

# INSPECTION REPORT

## REPTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Repton

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112976

Headteacher: Mrs V. S. Hyde

Reporting inspector: Mrs C. Field

9479

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2001

Inspection number: 217520

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Springfield Road Repton Derbyshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Helen Morton
Date of previous inspection:	11 <sup>th</sup> October 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
9479	C. Field	Registered inspector		<p>Information about the school</p> <p>The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
9188	J. McHugh	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
15414	D. Carrington	Team inspector	<p>Art and design</p> <p>Design and technology</p> <p>Information and communication technology</p> <p>Mathematics</p> <p>Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage</p>	
30144	J. E. Hastings	Team inspector	<p>Geography</p> <p>History</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Science</p> <p>Equality of opportunity</p> <p>Provision for pupils with English as an additional language</p>	
7958	G. L. Lewis	Team inspector	<p>English</p> <p>Religious education</p> <p>Provision for pupils with special educational needs</p>	<p>How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</p>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in the centre of Repton, a village located in South Derbyshire. Pupils who attend the school mainly come from the village that comprises mostly owner-occupied accommodation. There are 183 pupils on roll: 109 boys and 74 girls aged between four and eleven years all from White ethnic backgrounds as determined by school data. Pupils' attainment on entry to the reception class is broadly average. Around three per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is well below the national average. Around 13 per cent of pupils have special educational needs mainly for moderate learning difficulties. Six pupils have a statement of special educational needs in place and this is a high proportion compared to most schools. The school currently has Foundation status but will become a community school in January 2002. The local education authority is currently giving intensive support to the school to help with the changeover.

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

Repton Primary is an improving school that serves its community well and is striving to meet its aims. Academic standards are not yet as high as they should be but are rising because of the very strong and determined leadership provided by the headteacher. Teaching is good overall with some effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills that are enabling pupils of all ages to make consistent progress in extending their basic skills. Relationships, which have been strained in the past, are now positive, and the staff and governors work together with united determination to make improvements. Parents have rapidly growing confidence in the school and the quality of education it provides. The school no longer has serious weaknesses, is effective and provides satisfactory value for money

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

- The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has boosted staff morale, established a culture in which everyone in school is determined to make results better, and has a clear plan of action to sustain continuous improvement.
- Teaching is good overall and enables pupils to make effective gains in knowledge, understanding and skills over time. This is having a positive impact on raising standards.
- The school is a safe and caring place in which attendance is very good, behaviour is good, relationships are harmonious and pupils show good levels of respect for one another and adults.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Well-chosen strategies help develop pupils' self-confidence and self-determination to succeed academically and socially. Pupils' very good attitudes are a strength.
- The school targets its resources effectively and uses specific grants to increase the opportunities for pupils to achieve with growing success.

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

- Some pupils' achievements are not yet as high as they should be in English, mathematics and science, though standards are rising rapidly.
- The role of subject co-ordinator is not yet rigorous or influential enough in the drive to raise standards.
- There is no strategy or consistent approach to ensuring that the needs of gifted and talented pupils are met fully.
- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is not providing sufficient opportunities for them to show initiative, increase independence and manage appropriate tasks for themselves.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

In 1999 the school's inspection found serious weaknesses, specifically in pupils' rates of progress and attainment, as well as notable weaknesses in teaching, and in management and governance. Monitoring by Her Majesty's Inspectors in 2000 continued to flag up the low level of many pupils' achievements as the major issue facing the school. A high turnover, numerous temporary acting headteachers and periods of absence due to the serious illness of the deputy have slowed progress in some areas. During this time the local education authority has provided support that has kept the school making steady improvement. Since September, and the appointment of a permanent headteacher, there has been renewed impetus to forging ahead with improving the number one priority of raising academic standards. The impact of her very good leadership is clearly evident in the good progress that has been made in improving many areas of the school's work in the last few months. Many staff are new to their roles but are enthusiastic about their new management responsibilities. The school no longer has serious weaknesses and is well placed to continue to improve the issues raised by this inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

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

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average   E

The results in 2001 as shown above have risen significantly in all tested subjects. Standards were well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science when compared to all schools. There has been significant improvement in the school's performance in English overall and particularly in writing with a high proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5. Standards are above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science when set against the results in similar schools. Girls do better in the tests than boys and the school is implementing new strategies to ensure equality of opportunity. The school's rate of improvement is keeping pace with the national trend. The school has set very demanding targets for end of Year 6 tests that predict all pupils will attain the level expected in the three tested subjects, with a high proportion earmarked to achieve at higher levels. The inspection team can already see the impact that the improved educational provision is having on standards, and judges the school to have good capacity to reach its targets.

Inspection findings judge standards at the end of the Foundation Stage to be at the expected level. At seven and eleven years standards are above expected levels in English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, design and technology and physical education. Standards are at the expected level in science, geography, history, and religious education. From reception to Year 6 most pupils make steady gains in knowledge, understanding and skills. The level of challenge in the work set for



the very highest attainers and those with special gifts and talents is not yet consistent in all lessons and as such is an area for improvement.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour in class and at play is positive, though occasionally a few pupils spoil it for others by being too noisy and silly. There have been no exclusions within the last three years.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are keen to do jobs and take on the role of monitors, for example, very well. There are limited opportunities for them to manage appropriate aspects of learning however.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils are very punctual and this helps get the day off to a very purposeful start.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

All but one teacher has joined the school within the last 2 years and this makes direct comparison with the previous report's findings about teaching difficult. Teaching quality observed during this inspection was good overall, with strengths leading to quicker learning in Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 especially in English and mathematics. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen in reception where teaching methods restricted the children's opportunities to show initiative, make choices and take responsibility for some of their own learning; this impeded their social skills development. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and leads to the youngest children in school making a steady start to their education. Good teaching is enabling those pupils with special educational needs to make good progress against their individual targets. Teaching of the highest attaining pupils is not always sufficiently challenging, and this is an area for improvement. Teaching is particularly successful in promoting positive working conditions; classes are happy, purposeful places. In some lessons however, not enough time is given for pupils to reflect on new learning and to consider how they might improve in the future. The school's use of assessment to inform planning has yet to support fully the effective target setting work that is having such a positive impact on quickening rates of progress and raising academic standards.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The curriculum is well planned and meets statutory requirements. However, the organisation of some subjects hampers pupils' skills development. The quality of the curriculum is enriched by exciting lessons and the additional experiences provided through the growing number of out of school clubs and visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are helped to learn effectively and make good progress against their individual targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils' spiritual growth is appropriately fostered whilst their moral, social and cultural development is well attended to and enables most to become rounded and responsible young citizens.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The school is caring and responsive to pupils different needs. Written documentation to support practice in respect of health, welfare and safety matters is not yet fully in place. Good procedures in assessing pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy have yet to be established in other subjects.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents	Good. The new headteacher has placed improved communication with parents as a top priority and as a result many have restored confidence in the school. Strategies to promote a productive home-school partnership are proving effective and are benefiting the pupils' education.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership. She has set out a clear vision for taking the school forward and has worked extremely hard in a short space of time to improve significantly the quality of education being provided. All staff, and governors are working with her, and there is a united determination to forge ahead with confidence by implementing the well-conceived school development plan. The role of co-ordinators is highlighted in the plan as a key priority for improvement. A senior management team, although working well, has yet to be fully influential whilst the school seeks to appoint a deputy headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. All legal requirements are met in full. The governors are quickly getting to grips with their role and responsibilities but have still to establish terms of reference for committees. A positive feature is the linking of each governor to an aspect or subject that will enable greater awareness of curriculum matters.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher has led the school through a process of evaluation of standards so that it is now very clear exactly where strengths and weaknesses lie. Good use is being made of a range of indicators to enable a clear view of how standards compare to those nationally and in similar schools. There is growing application of the principles of Best Value.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staffing levels, accommodation and learning resources are adequate but are being improved as part of the school's drive for raised standards. The use of new technologies is a developing area. A tight budget is managed efficiently and this year there will be a small carry forward. The school provides a rapidly improving education for all pupils and gives satisfactory value for money.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school, are happy and enabled to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The school is approachable and willing to listen.</li> <li>• There is renewed confidence that leadership and management are enabling rapid improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information provided about how well their children are doing.</li> <li>• Staff turnover resulting in the dis-jointed education that older pupils have had.</li> <li>• The range of extra curricular activities is too narrow.</li> </ul>

Since the time of the previous inspection there have been problems with communication with parents. The situation today is much improved and the team endorses parents' positive views. The range of extra curricular activities is satisfactory; the school's information to parents is good. The pupils' reports issued last year were of variable quality, there are plans to improve them to give parents more information about their child's achievement.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. There were a number of serious issues concerning standards and progress raised by the 1999 inspection. Significant under achievement was identified in aspects of both English and mathematics throughout the school. Pupils were reported to make unsatisfactory progress in art and design, geography, music and ICT. The monitoring visit by Her Majesty's Inspectors last year charted the satisfactory progress being made in tackling the issues but still identified concerns. Since September, and the appointment of a permanent headteacher, there has been renewed impetus to forging ahead with improving the top priority of raising academic standards. The impact of her very good leadership is clearly evident in the good progress that has been made in improving many areas of the school's work in the last few months. School-wide assessment has enabled everyone to become aware of the level at which each child is working in English and mathematics and to plan appropriate work for different pupils. This is proving effective; however there is still a need to ensure consistent challenge for the highest attainers. Target setting involves staff, parents and pupils in a shared approach to supporting improvement in literacy and numeracy and is a positive feature. Monitoring systems have been set up to enable managers to evaluate how well pupils are acquiring new knowledge, skills and understanding and this information is now reported regularly to the governing body. The parents of some older children raised concerns at the outset of this inspection about the negative impact that a high staff turnover had had on rates of progress. The inspection team examined very closely the work being done in lessons, work recorded in books this term and some saved from last year. The team judges that standards are no longer a serious weakness and are rising at a brisk pace in most subjects. Nevertheless, the raising of standards is a key issue raised by this inspection to ensure that all pupils are enabled to maximise their potential, especially in English, mathematics and science.

2. The results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests have risen significantly in all tested subjects for both seven and eleven-year-olds. Some caution has to be exercised when comparing the school's results because the small size of cohort can distort the picture. However the trends are clear: the school's results in the tests are improving at a good pace.

3. The standards achieved by seven-year-olds in the 2001 tests were average in reading, above average in writing and science, and very high in mathematics. When compared to similar schools they were average in reading and science, below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

4. The standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in the 2001 tests were well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science when compared to all schools. There has been significant improvement in the school's performance in English overall and particularly in writing with a high proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5. Standards are above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science when set against the results in similar schools. Girls do better in the tests than boys, especially in English and the school is aware of this. For example, a range of reading books has already been bought that the school hopes will be more appealing to boys and so stimulate advanced reading skills.

5. Children in the reception unit known as the *Acorns* start school with broadly average knowledge, understanding and skills and make steady progress during their time in the

Foundation Stage to reach the level expected. Satisfactory teaching enables the children to increase the skills with which they handle numbers, move and control their bodies, build good reading habits, work creatively and to grow in their awareness of the world about them. The potential for some to develop very good personal and social skills is currently restricted by too formal teaching methods, and this requires review. Some good teamwork ensures that the children with special educational needs make steady progress against the personal targets set for them.

6. Inspection findings judge current standards at seven and eleven years to be above expected levels in English, mathematics, ICT, art and design, design and technology and physical education. Standards are at the expected level in science, geography, history, and religious education. From reception to Year 6 most pupils are making good gains in knowledge, understanding and skills in English and mathematics and steady progress in other subjects. Quite rightly the school has focused this term on assessing individual attainments in English and mathematics so that work is now being set at the right level in most instances. The level of challenge in the work set for the very highest attainers and those with special gifts and talents is not consistent in all lessons and this slows down the progress they make over time. The boost given to pupils' learning in Year 6 has a positive impact on their performance in National Curriculum tests, but more could be done to enable learning to build up incrementally from the Foundation Stage onwards. Those pupils with special needs who benefit from well-conceived individual education plans that include precise targets that are regularly reviewed are making consistently good progress. This good practice in target setting can usefully serve as a model to support improvement for other groups. The next challenge for the school is to ensure that all pupils learn at good rates in every year and across the subjects they study. The school is aware of the need to ensure that opportunities to extend literacy skills, particularly speaking, writing and research skills are maximised across the curriculum, for example to give time to extend these in history, geography and religious education lessons. The good use of target setting to support advancement in English and mathematics has yet to extend to science, and this is a missed opportunity.

7. The standards pupils achieve in basic skills are good overall. Pupils of all ages have good listening skills. They listen attentively to the teacher and follow instructions well. In all classes the pupils speak with confidence and are willing to respond when asked a question but few opportunities were observed where pupils voiced their own opinions or put forward well-reasoned arguments. Reading skills are at a good level and the pupils take immense pleasure from sharing books and enjoying stories and poems. Their good range of experiences beyond school enhances the level at which pupils appreciate what they read, often gaining understanding beyond the literal. For example, most of the pupils who read to inspectors were members of the their local library and owned a wide range of books themselves. Writing skills are good overall. Pupils sequence their ideas well and choose interesting words to enliven writing. Spelling and handwriting are weaker aspects however, spellings are too often inaccurate and the youngest pupils have yet to form a comfortable grip that gives them good pencil control.

8. Pupils have a reasonable recall of number facts, an appropriate understanding of shape, space and measures. By the age of eleven most can work quickly and accurately when working with numbers. Problem solving skills are more adept in some classes than others as there is a tendency for a few teachers not only to set the problems but give the solutions too readily. In all classes, both literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced with confidence and are supporting well-structured lessons that enable effective learning. The next step forward, to ensure that rates of progress are as good as they can be, is by promoting more widely the opportunities for pupils to work independently and discover things for themselves and to have time to reflect on new things they have learnt.

9. Skills in the use and application of ICT are developing well. There were several aspects of ICT that gave concern in 1999 and these have all been addressed. The new ICT suite is time-tabled intensively to enable pupils ample time to develop skills and knowledge and class based computers are put to good use in fostering cross-curricular use of ICT. Pupils achieve good quality work in word processing, graphics and data handling. Some of the work undertaken with the Internet is of very good quality, especially in Year 2. Older pupils are building good insights into the power of computers to sort, search and interpret data and Year 6 pupils evaluate different web-sites convincingly as they compare the target age range of the site and the facilities offered.

10. It is clear that standards have the potential to rise to higher levels as improvements kick in. The school is aware of where strengths and weaknesses lie and is embarking on a sensible course of action; for example, good attention is being paid to improve children's vocabulary across the subjects they learn. The school aims to meet the needs of different pupils through planning and organisation, and the allocation of additional resources to support some pupils in lower junior classes in developing their numeracy and literacy skills for example. This works effectively for the group with special needs who are assisted well in their studies and make good progress. The groups of pupils who still require more attention in all years and specifically in reception and infant classes, are those who could attain at very high levels if work was targeted more precisely and their progress charted as carefully as low achievers.

11. The school has set very demanding targets for end of Year 6 tests that predict all pupils will attain the level expected in the three tested subjects, with a high proportion earmarked to achieve at the higher level 5. The school anticipates that some will attain at levels 6 also but has not yet set specific targets for these pupils. The inspection team can already see the impact that the improved educational provision is having on standards, and judges the school to have good capacity to reach its ambitious targets.

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

12. The strengths identified in pupils' attitudes and behaviour in previous reports have all been sustained. Parents agree strongly that despite the problems in provision in the past, pupils are enabled to become mature and responsible and enjoy their time at school.

13. Pupils display very good attitudes to learning. In the lessons seen the majority of pupils concentrate very well and persevere with tasks even when they find it challenging. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson on multiplication where pupils were shown strategies of how to estimate the answer in their head when presented with a difficult set of numbers, one boy found this challenge extremely hard. The temptation to use a pencil and paper to attempt to work out the correct answer was overcome. Pupils' response benefits strongly from good teaching and from the very good role models of courtesy and respect for others provided by all the staff.

14. With few exceptions, pupil's behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. There are no instances of exclusion. Pupils are polite and helpful to visitors and one boy in Year 6 was seen during an assembly to get up and offer his seat to a visiting student without prompting. It is evident from their behaviour that pupils are aware of the school rules displayed around the school. They enjoy achieving the rewards of stickers and look forward each week to the presentation of the trophy for the class awarded the most house points.

15. On the few occasions where behaviour is less than expected, pupils' chattering and fidgeting were observed to cause minor disruption, largely because an excessive part of the

lesson was spent by the teacher speaking to the whole class, and some got bored through inactivity.

16. Relationships are good. The school is a harmonious community in which adults and pupils respond to each other with warmth and concern. Pupils usually get on well with each other. There are many examples of praise and encouragement being used to promote positive behaviour. The school's policy for behaviour and dealing with bullying is at present in draft form. The recent staff changes and the introduction of differing methods results in some inconsistency and consequently some very occasional less than expected standards of behaviour amongst pupils. The same group of pupils that behave well for one member of staff could be seen to take advantage of another who was not fully conversant with the school behaviour policy. The school is aware of these inconsistencies and has plans to review the policy that should easily address this concern.

17. In addition to the jobs all pupils willingly perform around the school, older pupils are encouraged to develop their sense of responsibility by monitoring behaviour during assembly for example. They award a smiley face to children who they observe have behaved well and listened. They are conscientious in their duty and can be observed offering words of support and guidance to those pupils who are not trying their hardest to achieve this reward.

18. Attendance and punctuality at school are both very good. Since the last inspection the level of attendance has risen steadily. Pupils enjoy school and a significant number in each class regularly achieve 100 per cent attendance.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

19. All but one teacher has joined the school within the last two years and this makes direct comparison with the previous report's findings about teaching difficult. The induction arrangements for new staff have been successful and morale is high. Teachers feel well supported in school and are committed to raising standards. A positive feature that has supported improvement, alongside the effective programme of staff development, is the school's implementation of a teaching and learning policy that has raised expectations about what is to be taught and learnt. The next step is for the policy to be rigorously monitored by co-ordinators, and findings used to support improved performance in pupils' progress and the standards achieved. The culture for sharing the practice that enables the best teaching and learning in school is now set and the school is poised to continue to build on the effective strategies by drawing more people into the process of monitoring and evaluation.

20. Teaching quality observed during this inspection was good overall, with strengths leading to good achievement in Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6, especially in English and mathematics. Of the 53 lessons observed, 28 were satisfactory, 21 good and three very good or excellent. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen in the Foundation Stage, where teaching methods restricted the children's opportunities to show initiative, make choices and take responsibility for some of their own learning; this impeded their social skills development. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and leads to the youngest children in school making a steady start to their education. Good teaching is enabling those pupils with special educational needs to make good progress against their individual targets. Teaching of the highest attaining pupils is not always sufficiently challenging. Although their progress is boosted at the end of the junior phase and this has good impact, with earlier identification of their needs and better provision they could potentially achieve more. This is an area for improvement. Teaching is particularly successful in promoting positive working conditions; classes are happy, purposeful places. In some lessons however, not enough time is given for pupils to reflect on new learning and to consider how they might improve in the future. The school's use of assessment to inform

planning is a developing area that is supporting the effective target setting work that is having such a positive impact on quickening rates of progress and raising academic standards.

21. The good teaching overall is enabling willing and enthusiastic learners. Pupils work hard, concentrate well and become mature and sensible learners. Pupils enjoy their lessons and demonstrate that they can work independently and responsibly when required, though the opportunities to promote this are not consistent. Because lessons are profitable, younger pupils are building skills, knowledge and understanding at good rates and older ones are catching up well on their studies. In English and mathematics many are moving quickly to where their potential lies. Teachers prepare lessons well and choose interesting resources that stimulate the pupils' very good responses. For example, in a geography lesson in Year 6, the teacher explained very clearly how fold mountains are made. By demonstrating with corrugated paper pushed up against a white bath mat, how the earth mass shifts and folds back on itself when it is forced against harder material. In all lessons teachers promote subject-specific vocabulary well, though more attention could be paid to ensuring that pupils use the correct vocabulary when answering questions.

22. Throughout the school there has been beneficial impact on the achievements of pupils from the successful implementation of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. These enable pupils to become literate and numerate and for many older pupils to catch up on work missed or hurried due to staffing problems. Teachers make effective use of mental warm-up time to improve numeracy though occasionally this goes on for too long and eats up the time available for pupils to work independently. Literacy sessions typically begin with the sharing of text, and most teachers engage pupils' good working habits very early on by asking probing questions that seek to deepen pupils' thinking skills. It is usually the case that group activities are purposeful and productive times in which the majority of pupils get on well with their independent tasks. Plenary sessions were observed to be rather rushed in both numeracy and literacy sessions and only occasionally did teachers return to the objectives they had set to assess what learning gains had been made. The good practice in setting targets for individual pupils in literacy and numeracy is not yet a feature of lesson planning or on-going assessment. Marking has yet to refer to these targets and as such is an area for improvement.

23. Relationships in classes are very good. Teachers want to do their best for the pupils and vice-versa; this shows in the generally good outcomes. Most teachers hold clear expectations of what pupils are capable of, are reflective about their own practice in meeting needs and keen to make improvement. There is a very good team spirit amongst staff, who are positive about sharing ideas in the interest of giving the best to pupils. Classrooms are bright and stimulating places that include good quality displays of pupils' work that give good recognition to effort and achievement. Both young and older pupils are rightly proud of their achievements and are well motivated by the positive reward systems operating in classes. Most teachers have sound understanding of the needs of the range of pupils in their class but in planning there is insufficient reference to the actual levels pupils are working at that could usefully highlight what the next step should be to move up a level. This is especially relevant to the very highest achieving pupils, those with special gifts or talents who need tightly focused work to ensure they achieve rather than just miss the higher level they could achieve. In some of the lessons observed, the written lesson plans confused *learning objectives* with *teaching activities*, and some were very sketchy in the detail covered. In the better lessons, skilful teaching compensated for these shortcomings but this is one aspect that requires improvement to ensure consistently good practice from reception to Year 6.

24. Teachers assess and chart pupils' achievements at regular intervals and this is a good feature of practice. There is less recording of more immediate learning gains following lessons and this is one aspect that the school is aware it needs to improve. When talking to



inspectors, Year 6 pupils showed good levels of self-knowledge about what they were good at and where they needed to improve their work. The good practice in target setting and self-review has yet to be used to the full as part of on-going assessment.

25. Parents are increasingly supportive and want to play their part in helping pupils make the very best rates of progress possible and to help realise the individual targets set. Teachers generally make good use of homework to extend learning, though less so for providing extension work for the high achievers. The quality and thoroughness with which home-school reading diaries are maintained is creditable.

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

26. The quality and range of curricular experiences offered to pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 is good overall; it is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, but too few opportunities are given to the children to manage appropriate aspects of their own learning. This is a key issue for the school to address. The ethos of the school is fully inclusive and one in which all pupils are encouraged to succeed, though the needs of very higher attainers are not consistently met. The school meets its statutory requirements through the teaching of all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Policies are in place for all subjects and this represents a very significant improvement since the previous inspection when quite a few were missing. Policies and schemes of work have recently been reviewed and a programme for future reviews is in place. The previous inspection identified some imbalances in the time available to promote both depth and breadth of studying some subjects. These have largely been addressed; history and geography are taught in alternate blocks and the school has yet to ensure a sufficient emphasis on skills development. There is some concern about the withdrawal of pupils from lessons for additional language study and for extra reading practice with volunteer helpers. During the inspection this was occasionally observed to have an adverse impact on curricular continuity; teachers do try to minimise the disruption to lessons and pupils do not miss the same lesson or part of a lesson every week.

27. Planning is good at all levels and ensures that full coverage is given to subjects and that there is appropriate progression. Good attention is given to promoting pupils' personal and social development in both the infants and juniors. The school has just introduced circle times to aid pupils' self awareness, and this is a positive feature. Personal, social and health education, which includes sex and drugs education, is supported by a good scheme of work and provision is good. The strategies for developing literacy and numeracy skills are good; there are good examples of effective practice which is impacting on other areas of the curriculum. For example, the research skills of pupils particularly in Year 6 and Year 4 are very good. They know how to use the contents and index pages of books in order to find the information they require and are able to explore the Internet and CD-ROM to search for sources of information.

28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. The support given to pupils with statements is very good. Pupils regarded as gifted or talented have not yet been identified as a group and this requires attention so that the school can evaluate and meet their needs fully. The School Development Plan identifies this need and strategies are being discussed for both extension and enhancement. Learning support in the class room is well co-ordinated with class teachers and educational care officers working together effectively to ensure that pupils with specific difficulties are enabled to make the same good progress as their class-mates. In classes where there is no support, for example Year 1, the organisation of the class teacher is important in ensuring that pupils who are lower attainers have access to the curriculum. Where this is done well, different work-sheets and materials are provided; the teacher's time is organised so that they receive extra help.

Pupils who are higher attainers are also provided with more challenging tasks and materials in the lessons judged to be good or better. One lesson seen in Year 4 illustrated the care that had been taken by the teacher to provide a wide range of materials and task-sheets; all the pupils in the class, whatever their ability, had sufficient to stretch them. The teacher monitored each group and provided support where and when it was requested, giving pupils the opportunity to gain more independence in their learning. The response of the pupils was very positive and disappointment was expressed when things had to be packed away for the following lesson. The lesson plans used by most teachers clearly identifies the support needed for pupils with special educational needs and where support staff will be deployed but this is not consistently the case for those at the other end of the ability spectrum.

29. The curriculum is enriched by a variety of experiences provided in the school and extra curricular provision is good. A photographic display documents work done by pupils on the Tudors and Stuarts in which they were given an opportunity to dress as they might have if they had lived at that time. The display clearly illustrates the positive impact this had on pupils. Visits to places of worship in the Derby area which also enhances pupils' understanding of different faiths. At an assembly during the inspection, a member of the Sikh community came to talk to all the children about Diwali; this is part of the work being done by pupils in religious education lessons. Since the arrival of the new headteacher in September, the school has become involved, once more, in football and netball competitions. Pupils who wish to play a musical instrument have access to peripatetic music teaching; there is a school choir and computer club. Pupils also have 'Booster' classes provided after school to improve literacy and numeracy skills. The local area is one that has a rich historical past as the "Capital of Mercia", and pupils have had the opportunity to visit and use facilities available for supporting their history project at Repton Public School. The school is forging ahead with its strategies to interact with the community and this is an aspect that many parents have recognised as a significant improvement.

30. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The headteacher is taking a strong lead in improving the opportunities for reflection and contemplation, especially in assemblies. Some teachers are giving pupils more time to think about things discussed and some of the extended writing by juniors indicates that pupils do have this capability in their writing. For example, writing about the Marie Celeste and some of the recent events in America show well developed perceptions of the feelings of others. Some of the poetry seen is particularly sensitive. Each year the school has two 'productions'. Older pupils have a Carol Service at the Parish church of St Wystan, and younger pupils perform a traditional Nativity play for the school and parents. Both events are very well supported by parents and usefully enhance pupils' understanding of the Christian faith and in this way support their spiritual development.

31. Good provision is made for pupils' social and moral development. Pupils are reminded frequently of teachers' expectations with regard to behaviour and attitude to work and school. They are taught to take turns and share from an early age and awarded house points for good behaviour and caring. The teachers do a great deal to enhance self esteem. They praise pupils' efforts and draw attention to positive behaviour and good role models in texts studied during the literacy hour. A Year 2 class read a story which focused on feelings and were confident in their discussion about what they perceived to be good behaviour, kind behaviour and bad behaviour. Pupils at Repton primary school understand the difference between right and wrong. Year 6 pupils monitor behaviour during assembly and reward pupils who have paid attention; they also intervene when attention strays.

32. Pupils have a range of experiences associated with their own culture and that of others through their art and design, history, geography and religious education lessons particularly. The provision made for their cultural development is good. Pupils have a good sense of their own cultural heritage. The texts selected for the reading schemes include stories and characters from different cultures and they have a range of visits and visitors

which enhances their understanding and knowledge of various communities. Pupils' writing displayed around the school shows their appreciation of books and their understanding of a good range of cultures, for example the Aztecs, Romans and Egyptians. In religious education lessons it is anticipated that further opportunities will develop as pupils have greater access to the extra artefacts and visits which will come from the development of the religious education schemes of work that covers Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism as well as Christianity. Visits to local mosques and temples have already opened pupils' eyes to the multi-cultural world in which they live and the richness of such diversity.

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

33. Arrangements for ensuring that the school is a safe and supportive environment are satisfactory overall. Staff show a strong commitment to the care of pupils. Parents are confident that their children like coming to school and feel secure.

34. Since the previous inspection the school has been through a period of frequent change of leadership and staff. This has resulted in day-to-day procedures being adopted without due regard to the written policies which support actions taken. The school has identified the need to record all agreed practices into a staff handbook that is scheduled for completion next term. The current headteacher, upon appointment in September, undertook an audit of the school and identified areas needing immediate action. This has proved to be a sensible course to take, and she has achieved a great deal in a short space of time to ensure consistent practices, though some policies have not been written. Child protection procedures are satisfactory although the policy to support this does not contain clear guidance for staff and as such is scheduled for review. The health and safety policy remains in draft form. At present there is little governing body involvement in matters regarding health and safety. Until this term regular fire drills did not take place and some fire protection equipment and procedures are obsolete, although exits are clearly identified. First Aid procedures are good with all staff having recently been trained. A local education authority audit of health and safety arranged for later this term should aid the school in resolving many of these minor issues.

35. Staff are available at the beginning and end of the day for parents to discuss any immediate concerns regarding their child's development. Plans are in place for the next term, which include home visits to new entrants to the reception class to enable staff, parents and pupils to begin to build a constructive relationship at the earliest opportunity. Personal, social and health education, which includes sex education, bullying and drugs supported by a good scheme of work is taught regularly and provision is good.

36. The assessment and monitoring of pupils academic progress and personal development as they move through the school is greatly improved. This was seen as a weakness in the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Teachers' assessment of how well pupils would achieve in 2001 National Curriculum tests in May were way out of alignment with their actual performance. Staff have focused on this during recent meetings and an effective system is now in place for assessing progress and in using national curriculum levels more accurately. Practice is best in English and mathematics and this enables staff to set individual targets in literacy and numeracy that are aimed, successfully, at raising attainment. Pupils are involved in monitoring their own achievement by setting themselves targets to aim for. These are displayed on classroom walls and in some of their books. When pupils achieve them, they discuss and set new targets with staff. Targets are not yet set in science and this is a missed opportunity. Assessment systems in ICT are developing very well but are not yet fully in place in some subjects, for example history and geography.

37. The school has good systems to identify, assess and monitor pupils with special educational needs and parents are involved at all stages of the process. The subsequent support pupils receive to attain individual targets enables them to make satisfactory progress. The provision identified on statements of special need is in place; the statements are reviewed annually as required.

38. Procedures for promoting the good behaviour seen are effective. All staff and older pupils are involved in the awarding of stickers and house points. However, this is not always consistently applied and changes in staff have resulted in some confusion. The need to review the behaviour management policy has already been identified by the school. A positive feature is the award made by the County for two years running for the school's anti-bullying work.

39. Monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. A computerised system of registration has recently been introduced; this results in some duplication of work for administration staff. As staff become fully conversant with the system and exactly what information the school requires to monitor attendance effectively, this should be addressed.

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

40. Since the last inspection in 1999, when this aspect was judged to be satisfactory, with some concerns, the school has been through a period of significant change. The partnership with parents has been a major priority for the new headteacher who has already restored much lost confidence. The quality of communication with parents is good and a growing number of parents are coming into school to play a direct role in its life and development.

41. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents expressed confidence in their growing partnership with the school to help support pupils' learning. They are supportive of its aims and values and appreciate the improvements in all areas since the appointment of the new headteacher. This indication of levels of support was shown to have increased further when, some months afterwards, a repeat questionnaire was sent to parents by the governing body. Appropriate emphasis has been placed by the school on forging effective links with parents. These links are well forged, are proving effective and are benefiting the pupils' education.

42. Parents appreciate the welcoming atmosphere and approachability of staff. They feel confident that any concerns they have regarding their child's welfare or progress are listened to and acted upon. Parents and friends assist the school with a variety of tasks, from listening to children read, accompanying the weekly walk to the swimming pool to designing and painting the murals on the wall in the library, which help make a colourful and inviting environment. An active parents 'association' supports the school by raising substantial sums of money for the direct benefit of the pupils.

43. Written communications with parents include a helpful, friendly, newsletter each month, which keeps parents informed of events and achievements. The Governors Annual Report to parents is yet to be produced. Concern was expressed during the pre-inspection meeting with parents, about the lack of information available about the standards pupils achieve when compared with other schools. The inspection team endorses this comment as in the past parents have not had access to data that would enable them to judge for themselves the standards of achievement. Whilst standard assessment test results are available to parents, national comparative results are not given with them, as required. The school prospectus has recently been rewritten to ensure parents receive all the information they are entitled, by law, to know. This is now very informative and of high quality. Some omissions following printing have since been identified and an addendum sheet is to be issued. Pupils' end of year progress reports are to be changed in format this year. For example, not all subject reports last year told parents where their children's strengths and weaknesses were, or whether their progress was sufficient. There was inconsistent use of target sharing. The headteacher is aware of these shortcomings and already has planned a much improved format for the reports to be issued next Summer.

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

44. When the school was last inspected in 1999, serious weaknesses were reported in the relationships between headteacher and staff. The report also flagged up that insufficient progress had been made in responding to the issues raised by the earlier 1996 inspection, particularly in respect of raising academic standards and management and governance aspects. Since that time there has been a series of acting headteachers and as such it is difficult to chart specific progress made over the last two years. What is possible to evaluate however, is the dramatic improvement in relationships, morale and confidence at all levels since the appointment of the new headteacher this September. She has set out a clear vision for taking the school forward and has worked extremely hard in a short space of time to improve significantly the processes that are so important to support school improvement. For example, policy formulation, curricular planning, the tracking of pupils' progress and target setting and performance management have all been improved.

45. All staff and governors are working with her, and there is a united determination to press ahead with confidence by implementing the well-conceived school development plan. The role of co-ordinators is highlighted in the plan as a key priority for improvement. Job descriptions have been written and articulate the management aspects of the posts quite clearly. Each co-ordinator has put together an action plan for their subject and there is confidence to move forward quickly on these. Budgets are not yet devolved to co-ordinators; this is scheduled to happen once the school returns to Community status and under the local education authority's control early next year. The role of co-ordinator is not yet fully effective and as such it is still a key issue. Parents have growing confidence in the school's abilities to provide a good rounded education for their children.

46. The leadership and management of the headteacher is very good. There is a very positive team spirit emerging with everyone enthusiastic for the challenges and opportunities

that lie ahead. The school is currently without a deputy headteacher; an appointment is scheduled to be made this term. Meanwhile other staff have taken on enhanced management roles and the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator who has been acting as deputy headteacher has supported the strategic management of the school very effectively. Other senior managers are slowly being drawn into the process of management, though by necessity the headteacher has had to forge ahead on some things, for example monitoring and evaluation, before training has been given to others to be effective in this role. The intensive support provided by literacy and numeracy consultants from the local education authority has been very beneficial in monitoring and support work.

47. Governors too have re-appraised their roles and each governor is linked to a subject to enable closer monitoring of the curriculum. Many policies have been considered and approved, though some have yet to be fully ratified. A useful committee structure has been set up to help organise governors' work but committees have yet to have terms of reference set down. Governors are ensuring that all legal requirements are met and have plans to present their work so far this year in a revised annual report to parents in the Spring. The chair has worked in partnership with the headteacher to look at benchmark information to check how well the standards in school compare with other schools, and in so doing can ensure that the principles of best value are applied effectively in decision-making. The governors are appropriately involved in shaping the direction of the school and are well placed to support the headteacher in strategic management.

48. The school has undertaken a comprehensive audit of the quality of educational provision and has established effective strategies for making improvements. For example, all pupils have been assessed in English and mathematics and work planned to ensure that everyone is working at an appropriate level. Work sampled by inspectors demonstrates that under-achievement is becoming a thing of the past, though there is still more scope for the very high attaining pupils to be set consistently challenging work. The provision made for those pupils with special educational needs is good and the headteacher, as co-ordinator, is managing provision effectively. The needs of the very able, those with special gifts and talents have not yet been identified as a group and this is an area that the school has identified for improvement for the future. The inspection team have raised it as an issue that requires more immediate attention.

49. Financial planning is efficient. There are clear links between costs, and the planned priorities for improvement in the school's development plan. The school targets its resources effectively and uses specific grants to increase the opportunities for pupils to achieve with growing success. For example, additional literacy strategies in lower junior classes are helping accelerate pupils' literacy skills development, booster classes in Year 5 and 6 are having tangible impact on helping pupils move forward and is improving their performance and the work being done to assist those pupils with special educational needs to learn effectively is well targeted. Financial control in school is secure as reflected in the very recent auditor's report. The headteacher inherited a budget overspend of around £20,000 but with prudent planning has trimmed this back and has forecast a slight carry forward of around £13,000 at the end of this financial year. This is reasonable in the circumstances as a higher than expected amount of money has needed to be spent on resources, particularly books which were in very short supply. The headteacher and governors are committed to raising the quality of education for pupils currently at the school, whilst also mindful of the need to build up a contingency for future improvements.

50. The school has come through a period of uncertainty, but there are now clear indicators that it is on a forward roll. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are all now at least satisfactory. Standards are rising as shown by 2001 National Curriculum tests and the findings of this inspection. The income per pupil is above average but because the

school is providing a rapidly improving education for all pupils, it is judged to give satisfactory value for money. The team is of the view that the school is well on track to realise its goals, and achieve the demanding targets set for 2002.

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

51. In their work to further raise standards and improve the quality of education at the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve further the standards pupils attain in English, mathematics and science particularly high attaining pupils by:
  - building on the effective strategies in place;
  - promoting more widely opportunities for pupils to work independently and discover things for themselves;
  - ensuring that consistent use is made of pupil's individual targets in on-going assessment, including marking of work, and they are referred to in the end of year reports to parents;
  - ensuring that lessons enable pupils to reflect on new learning and take stock of the next steps in learning;
  - ensuring that all teachers pay sufficient attention to setting clear learning objectives in lesson planning for the range of pupils they teach;
  - evaluating how well different pupils achieve in their lessons and using this information consistently to set suitably challenging future work, especially for high attaining pupils.

and more specifically –

In English by:

- working to improve pupils pencil grip and control so that writing is legible and better presented;
- practising spellings more frequently and insisting on accuracy in recorded work;
- extending opportunities for promoting literacy across the curriculum;
- widening opportunities for pupils to present information orally, to discuss, voice opinions and considered arguments.

In mathematics by:

- widening the opportunities for pupils to tackle and solve problems for themselves.

In science by:

- setting targets for each pupil to assist the tracking of progress over time.
- (Paragraphs: 1, 6, 8, 10, 20, 22-24, 36, 43, 68, 70, 76, 81-83, 85, 86, 89)

- (2) Extend the role of co-ordinators by:
- setting out a plan that clearly shows what monitoring is to take place and what it is expected to achieve;
  - giving time and opportunity for subject co-ordinators to observe lessons being taught in the subjects they lead on so that they have better insights into planning future improvements;
  - promoting more widely features of the best teaching and learning to be found in school.
- (Paragraphs: 19, 45, 46, 90, 98, 103, 108, 114, 120)
- (3) Identify those in school who are very able, have special gifts and or particular talents by:
- establishing a criteria for assessing talents and gifts and identifying those who comply;
  - formulating a policy that sets out how their needs will be consistently met;
  - monitoring the progress that these pupils make over time.
- (Paragraphs: 10, 20, 28, 48, 86, 87)
- (4) Ensuring that the Foundation Stage builds on the strengths identified in the past and focuses on providing learning opportunities for the children to develop independence, initiative and manage appropriate aspects of their own learning.
- (Paragraphs: 5, 56, 59, 65, 67)

Minor issues for inclusion in the governor's action plan are to:

- continue to establish and ratify policies to guide practice in all required aspects of educational provision;
  - review the organisation of history and geography to ensure that pupils receive sufficient opportunity to develop their growing research and enquiry skills to the highest level possible.
- (Paragraphs: 34, 47, 102, 104)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	2	21	28	1	0	0
Percentage	2	4	40	52	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

### 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)	183
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	6

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	25

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.3

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	11	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	19
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	27	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (87)	90 (91)	100 (87)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	18
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	25	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (87)	83 (87)	97 (65)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	11	19	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	8	10
	Girls	18	16	16
	Total	29	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (77)	80 (77)	93 (87)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	4
	Girls	15	11	8
	Total	21	18	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (70)	60 (73)	40 (80)
	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	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	183
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	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)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.4
Average class size	26.7

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	126

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	409 938
Total expenditure	421 079
Expenditure per pupil	2 075
Balance brought forward from previous year	(11 007)
Balance carried forward to next year	(22 148)

*Figures in parentheses indicate negative values*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	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	183
Number of questionnaires returned	67

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	42	7	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	37	13	7	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	46	10	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	48	19	4	4
The teaching is good.	31	45	13	6	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	13	40	33	10	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	36	43	12	7	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	36	45	12	4	3
The school works closely with parents.	19	37	27	12	19
The school is well led and managed.	9	33	16	22	19
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	18	64	7	3	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	34	30	6	7

### Other issues raised by parents

Twenty parents took the opportunity to write additional comments to the inspection team. All expanded on the points covered above. Most parents made it clear that their comments were based on the past year; most have confidence in the new headteacher to bring stability to staffing and take the school forward. Another questionnaire sent to parents by governors 8 weeks after the one above was issued showed that the majority of parents now hold positive views about the quality of education provided.

## **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**

52. The 1999 inspection report indicated that the school's provision for children under the age of five was a considerable strength. The quality of teaching and learning was very good and the children made good progress because the curriculum was well planned to meet their needs. From an above average standard on entry the children attained above average levels of skills and knowledge by the time they were five years old.

53. There have been major changes to the provision for children of this age during the last two years. Firstly, the school has introduced a good planning system to meet the needs of children in the Foundation Stage. This planning is carefully tailored to the development of skills and knowledge in the six early learning goals that form the basis of the revised curriculum. Secondly, children as young as four-years-old are now admitted full time to the *Acorns Unit*, where children in the Foundation Stage are taught. This means that the children now start school with less advanced skills than before, though there is a wide range of ability within the present group. Thirdly, both members of staff working in the unit joined the school at the start of this term. Thus, provision for the youngest children in the school has sustained some of the strengths identified in 1999, but the school acknowledges that there are aspects for development as new systems bed in and staff assume fully their roles.

54. During the inspection, there were 16 boys and 10 girls in the unit that doubles as the reception year in school. When children start in the unit, their level of skills and knowledge is about average, though there is a full range of abilities, including some able children and some with special educational needs. The baseline assessment carried out in the first few weeks in the unit shows the spread of ability quite clearly.

55. The *Acorns Unit* is housed in a pleasant building that is enhanced by some bright displays, including some by the children themselves. Outside, there is ample space for outdoor activities, including a play house and area marked out for counting and other games. There is a satisfactory level of resourcing, though school managers identify the need for more large outdoor climbing apparatus.

56. In all, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. One lesson observed was judged to be of unsatisfactory teaching quality. At such times, particularly in communication, language and literacy, *subjects* are taught formally as separate entities and opportunities to develop the full range of knowledge and skills are missed. Similarly, in this *subject* and in mathematical development, the work is often based on teacher led activities that involve the children listening for long periods. Some of the youngest children find concentration difficult at times such as these. Whilst planning quality is good and includes opportunities for children to investigate, experiment and discuss their experiences and to grow creatively, personally and socially, in practice activities are not always as well matched to children's needs as they could be.

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

57. When children start school, they require reassurance and support to enable them to take advantage of all the opportunities provided for them. Within a few weeks, they become more confident and hold meaningful conversations with each other and with adults. Thus, the children make satisfactory progress from an average starting level in terms of personal, social and emotional development. The staff of the unit give friendly support to the children to help them settle and build positive relationships. In some activities, children are encouraged

to show independence in their work, though the formal teaching style in some work restricts the progress made by children in showing initiative and managing appropriate aspects of their own learning. This is restricting the rate at which some of the children could develop their independent learning skills. The children learn to care for each other and the things they handle, and know the difference between right and wrong. The quality of teaching of this aspect is satisfactory and most children will achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year, though a few could realistically be achieving above the level expected.

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

58. The work in communication, language and literacy is dovetailed into the early stages of the school's literacy strategy. During the inspection, most of the work was covered in quite formal lessons that took the form of literacy sessions, as in the main part of school. The starting points for the work are rooted in the stepping stones that form the basis of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. When they start school, the children have average skills and knowledge in this sphere and react well to favourite stories, rhymes and songs. They are able to show preferences when making choices and some children recognise their names and other simple words. One or two write letters with some effort, though many make a series of straight line marks to represent what they are copying.

59. The teaching, although rather too didactic, is satisfactory overall and the children learn to speak more confidently, with many using a wider vocabulary than when they started in school. They listen with interest to stories and follow the story line in their big books, such as *Goldilocks and the three bears*. Sometimes, the children do not have enough opportunity to talk about the things they are working on and because they are expected to listen for long periods, some show increasing signs of restlessness as the lesson unfolds. More able children are beginning to use language to express their thoughts and ideas and they write with more of a flourish. Middle attaining children show satisfactory progress in the development of writing skills, though the less able still struggle with this. The development of early reading skills is sound. The more able recognise a wider range of words and are beginning to make sense of simple sentences. The other children require support in such work and one or two do not recognise many words or letters at all.

60. Overall, the children make satisfactory progress and most will achieve the early learning goals by the time they finish in the reception class.

### **Mathematical development**

61. Mathematical development is another of the early learning goals that is taught in mostly formal ways. Whilst the work is planned to provide appropriate experiences for children in different ability groups, in practice, the organisation of the work and the groups means that the staff cannot always be sure that the children are making the best possible progress. Basic knowledge and skills are taught satisfactorily and the children make the expected progress from their average level at the start of the school year.

62. The children are interested in numbers and counting and many chant number rhymes with accuracy and glee. The more able children are beginning to add small quantities and they show confidence counting forwards and backwards within 20. Middle ability children work more confidently within ten and the lower attainers are gaining confidence with numbers to five. A couple of children still have difficulty with one and two. Overall, the children are currently working at the middle level of the stepping stones for mathematical development and are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

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

63. When they start school, children have the expected knowledge and skill level in this aspect of learning. Because teaching is satisfactory, they make sound progress and by the end of their year in the unit, most children will attain the early learning goals in most aspects. The exception concerns familiarity with early skills in ICT. As yet, the children have had little experience using computers. There is a computer in the classroom but this was not used during the inspection. It is equipped to run the basic software suitable for young children, although it is not connected to a printer. The children have not really begun to find out about the use of ICT to support their learning and they do not currently make use of the ICT suite in the main building. The children have a range of experiences to build knowledge about living things, familiar places and people and the way that things work. During the inspection, the children took a walk around the school grounds and talked happily and confidently about such things as the colour of leaves, the signs and sightings of animals and the way that autumn brings change. The children have a growing sense of the past and the area around school and their homes. They know where things are stored in the classroom and the routes taken to other parts of the school.

## **Physical development**

64. No lessons in physical development were observed during the inspection but other evidence points to satisfactory teaching and learning in this early learning goal. Apart from the provision of large outdoor climbing apparatus, the school has the necessary resources to enable the children to build skills of movement and body control satisfactorily. The children move confidently about the playground, they form impressive crocodiles as they cross the main playground and they sit in carefully gauged rows and circles in lessons and assemblies. They are aware of the space around them and they give room for others to manoeuvre. As they play, they run, skip and move in other ways and although accidents happen, they are infrequent and there are good levels of safe movement on the whole. In class, the children handle small tools and writing implements soundly. The more able become practised users of such implements and their writing, drawing and painting shows improved attention to detail. Middle ability children develop their skills soundly to copy simple text, paint recognisable images and cut paper with reasonable precision. The less able require strong adult intervention to achieve at such levels. By the end of their year in the reception class, most children will achieve the early learning goals for physical development because they are making satisfactory progress from their broadly average starting point.

## **Creative development**

65. Opportunities to develop pupils' creative skills could be greater. Where the work focuses on creative development, as it does twice weekly on the overall plan to provide for the six early learning goals, the children build skills and knowledge satisfactorily. Thus, in their art and design, singing and play activities, the children explore colour, shape, sound, music and dance and their imaginations are tapped successfully. Teaching is satisfactory at such times. In other sessions, opportunities for creative development are missed. The formality of some lessons restricts the potential to use creative activities as the vehicle to build say speaking and listening skills or the children's knowledge of counting. More able children are capable of taking advantage of whatever opportunities are provided for their creative development and generally show imagination and some flair in their work. Middle and lower ability children do not show the same confidence and they require the broader opportunities to develop creatively that can be provided by more integration in the curriculum. Overall, most will attain the level expected by the early learning goals.



66. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is in a period of transition for several reasons. Since September, a sound start has been made to the management and development of the learning programme for these children.

67. Senior managers recognise that there are a number of aspects of provision that require enhancement and are determined to make the changes. Because of the work that remains for completion, provision for children in the Foundation stage is the fourth key issue of the present inspection. There are positive signs that the school will deal effectively with the necessary improvements.

## **ENGLISH**

68. English has shown good improvement since the school was found to have serious weaknesses. Significant investment in book and reading scheme resources this term are already having a very beneficial impact on standards, particularly those of boys. The new headteacher has made quantum leaps forward in improving assessment practices, and in establishing a rigorous system to track and target pupils raised performance in literacy in all year groups. The school needs to continue to build on the effective strategies in place and to evaluate how well different pupils achieve in their lessons and use this information consistently to set suitably challenging future work, especially for high attaining pupils.

69. The results of the National Curriculum tests for pupils in 2001 showed that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level 4, and the higher level 5 was well above the national average. When compared with similar schools pupils' performance was above average. There has been an overall improvement in results in the past two years with the performance of eleven-year-old pupils improving by a grade. In the tests for seven-year-olds, pupils at Repton primary school achieved average standards in reading and well above the national average in writing.

70. The teachers' effective planning for Literacy hours and the supported work done in guided reading and writing lessons is impacting positively on the results which pupils are achieving. The integration into other subject areas of literacy strategies is consolidating work done in literacy lessons. The school also makes provision for 'Booster' classes, withdraws pupils for additional language support, additional literacy lessons, all of which are having an impact on pupils' skills in speaking, reading and writing. Some teachers specifically identify pupils with learning difficulties and cater for their specific needs in their lesson preparation and delivery. Some teachers plan specifically for high attaining pupils and set work to tax them. This good practice is not yet consistent in all classes and the very best practice has yet to be shared. The inconsistency in providing the challenge that high attaining pupils require is dampening down the progress they make over time and is a refinement in English that the school is conscious it needs to make.

71. Standards during the inspection were judged to be above the national average. Attainment in speaking and listening is above the national average. Pupils talk confidently and listen attentively in whole class and group work situations. During a whole school assembly pupils were able to answer questions asked by the visitor, a Sikh telling them about Diwali, and listened carefully throughout the talk. In classes all pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 are made aware of turn-taking and listening to others so that when they are in their own groups polite discussion is the norm. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are able to talk about what they enjoy in their reading and relate features from their reading coherently. Some pupils speak quietly and have identified this as a personal target for improvement. Almost all pupils listen carefully to instructions from the adults either teaching or supporting their learning and respond appropriately.

72. Attainment in reading is above the national average for pupils from Years 3 to 6, and average for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils read fluently and show good understanding of what they read. Pupils make good progress through the reading schemes and supplementary texts available. The resources for reading are much improved since the new headteacher's appointment, with the library already being refurbished and new books bought. There remains the need for pupils to have specific teaching to ensure they are conversant with the Dewey method of organisation. In discussion with inspectors, older pupils shared their enjoyment of the new library and expressed how good it was to be the first person to use a new book. Younger pupils are developing their phonetic skills and using these to help them build words. One higher attaining pupil in Year 6 was reading a text which included several complex words; these were read with some confidence after using the strategies learned in her earlier years, words such as 'anthropological' posing no difficulty. Pupils are able to talk about the variety of books they had read and preferred, they are able to discuss how they choose books for reading for pleasure and compare some of the stories read with subsequent films. Two pupils had been to see the 'Harry Potter' film and compared the characters as they had imagined them with those portrayed in the film, one Year 2 pupil expressed the view that reading was better 'because you could use your imagination more'. Pupils at an early age are taught about title pages, authors, index and content pages so by the time they are in Year 2 they are confident and not only know what a contents page and an index is but are also able to use both with confidence to access information. By the time they are in Year 4, they have extended these skills to become confident users of the Internet and various CD-ROM; pupils are able to search for topics and subjects employing a variety of methods. In a Year 4 history lesson, these skills were very well demonstrated; the teacher had set a variety of tasks for all the abilities in the class to which pupils responded enthusiastically. By the end of the lesson all pupils were able to find out several facts about their particular subject, using text books and the computer.

73. Attainment in writing is above the national average. Work seen in pupils' books shows improvement over time with pupils gaining increasing control over their writing. By the time pupils are eleven, most are writing legibly and in joined handwriting in ink. Some pupils experience difficulty in making the change from printing to joined handwriting and this is seen by the headteacher, who is the co-ordinator for English, as a priority for improvement. At present there is no systematic method used to teach handwriting and this needs to be addressed as pencil control and grip are both weaknesses lower down the school. By the time pupils are eleven they are able to write for a variety of purposes; they make notes, write reports, poetry and narrative, both creative and factual. In a Year 3 class, pupils are constructing a newspaper front page for history; in Year 4 they have written poetry in the style of Michael Rosen, a poet being studied in the literacy lessons. A wall display in the reading scheme area illustrates clearly the progression, both in terms of content and handwriting skills, from simple writing in Year 1 to sophisticated and imaginative writing in Year 6. Accuracy in spelling is an area where pupils have yet to develop their skills fully. Teachers' marking is informative in identifying errors and how to correct them and also in setting targets for pupils. Key words are now being taught and common spelling errors highlighted.

74. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class by the learning support assistants and education care officers. A good example was seen in a Year 5 class, where pupils were working on a play script. The pupils, with help and encouragement, were able to write the beginning of their script paying attention to the conventions that had been taught recently. Pupils are also withdrawn from lessons for extra help in reading and writing this does have a disruptive effect on some lessons, for example physical education and religious education. Pupils do however, make good progress in literacy as a consequence of the additional support.

75. The links made by teachers across curriculum areas is enhancing the opportunities for pupils to vary their writing tasks, reference is always made to what they might have learned in literacy lessons. The guided writing times, which supplement the literacy lessons has begun to have an impact on pupils' skills, the introduction of writing frames, in science and history for example, helps pupils build on a structured approach to writing.

76. Teaching in English is good overall with some very good features that lead to pupils making good progress in all years. Teachers are well prepared for lessons; lesson planning is detailed and often identifies strategies which cater for the variety of abilities in the class. Their knowledge and understanding of the subject is good, as is their teaching of basic skills. Expectations are high and pupils are encouraged to set their own targets for improvement in their books, in addition to those displayed in classrooms. The level descriptors for the National Curriculum tests are displayed for older pupils and referred to by teachers where pupils are almost ready to make the step from one attainment level to the next. Marking is thorough and detailed with guidance for improvement written for older pupils. Teachers are able to use the data collected on pupils' attainment to set targets and also plan lessons. Teaching is effective and enthusiastic in most lessons seen. In one lesson seen pupils were given the opportunity to work independently and responded enthusiastically. In some lessons this is not the case; pupils are able to use their skills and initiative but are not always given sufficient time to develop them to the full. In these lessons a little less whole class work and more time to work in groups or individually needs to be developed. Most teachers use the ICT suite or their class computers to support their teaching of English and to improve literacy skills. Several examples of pupils' work which had been word processed were on display, some basic desk top publishing was seen in the 'Wanted Posters' and newspaper front pages produced.

77. The best lessons seen had a brisk pace and a variety of tasks to interest pupils; teachers used their time effectively to monitor work in progress and to ensure that pupils were working productively. Guidance, encouragement and praise for work and effort help to lift pupils' self esteem and confidence. Pupils' attitudes to English lessons are invariably very good. The plenary sessions are used effectively for pupils to evaluate both what they have learned and also the work of their peers. Pupils tell the teachers what they have learned and exhibit well developed critical skills in commenting on their class mates progress too.

78. The leadership and management of English is very good. Under the guidance of the headteacher, teachers' assessments are now more accurately in line with the national levels for English. A portfolio of work has been collated for standardising purposes. In her role as co-ordinator the headteacher monitors teaching by observation and the collection of planners and pupils' books. A cohesive scheme of work is in place and the shared commitment to improvement is tangible. The headteacher's leadership ensures the clear educational direction of the subject. The changes seen in pupils' books and in teachers' comments is testament to the effectiveness of her management of the subject and the way in which staff have adopted the lesson planning and evaluation now in place. Pupils were tested in English two weeks after the headteacher took up her post in order to establish clear target setting for staff and pupils and the data analysis already carried out has impacted on the teaching of English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

79. When inspectors reported in 1999, they judged that standards in mathematics, although broadly average, were not high enough and that pupils made unsatisfactory progress. Furthermore, they indicated that there was some unsatisfactory teaching, especially in junior classes. Some relative strengths were identified, notably the satisfactory

start made to the school's numeracy strategy and the appropriate cross-curricular links that saw mathematics skills and knowledge promoted soundly in other subjects.

80. Over the years from 1998 to 2001, standards in the National Curriculum tests have see-sawed. In even years they have been similar to the levels found in most primary schools and in the odd years they have been better than usually found. Thus, in 2001, Year 6 pupils achieved above average standards in comparison with all schools and satisfactory ones in comparison with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. Results in 2002 for the current Year 6 are likely to be above average once again and the Year 2 pupils are equally likely to achieve at above average levels. The work seen in lessons and found in pupils' books confirms the steady rise in standards in school.

81. In general, there have been no differences in the attainment of boys and girls in the mathematics National Curriculum tests over recent years. In lessons, inspectors saw no great differences in the interest and motivation of boys and girls and the progress of both was good. This also applies to the different ability groups. For the future, more improvement to standards in mathematics will arise from greater and more consistent planning for specific ability groups. In most lesson plans examined and sessions observed during the week of inspection, the work provided was similar for all pupils. Whilst the quality of support provided by teachers and support staff enables pupils to make good progress overall, teachers cannot be certain that progress is at best levels because the expectations of what will be learned by each ability group are not always clear enough.

82. The quality of teaching of mathematics is good in infant and junior classes. Pupils are well managed, basic skills are taught effectively, teachers have good subject knowledge and the pace of work is well judged. Support staff teach their pupils well and homework is used wisely and successfully to promote increased knowledge and understanding. Some marking in books could be more helpful in identifying ways to improve the work, though very good examples of such developmental marking is to be found in Year 6 books. In some lessons, teachers took too much time to explain and provide information and this dampened down the opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves and to reflect fully on new learning.

83. Because mathematics, including basic numeracy, is taught well, pupils build skills and knowledge thoroughly. The pupils work productively and develop into mature and sensible learners. Their own knowledge of their learning would be enhanced by more frequent opportunities to evaluate the progress made in lessons, especially towards the end of the session.

84. The curriculum for mathematics is broad and well balanced, with proper emphasis on the development of the basic skills and knowledge of numeracy. The school's strategy for numeracy is good, and like the work to boost standards in junior classes, is having a good effect on standards. The coverage of each strand of mathematics is thorough and ICT is used well to practice and apply the knowledge and skills learned in mathematics lessons.

85. The temporary arrangements for the management of mathematics are working well whilst the school advertises for a person to lead on mathematics. The subject has shown good improvement over the years. Effective support has been given by the local education authority's numeracy consultant. The process of target setting set up this term is bedding in well. The school's overall targets for attainment in mathematics are sensible and suitable and have been achieved most years. Work to broaden such target setting into a programme for setting clear learning objectives for individuals and groups of pupils is moving ahead. The good assessment procedures in mathematics assists the evaluation of progress towards these objectives. However, the filtering of more general targets into specific tasks for different ability groups, the sharing and review of targets with pupils in lessons and the use of marking

to flag how well the targets are being achieved need coordinating more effectively. School managers have good determination to improve mathematics and all staff share this commitment. Therefore, the prospects for continuing improvement are good.

## SCIENCE

86. The result of the 2001 National Curriculum test for pupils aged eleven confirms that the trend of improvement over the last three years, since the previous inspection, is continuing satisfactorily. They show a small rise overall compared with last year, with more pupils attaining the higher level 5 this year. The results are average when compared to all other schools. This confirms a picture of broadly average attainment based upon the standards of work seen during the inspection. The performance of boys and girls is similar. Standards at the end of Year 2 are at the level expected for pupils of this age. Pupils make steady progress over their time at school. The school is aware that because of its emphasis on English and mathematics, the drive to raise standards has not been so great in science. The new co-ordinator is very aware of where improvement lies and is ready to lead the subject with confidence so that standards can lift in the near future. The system of target setting in English and mathematics has not yet transferred to science and this is a missed opportunity to support advancement, particularly for high attaining pupils.

87. Pupils know and understand the principles involved in carrying out fair testing. Evidence of this was seen in a range of Year 6 investigations including researching into suitable surfaces for skateboards, and answering the questions: *“Does water affect weight?”* and *“What type of paper hits the floor first?”* They record their findings in table forms, or on occasion as graphs produced using ICT. In a number of lessons seen in the juniors during the inspection pupils were successfully using fair testing as part of their science investigations. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they are applying scientific principles with confidence; they have an understanding of planning, and of the need to be consistent in their application of variables. Their practical skills are growing alongside their knowledge and understanding and their progress is developing at an average and occasionally more promising rate, especially for the more able pupils. Progress is also enhanced by the use of mixed ability groups for some of the investigational activities, though too often planning does not focus on the specific learning needs of the potentially high flying scientists.

88. Attainment of pupils aged seven was found to be about average on the basis of inspection evidence, although a small proportion is clearly more advanced. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of a number of issues relating to the topic *Health and Growth*, including the importance of diet and exercise. They can label a diagram with the correct location of the main body parts and organs. Pupils record what they have learned about the body in a booklet devoting a page to each part with diagrams, and making good use of their literacy skills by incorporating a glossary and an index. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils demonstrated confidently their knowledge of materials and could identify the differences between items that are natural and those that are man-made. They were enthusiastic to find out things and their understanding moved forward in the lesson at a good pace. They responded in a confident and articulate manner to the teacher's probing questions, though there were missed opportunities for them to use the correct vocabulary that the teacher had tried to reinforce.

89. The science curriculum contains all the required elements of the National Curriculum and this is evident in the newly developed planning system. The four strands of science are all covered over the course of the year, however during the week of inspection it was mostly investigative work observed. The teaching of science is generally satisfactory in both infant and junior classes, and at times it is good. Features of the teaching includes effective pupil management, high expectations of their response and performance to the challenging tasks set for them, and teachers' confidence in their own knowledge of the subject. There is however, inconsistent practice in setting clear learning objectives in lesson planning for the range of pupils they teach. Good teaching was observed to compensate for this shortcoming. Although there are planned assessments at the end of topics, there is little on-going evaluation of how well different pupils achieve in their lessons and teachers are not yet using their observations consistently to set suitably challenging future work, especially for high attaining pupils. These are areas for improvement. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective assistance from the support staff and make steady progress. The use of ICT is not yet well established in supporting the development of science although there is evidence of a small amount of it in some pupils' work.

90. Most pupils enjoy science, and this is evident from the positive attitudes they show in lessons. They are interested, can work independently or co-operatively in groups, and show good levels of concentration. Good behaviour is seen in most classes, and where pupils do not focus well they do not make the same progress as the others in the class. The new co-ordinator was appointed at the start of this new school year in September and has made strenuous efforts in improving the management of science, through revised planning, a reviewed policy, and the development of an action plan. Her considerable experience is used to provide support for colleagues in all areas of the school. She is currently monitoring the quality of planning, and has plans to extend her monitoring role to ensure that standards are raised further in line with her expectations.

## **ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

91. During the inspection, more lessons and other evidence were available for design and technology than art and design. This is because of the cycle of curriculum planning which sees the alternation of the two subjects through the year. Design and technology was the current theme in most classes during the inspection.

92. In the 1999 report, standards in the two subjects were found to be compromised by erratic coverage of the curriculum, lack of skill development and inconsistent quality of education. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in the lessons seen though there were too many gaps in pupils' experiences for them to make appropriate progress. The management of the two subjects was adequate at best, but had several significant shortcomings.

93. This has all changed. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good and standards have risen to satisfactory levels for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This is due to effective subject management with a clear understanding of what has to be achieved in order to bring improvement. The educational direction for the subjects is good and all staff work well to ensure that pupils have the necessary range of experiences in both subjects. The high profile now given to these subjects is very evident around school; the display area title that says, "design and technology" for example, has been done by pupils with each letter made from a different material and very intricate pattern work applied. The school is not yet identifying potentially gifted artists and this is a missed opportunity to develop the talents of a few pupils who clearly have significant creative ability.

94. Skills and knowledge are built successfully. Some outstanding work on book design has been achieved by eleven-year-olds that combined planning, designing, making, artwork and a literacy content. Hats on display in the foyer show the originality and flair that individuals are putting into their unique designs. In a Year 6 lesson where pupils were planning the design of cakes to be given as gifts, the focus on matching the design to the interests of the recipient was the key element of the work. The pupils produced detailed designs for their cakes and the frill to wrap round them. These were based on an analysis of the recipient's likes and dislikes. There were as many different designs, each of good quality, as there were pupils in the class. Future lessons for this class involve the making of the cakes and the design and manufacture of attractive packaging to protect and *sell* the product. The pupils already had many ideas for their cake cartons and were researching methods to use in the manufacturing process. Similarly, the pupils are to transfer their designs for cake frills to the computer in order to print out a professional product. The pupils were keen, well behaved and worked productively in this lesson as they built skills and knowledge effectively.

95. The displays of work around the school and examples of products and designs created this year and last show that the development of skills is consistent from class to class. There is much attractive artwork on display, with one such display in the hall arranged to show how pupils improve their techniques, skills and knowledge in still life work from reception to Year 6 in still life work.

96. The curriculum is broad and well balanced for both subjects. The focus on the design and evaluate stages of the work is held in good balance with the practical activity of producing the image or product. There are good links with ICT in both art and design and design and technology and this enhances pupils' knowledge and skills well in all three subjects. There could be rather more three-dimensional work in art and design and the use of sketchbooks to record attainment and progress in drawing skills will be of help in assessing how well pupils are doing, once introduced later this year.

97. Pupils work hard in their lessons and enjoyment and enthusiasm are both evident. The teaching of both subjects is good, mostly because of the firm focus on the development of techniques, skills, knowledge and understanding. The work in art and design especially makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development because pupils study works of famous artists and craftspeople from a range of traditions and cultures. The visit to a local mosque, for example, is used to show pupils the wealth of attractive detail in the Islamic motifs used in the elaborate tiling patterns to be found on floor, wall and ceiling.

98. There remains to be dealt with the enhancement of resources, particularly tools for wood technology, improvement to assessment in both subjects and the need for greater direct monitoring of design and technology and art and design. The subject coordinators are keen to embark on the necessary work to bring such improvement and the past track record of the school suggests that the two subjects have a good future.

## GEOGRAPHY

99. At the time of the last inspection standards in geography were judged to have fallen and insufficient emphasis was placed on the subject. Since then the school has made satisfactory improvement and the curriculum has been planned to provide an appropriate range of geographical experiences. Standards are now at the expected levels for seven and eleven-year-old pupils. The development of knowledge and understanding is moving forward at an acceptable pace, but there is limited development of geographical enquiry skills. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection and consequently the report is based upon the limited amount of pupils' work available, and discussions with groups of pupils and staff.

100. By the end of the infants pupils are beginning to develop an idea of local places through the use of the national guideline materials on life in the Scottish islands. Through the satisfactory standard of teaching, they are able to describe routes taken around the island, plan a journey from their home in Repton to Scotland, and draw a map of the island marking in the important features. Their knowledge of maps and mapping are usefully reinforced through the effective display of a hand-drawn street map of Repton showing the location of public buildings and places such as the local health centre, the church and the park. Pupils' literacy skills are developed appropriately through the opportunities provided for them to write letters asking for information about the island, and writing about their own daily lives to compare with those of the islanders.

101. Despite the comparatively small amount of work completed so far this term due to the way the subject has been organised, the pupils in a Year 6 lesson are developing their knowledge of the formation of mountains well because of very effective teaching. They quickly grasped the principles of *folding* following a very innovative demonstration by the teacher to highlight *cause and effect*. They are able to research information for themselves and can find out how mountains are formed, using a large collection of non-fiction books provided by the class teacher. They demonstrated their knowledge of the names of the major continents and their position, by correctly placing them on a world map. In Year 5, following their visit to a Seven-Trent water treatment plant, pupils interrogate the Internet as part of their water treatment investigation, to find out for themselves how we come to have a clean and plentiful supply of water. The teaching enables pupils to use their ICT skills for a useful and practical purpose and developing their learning effectively as a result.

102. The standard of teaching in school is satisfactory overall but some good and occasionally very good quality lessons were seen during the inspection. Teachers show confidence, and use methods that enable pupils to learn effectively. ICT is used to good effect and the development of enquiry skills is also well fostered in these lessons. However, there is little evidence of enquiry skills being promoted beyond this. Recorded work reflects the blocks of time devoted to geography and months can go by without pupils' learning geography. This means that pupils' learning does not always have sufficient time to move forward to potential. This organisation of learning does make it difficult for pupils to practice and refine their research skills. The school is now in a position to take stock of its curriculum to ensure that enquiry and research skills are to the forefront and promoted within different subjects.

103. The subject co-ordinator is only in school for a temporary period, and the school has yet to decide how the useful work begun in re-establishing geography is continued. Since the start of the school year the subject management has been in the hands of a very enthusiastic and committed co-ordinator, who has ensured that a sound curriculum has been put in place, and has set up systems for the monitoring and evaluation of geography later in the school year.



## HISTORY

104. Standards in history have been maintained since the last inspection with pupils reaching the expected level by the ages of seven and eleven years. Provision for history is effective and pupils benefit from a good range of worthwhile learning experiences that enable most to make satisfactory progress overall. Teachers provide well for pupils with special educational needs and this ensures they make good progress. Support staff are particularly effective in ensuring that these pupils take a full part in lessons. There is potential for learning in history to be better; however, time constraints are limiting potentially higher level attainment. The school blocks time for history and then switches to geography. This means that in some years pupils will have a month of history and then move onto geography. In Year 4 books, for example, there has been no recorded work in history since September; instead the focus is now on geography. The school has yet to review what impact this organisation is having on achievement overall.

105. Due to the way in which history is organised little evidence of previous work was available for infant classes during the inspection. However, in the few lessons observed it was evident that pupils are developing a clear understanding and a good knowledge of aspects of history. For example, they know about the circumstances surrounding the Great Fire of London, including how and where it started, and what action was taken to put it out. In a Year 2 lesson pupils knew that information can be gained from different sources, and were able to gather it for themselves from the non-fiction section of the library, and by using a CD-ROM and the Internet. They understand that this information is available to us today because of the writing of "eye-witnesses" such as Samuel Pepys and John Claire. They display a keen interest in the subject and carry out additional research at home.

106. By the age of eleven there is considerable evidence that pupils knowledge and understanding of major events in history is developing as well as their enquiry skills. In recorded work in Year 3 about the Romans. Pupils' complete worksheets that cover basic facts about the Iceni warriors. There is some useful cross-curricular links as they research by using the thesaurus to find different words to mean, "Invader and Settler". In a Year 4 lesson for example, pupils were studying ancient Egypt through the examination of evidence. When examining a diagram of how Egyptians used the Nile pupils are asked questions like, "What does the landscape tell us about life.....?" and "How do objects tell us about ....?". When shown pictures of artefacts they are encouraged to be an archaeologist and say "I think this is .....". ICT is well used to support pupils' learning and a considerable amount of information is gleaned from the Internet in the form of maps and pictures of tools. Pupils display great interest in the subject and quickly become absorbed in their tasks. The application of literacy skills is evident in the way skimming and scanning techniques are used in researching information. In written work pupils in Year 5 had created some empathic pieces about life in Victorian times, expounding their own ideas about what life must have been like for children who had to work. In Year 6, personal research into the Aztecs showed originality and flair, as some pupils chose to delve quite deeply into the culture and history of this important civilisation.

107. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory although some examples of good teaching were seen. These are characterised when confident teachers allow pupils to develop independence and their ability to carry out their own research. Teaching is well planned and teachers make good use of resources. When marking work teachers ask questions to develop pupils' knowledge and thinking skills further. Pupils show very good attitudes to the subject and are keen and eager to find out about times past and to compare and contrast life then with that today. History lessons make a good contribution to pupils' cultural awareness.

108. The appointment of an enthusiastic new co-ordinator from the start of the school year in September who is keen to improvement in the subject, promises well for the future. She is well informed about the history of the local area of Repton, and will ensure that this is used to support learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

109. At the time of the 1999 inspection there were several aspects of ICT that gave concern. Standards were below average and progress unsatisfactory because pupils had insufficient opportunities to develop the necessary skills and knowledge across all strands of the subject. In those lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory, and it was identified that the new ICT suite was being put to suitable use.

110. Two years on, the school has made good strides with improvements to ICT. The ICT suite is timetabled intensively to allow teachers ample time to develop skills and knowledge and class based computers are put to good use in fostering cross-curricular use of ICT. Staff knowledge and confidence has increased due to effective measures to train and support teachers. This has resulted in greater competence in teaching. This time round, teaching and learning for all pupils are both good.

111. The school is able to provide good quality learning experiences in all strands of ICT. Inspectors found much evidence of good quality work in word processing, graphics and data handling. Some of the work undertaken with the Internet is of very good quality, especially in Year 2. Older pupils are building good insights into the power of computers to sort, search and interpret data and Year 6 pupils evaluate different websites convincingly as they compare the target age range of the site and the facilities offered. They say, for example, that some sites are good for finding information about Alice in Wonderland, but that they are not wildly imaginative in their features and after a few minutes their attractiveness palls. On the other hand, they find fast-moving sites with attractive animation and links to other pages and sites of lasting impact and value. The Year 6 pupils contrast such speed and impact with more conventional sources of information and explain the advantages of ICT based research well.

112. Teachers have good subject knowledge, they teach the basic skills of ICT well, manage the pupils and organise their lessons effectively and show good levels of expectation. All pupils make steady progress in their learning, though there is still a need to plan separate tasks for different ability groups and to develop systems of ongoing assessment that give pupils every chance to evaluate their own improvement. Since the pupils are keen, enjoy work and put in good effort, learning is productive and pleasant.

113. The curriculum is much improved; it is broad and well balanced and meets statutory requirements. There are good cross-curricular links, with some good work involving ICT seen in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, art and design and history.

114. The subject is managed well by the coordinator who is hard working, determined to bring improvement and alert to the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. She is ready for the next step in monitoring directly the quality of education and standards and progress. She is also working actively to produce a good assessment system for ICT that is firmly linked to the systematic development of skills. The school priority that ICT has been in recent years has been well promoted and the funding provided has been spent wisely to bring improvement. ICT is rapidly becoming a subject strength of the school.

## **MUSIC**

115. It was only possible to observe one lesson in music during the inspection and, consequently, it is not possible to report in detail on the subject. Singing in assembly was observed to be enthusiastic and the choir was seen to practice and refine their developing performance to a polished level. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and teaches music for an appropriate amount of time each week. There is also provision for a range of musical experiences for its pupils including a weekly recorder club for both infant and junior pupils, a mixed choir of boys and girls who sing tunefully and are currently rehearsing for a Christmas musical "Hosanna Rock". A selection of pupils who learn to play the flute, alto-saxophone, clarinet, cornet, trumpet and violin are taught by visiting peripatetic music staff. Pupils are encouraged to play in assemblies, and to take part in the annual production of musical shows like "Oliver". The school has visits from a percussion workshop, the Staffordshire Brass Ensemble, and the John Port High School Swing Band. Carol concerts are performed at the local church as part of the school's tradition for supporting and developing the music curriculum.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

116. Physical education was a strength of the school at the previous inspection in 1999 because standards were good and pupils made better than expected progress. Teaching quality was good in Years 1 and 2, though no teaching was observed in Years 3 to 6. Management of physical education was judged as *underdeveloped*.

117. During the current inspection, a range of physical education activities was observed throughout the school, including swimming lessons for Years 2, 3 and 4. It is evident that the school has built on past successes, sustained strengths and improved weaker aspects of physical education. Pupils now make good progress in physical education and attain good standards at all ages. Management of the subject is now good and pupils have very good attitudes to the subject. This ensures that physical education lessons are energetic times of learning where pupils behave very well and develop the necessary good relationships that are the foundation of team and group sports and physical activities.

118. The development of gymnastics skills is good. Gradually, pupils become more confident in their movements and older juniors show good poise and grace in their sequences. The development of swimming skills is good. Most pupils swim the desirable 25 metre length well before they leave school at the end of Year 6. Pupils' acquisition of games skills and knowledge is at a good rate too and the school has considerable success in competitive games and sports events against other local primary schools. There are some good opportunities for pupils to observe the demonstrations of other pupils and then to evaluate and state what could be improved. However, this aspect of physical education could

be covered more consistently in lessons in order to assist pupils in bettering their movements and prowess in games.

119. The curriculum for physical education is well planned and is broad and well balanced. There are good opportunities for many pupils to take part in the programme of sport and games activities outside lessons. Pupils' skills are well enhanced by participation in this programme and the progress made is promising for good future results in competitive matches. The school is not yet identifying those pupils who may have special sporting talents, though they are aware of some boys who have been scouted by professional clubs for coaching and development because of their exceptional football skills.

120. As yet, there have been no opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor directly the quality of education and standards achieved in physical education. Assessment of skills is informal and inconsistent between teachers. Both these aspects are ripe for improvement and school managers are keen to do just that. There is good educational direction for the subject and the coordinator has had considerable success in moving the subject on.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. Standards of attainment in religious education are at the levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus for both seven and eleven-year olds. A key issue at the time of the previous inspection was the unsatisfactory progress over time in religious education. 'The lack of planning to ensure skills, knowledge and understanding were developed' was seen as the cause. This issue has been addressed appropriately. Pupils' work shows that progress is now being made from year to year. By Year 6, pupils are confident researchers and are able to discuss their understanding and show their knowledge in written and spoken forms as they learn about, and from, religious education.

122. Learning in religious education is satisfactory for most pupils. Work in books shows some in which the *key question approach* to the subject is leading to steady progress in pupils' knowledge and understanding about aspects of religious education. For example, in Year 3 pupils have considered: "My network", as they considered who cares for them, "Happy Memories" and "Special People".

123. The school's emphasis on first hand experience is also helping pupils understand about the multi-cultural and multi-faith world in which they live. A display in a Year 4 class used artefacts, photographic evidence and pupils' writing about a visit to a Hindu temple in Derby. This showed their enjoyment of the visit and also what they had learned. In their books they draw the special symbol "Om", which means "God" in Hindi with some pupils writing very interesting pieces about the Hindu faith. Pupils studying Islam in Years 5 and 6 are able to write about their understanding of the history of Islam and relate this to their visit to the mosque. Links were provided in one of the assemblies with the visit of a Sikh who told the pupils about Diwali. The pupils who had already studied some aspects of Hinduism and Sikhism were able to answer his questions about Diwali with confidence. A Year 1 lesson took up the topic of the symbolism of light in their lesson later in the week, many of the pupils remembered what they had seen earlier in the week. Older pupils have a Carol Service at the Parish church of St Wystan, and younger pupils perform a traditional Nativity play for the school and parents. Both events are very well supported by parents and usefully enhance pupils' understanding of the Christian faith.

124. Teaching of religious education is satisfactory overall with lessons well planned and prepared for by teachers; this has a positive impact on learning. Since the previous inspection artefacts and books have been purchased to support the teaching of religious education and good use is being made of these. The Open Centre in Derby also provides a

valuable resource for staff and pupils; visits and visitors as well in- service training for teachers of religious education can be arranged. These additional resources together with the schemes of work which have now been developed provide a firm basis from which to build teachers' confidence in the subject. The religious education resource area is accessible to both pupils and teachers.

125. The leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory. The religious education co-ordinator has been in post since September 2000. She has had the opportunity to benefit from some in-service training and has shared that with other teachers. The school has also benefited from input by an religious education consultant which resulted in the development of a useful policy for religious education and helpful schemes of work to assist both teaching and learning. The school has adopted Derbyshire's agreed syllabus and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance to assist in developing the scheme of work for religious education which covers Christianity and five other faiths: Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism. The scheme of work covers all parts of the National Curriculum Programme of Study and attainment targets for religious education thereby ensuring the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. Monitoring is carried out regularly, teachers' planning is seen and pupils' work is collected. The co-ordinator knows that assessment needs to be developed and has planned for staff in service training in the next term.