal assessment. The co-ordinator also extends pupils' learning opportunities by offering a lunchtime choir at certain times of the year, which around 30 pupils attend. The choir contributes to joint performances with a group of local schools. Visiting musicians occasionally work with classes in singing or to demonstrate percussion instruments from around the world. There is no local authority provision of visiting teachers of instruments for those pupils and parents who might wish to take advantage.
160. As nationally, music has been given low priority in school development in recent years. Although pupils' progress in the subject was unsatisfactory at the previous inspection, this was not made a key issue for action and the school has focused most of its attempts at improvement elsewhere. As a result, there has been only slight improvement in the provisions for music and the quality of provision is barely satisfactory. Lack of development is seen in a lack of training for staff and upkeep of resources for learning. Resources are unsatisfactory: there are too few instruments and the quality is poor.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

161. By the age of seven, pupils achieve satisfactory standards for their age and, by the time they are eleven, pupils are above the standards expected. Only three lessons could be observed, one of these for only a small group of Year 1 pupils. However, observations in the playground of running, dodging, balance and co-operative skills, and of sporting extra-curricular activities, give sound supporting evidence. There is adequate time on the timetable for physical education. The time allocated for swimming is now appropriate, having been judged excessive at the last inspection. The short time spent travelling is used productively to further consolidate the already good attitudes and behaviour of pupils. They are proud that they have a very good reputation in the community. Pupils with special educational needs are usually well supported and make good progress towards the standards

expected, and to targets within their individual education plans. Standards have improved in Years 3-6 and one reason for this is the adoption of a national scheme of work that clearly identifies progression in skills and abilities, thus clarifying expectations of pupils of different ages. The assessment process embedded in this scheme for identifying the progress of individuals, and so ensuring good next step planning for pupil's experience, is only just in place. It is planned to use this consistently throughout the school to identify areas for improvement, and pupils' achievements.

162. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make only satisfactory progress. One class of Year 1 pupils was seen learning to run with speed and direction in chasing games at good level. They learn to enjoy teamwork to control a parachute and are able to run underneath from side to side and exchange places with others when it is inflated. They show pleasure and achievement and this gives them confidence to try new skills. In Year 2, pupils have a lower than expected level of skill in dance, and inattention and challenging behaviour limits their skill development and group co-operation in interpreting mood and music. By Year 6, pupils have developed their skills in games to a good level. They have overall good agility and control of a ball in football and netball. Good teamwork was observed in passing and receiving a ball, and also in positioning within a game to take advantage of pace and speed to elude cover by opponents. Pupils worked well together with good anticipation and awareness of strategy. They support each other and have good attitudes and relationships. They value and acknowledge each other's accomplishments and there is a consistently good team spirit amongst them. This is because teachers value all pupils' abilities and success, encouraging each small step forward in learning. They are good role models for pupils. Boys and girls have equal opportunity and experience and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils' attainment in swimming is very good. By Year 6, they have all achieved the targets set in the National Curriculum. Observations of Year 6 pupils, who are all at least moving through the water without support, indicate that the standards will be similar at the end of this academic year.
163. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. However, management of pupils is weak in Year 2, and inattention slows the pace of the lesson, thus limiting the pupils' opportunity to learn effectively. For example, in a dance lesson in Year 2, the lesson started well with a good warm-up and good pace. In the main activity, interpreting music with machine-like movement, in a co-operative group, some boys took advantage of the teacher's lack of control to slow and disrupt the lesson. The teacher told them they would receive the first sanction in the agreed behaviour policy, but did not carry this out as they continued to disrupt. Pupils were invited to observe exemplar groups but not invited to comment on good features against which to compare and thus improve their own performance. The pace was consequently slow and the cool down activity and summary of learning incomplete. Only good pupil attitudes and tolerance kept many pupils on task. In Years 3-6, teaching is good and, in swimming, very good. In the Year 6 games lesson teachers demonstrated good planning and knowledge of the subject. Steps made by

pupils in key skills in passing the ball and teamwork were evaluated and shared with pupils and this encouraged them to raise their performance after structured discussion with team mates. Teachers' high expectations of all abilities ensured that all of them were valued and that their individual efforts and successes would be recognized. Tasks were challenging and the pace of the lesson followed pupils' learning and progress. The very good teaching skills and knowledge available through both the very good swimming instructor and a qualified ex-parent are used well to combine with staff's good skill on the poolside. Pupils are challenged but safe in their ability groups and working at their potential in learning.

164. Overall, the leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has good leadership skills and knowledge of the subject and uses the opportunities to support good learning and attainment provided by sporting activities outside lessons and input by external agencies for older pupils. The extra-curricular sporting activities and outdoor pursuits, including the good skipping initiative, are limited to pupils in Years 3-6. Although the structure and assessment in the new national scheme is benefiting pupils' individual learning, the co-ordinator has little opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 and this is necessary to improve standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION will be subject to a separate inspection at a later date.