

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **UPPINGHAM C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Uppingham

LEA area: Rutland

Unique reference number: 120184

Headteacher: Mrs J Anning

Reporting inspector: Mr S Hill  
21277

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> October 2001

Inspection number: 219713

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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Belgrave Road Uppingham Rutland
Postcode:	LE15 9RP
Telephone number:	01572 823245
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Stephen Evans
Date of previous inspection:	November 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21277	Steve Hill	Registered inspector	Science, Art & Design, History, Geography, English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements, How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9056	Val Cain	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20003	Suzi Metcalfe	Team inspector	English, The foundation stage, Information and communication technology, Religious education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
20326	Peter Clark	Team inspector	Mathematics, Physical education, Music, Design and Technology, Special Educational Needs, Equal Opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to students?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a small Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school in the small town of Uppingham in Rutland. It caters for 126 full-time pupils aged from 4 to 11. Virtually all pupils are of white, United Kingdom heritage and have a home language of English. Thirty-two pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is above average. Three of these have statements of special education needs. The range of special needs is varied, including autism, moderate learning difficulties, speech and communication difficulties, and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' social and economic circumstances cover a wide range and are average overall. Pupils' attainment on entry to school is similarly varied, but overall is below average. Since the last inspection, the school's roll has reduced from 169, but a new classroom is currently being built in anticipation of increased numbers from new housing developments.

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

This is a good school. It is a happy community in which pupils thrive socially and academically, and relationships are excellent. Standards of attainment are improving. Pupils achieve well, because of the good quality teaching they receive. The headteacher provides very good leadership to a committed and hard-working team of staff and governors. The school is well managed and gives good value for money.

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

- Standards are high in mathematics, science and music.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, behave well, and form excellent relationships, because of very good provision for their social and moral development.
- The school is very well led by the headteacher, management is good, and all staff are committed to improving the school's provision.
- The quality of provision in the reception class is very high, and gives children a very good start to their schooling.
- The school is a caring, happy community in which pupils are looked after very well.
- The school has very good relationships with parents.

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

- Standards of handwriting are weak.
- Standards are too low in geography at Key Stage Two.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent.
- The monitoring and assessment of standards and teaching could be improved in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
- Annual reports to parents of pupils' progress are unsatisfactory.

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

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

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection in November 1999. All the key issues from the last report have been addressed, generally with great success. Standards have been raised in English, mathematics and science at the top end of the school. More time is now spent on science. The planning of lessons is better and work is more challenging. Teaching arrangements for literacy and numeracy have improved. The presentation of pupils' work, however, still has weaknesses. The quality of teaching has improved, and is now good overall. Teaching quality is monitored effectively. Better use is made of assessment information in planning. Marking of pupils' work has improved, although there are still some inconsistencies. The leadership and management of the school have been improved considerably, and are now good. The school development plan is of good quality. The headteacher has a better overview of teaching and the curriculum. More opportunities are given for creative writing. The governing body is much more active, and governors fulfil their role well. Financial planning is good. A health and safety issue has been resolved and parents are given good information about what their children are to learn.

## 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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	D	C	C
Mathematics	E	E	B	B
Science	E	E	C	D

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

Results of national tests for 11-year olds show that standards in 2000 were broadly average for English and science, and above average for mathematics. In comparison with similar schools (those having broadly similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals) standards were average in English, above average in mathematics, and below average in science. Provisional results for 2001 show an improvement, particularly in science, although national comparative figures are not yet available. In science, over half the pupils attained above the expected level for their age. Results in writing also improved significantly. Over time, although there are fluctuations from year to year because of the different proportion of pupils with special needs in each group, overall results show that standards have risen, particularly in the last two years.

The evidence from inspection confirms this improving picture for pupils in Year 6. Standards in English are currently in line with national expectations. Standards are ahead of national expectations in science and mathematics. Standards are also good in music. Standards are in line with expectations in all other subjects except in geography, where they are too low.

For pupils aged seven, standards are ahead of expectations in mathematics and music, and in line with expectations in all other subjects. In English, although standards are satisfactory, few pupils exceed the expected level 2 in writing.

At both key stages, standards in handwriting are weak.

Pupils in the foundation stage (the reception class) make good progress from a low overall base. The majority of the current class are on target to meet the early learning goals (nationally suggested standards) by the end of reception.

Pupils start school with standards of attainment which are below average. In their time in school they achieve better than might be expected in relation to their starting points, including those pupils with special needs, and those with high ability.

The school sets challenging targets based on a careful assessment of pupils' abilities, and works hard to achieve them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and join in a range of activities with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is consistently good both in class and outside. Pupils develop good levels of self-discipline.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form excellent relationships with other children and with adults in the school. They develop a very good sense of personal responsibility, enjoy helping each other, and show considerable initiative. Older pupils take a great pride in the help they give to younger ones.

Attendance	Good. Attendance is consistently a little above national averages, and there is no unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good and lessons start on time.
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### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching and learning are good overall. During the inspection, examples of good teaching were observed in every class and from every teacher. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, and three-fifths of lessons seen were graded good or better. A fifth of lessons were very good, including one excellent lesson.

Teaching is particularly good in the reception class. A major strength is the very effective partnership between the three members of staff. Lively teaching and a wide, exciting curriculum ensure that children make very good gains in their learning. Their independence is promoted very well.

At Key Stage One, teaching is at least satisfactory and is sometimes good or very good. Teachers have a good understanding of teaching this age group, and teach basic skills well. They plan interesting work, which engages pupils' attention. Relationships are good, so that pupils are secure and enjoy learning.

At Key Stage Two, teaching is often good and sometimes very good. Expectations are high and pupils are managed well. This supports the good progress in learning over this key stage, particularly in science.

The teaching of English, including literacy, is satisfactory and that of mathematics, including numeracy, is good. The management of pupils is generally good, and is firmly based on clear expectations and good relationships. Teachers and learning support assistants provide very good help to pupils with special educational needs, so that they have full access to the curriculum and learn well. Higher attainers are generally challenged effectively, so that they gain high standards.

Relative weaknesses are the teaching of handwriting, and inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work. Lessons that were only satisfactory often had many good points, but sometimes the pace was too slow, so that pupils lost concentration, and the teacher had to spend too much time ensuring good behaviour.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall, and very good in the reception class. The provision for extra curricular activities is very good, both before and after school, and at breaks and lunchtimes. A wide range of visits and visitors help ensure a rich, interesting curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported and make good progress. Teachers and learning support assistants provide very effective help to these pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Sound procedures are in place to help any pupils who are at early stages in learning English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. All members of staff provide very good role models for pupils. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pastoral care is very effective, and pupils feel safe and secure in the school community. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, and are



	excellent in the reception class.
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The school works very well in partnership with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives very clear leadership to the staff, and is well supported by subject co-ordinators. Leadership has been particularly strong for English, mathematics and science, and for the foundation stage. There is a need to extend this good practice across other subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are well organised and support the school effectively. They have a good understanding of the school's needs, and work hard to support improvements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has worked hard to identify needs and has been effective in addressing them, to improve standards. The principles of "best value" are applied well.
The strategic use of resources	Good. There is good provision of staffing and accommodation, and resources are sound. They are used well to support pupils' learning.

## 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>• They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with concerns.</li><li>• Teaching is good.</li><li>• Children are making good progress.</li><li>• Behaviour in school is good.</li><li>• They are well informed about their children's progress.</li><li>• The school expects children to work hard and do their best.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some parents think that the provision of extra curricular activities is inadequate.</li><li>• A minority of parents feel the school does not work closely with them.</li><li>• Some parents feel that the amount of homework their children get is inappropriate.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive comments, although there are weaknesses in the school's written reports about pupils' progress. The inspection evidence shows that the school does work closely with parents, and that homework provided is appropriate. The provision of extra curricular activities is a strength of the school; very much more is provided than is usual, particularly in such a small school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards have improved since the last inspection, and pupils are now achieving well in the light of their attainment when they start school. The improvements have come about principally because of good management, and hard work from all the staff, which have led to significant improvements in teaching and in the organisation of the curriculum. Standards across the school are now at least in line with expectations except in geography at Key Stage Two and in handwriting at both key stages.
2. Results from national assessments indicate an improving picture, and in the last two years results at the end of Year 6 have risen significantly, compared to national figures. The evidence from inspection confirms this improving picture for pupils in Year 6, where standards were unsatisfactory at the last inspection in English, mathematics and science. Standards in English for pupils aged eleven are currently in line with national expectations. Standards are ahead of national expectations in science and mathematics. Standards are also good in music. Standards are in line with expectations in all other subjects except in geography, where they are too low.
3. For pupils aged seven, standards are ahead of expectations in mathematics and music, and in line with expectations in all other subjects. In English, although standards are satisfactory, few pupils exceed the expected level 2 in writing.
4. In the foundation stage children start with a wide range of skills but their attainment is below average overall. They make good progress and the majority are in line to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.
5. In English, standards are good in listening and satisfactory in speaking. Reading and writing have improved at Key Stage Two, and in the last year, scores in writing in national tests more closely match scores in reading. Handwriting is unsatisfactory.
6. In mathematics, number work is a strength at both key stages, and mental facility with number is a particular strength at Key Stage Two. A relative weakness is the lack of opportunities for pupils to perform investigations, or to work out their own methods, so that standards are not as high in these aspects.
7. In science, a strength of standards at Key Stage One is the large number of pupils who attain the expected standards, with no pupils who started at the school failing to achieve level 2 for the last two years. This is because of the good support given to pupils with special needs and their consequent good progress. By the end of Key Stage Two, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of science, although last year their understanding of scientific enquiry was only satisfactory, because this aspect of the curriculum received relatively little attention. This is not the case across the school as a whole, where a good balance is drawn between different aspects of the subject.
8. Pupils' basic skills are satisfactory. They have secure skills in numeracy, reading and in information and communication technology (ICT). Their writing skills are generally satisfactory, with the exception of their handwriting, which is weak. They make good use of their numeracy and literacy skills in other subjects, although their use of their ICT skills is patchy between subjects. Their weak skills in handwriting have a detrimental effect on the quality of their work and its presentation in a range of subjects.
9. Because pupils start school with standards of attainment which are below average, overall they achieve better than might be expected in relation to their starting points, including those with high ability. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and when they have additional adult

support. They make good progress in relation to their initial attainment, particularly in improving their literacy skills. There is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls.

10. The school sets challenging targets based on a careful assessment of pupils' abilities, and works hard, and successfully, to achieve them.

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

11. The pupils have very positive attitudes to work and to school life. They have a real interest and desire for learning and make the most of their time in lessons. In over three-quarters of the lessons seen, the attitude of the pupils was good or very good. Of particular note is the consistently good or very good response of the Year 6 pupils, especially their interest and involvement in all activities with and outside the classroom and their mature behaviour round the school. All pupils know the routines of the school well and settle to work quickly and sensibly. Most are very keen to answer questions and offer their opinions in discussion times, older pupils in particular giving thought into how they respond rather than rushing into speech with disregard to the needs of the listener. In a Year 2/3 numeracy lesson, for example, pupils rose to the teacher's high expectations, showing thought and consideration for others, enthusiasm and perseverance. The sheer delight and enthusiasm of Reception children going together into their secure outdoor area to "use a toy tool kit to *'repair'* their equipment" as Percy the Park-keeper would do, was a joy to experience! Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work. They work well with their peers and are proud of the improvements they have made.
12. A large number of pupils participate enthusiastically in the very good range of extra curricular activities. The front entrance area displays a range of artefacts made by pupils in their art and craft based clubs. Pupils come into school early to practice musical instruments for assemblies and to have music lessons and keenly assemble at break for extra musical tuition. Pupils are proud of their jobs around the school. The pupils elected to the school council take their role seriously, ensure that issues are discussed thoroughly and report with care and seriousness back to their classes. The Year 6 pupils who are library monitors take on their tasks of tidying the books methodically and maturely.
13. The behaviour of the pupils is consistently good. Older pupils are good role models for younger, taking pride in helping at lunchtime and playtimes. No pupils have been excluded. Disruptive behaviour in lessons is hardly ever seen. Pupils listen sensibly, follow instructions carefully and really enjoy activities. All pupils are very clear about the 'Golden Rules' and the expectations in their classrooms and around the school. Year 6 pupils in particular respond well to the "credit card" system. Pupils get ready for lunch quietly and are very quick off the mark to line up at the end of break times when they hear the bell. As a result lessons start promptly, maximising learning time. In assemblies, pupils file in and out quietly and carefully, responding extremely well to the effective management strategies and high expectations in the school.
14. The school is a harmonious and friendly community. Relationships are excellent. No evidence of bullying or other oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and pupils know the routines for dealing with any incidents that occur. Boys and girls get on well together, both when collaborating in lessons and playing outside at break. Pupils are courteous and trustworthy. They are proud to show visitors around their neat and tidy school. Independent learning skills are well developed from the moment a child enters the school. In Reception, for instance, a target to support the learning of all pupils is selected each week and the children consider how well they have achieved their target at the end of the week. In most lessons pupils respond very well to encouragement to develop independence and not to rely always on the teacher. In a good Year 6 English lesson, pupils used a range of biographical texts to gather information to write autobiographies. Two girls, using the Internet, could not get the server to respond, so took themselves off to the library to select texts, returning to settle quickly and quietly to what they had been asked to do.

15. Across the school pupils have a very well developed ability to respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others. In personal, social and health education lessons, pupils are extremely thoughtful and sensitive when listening and responding to the ideas of their peers. In “circle time” the pupils know that they have to listen and speak clearly to get the most out of lessons. In discussions with pupils, they could all articulate the qualities of their neighbours and give examples of strengths such as helping to tidy up, musical skills, supporting when using a computer and looking after equipment. Times for prayers and reflection within classes are followed respectfully. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others; even children in Reception are able to differentiate between accidents and deliberate acts.
16. Pupils with special educational needs have similar attitudes and behaviour to their peers. Most persevere willingly, listen well in lessons and try to answer questions they have been set to meet their needs. Pupils whose concentration is not well established are helped to stay on task by appropriate and good support from learning support assistants. Their interest is directly reflected in how interesting the work is. Pupils show growing self-esteem and confidence when their contributions to lessons are sought and valued and when teachers, adults and peers celebrate their success, for example in the lunchtime art and craft club. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the life of the school and are very well accepted by other pupils.
17. Levels of attendance are good and consistently remain a little above the national average; this has a positive effect on learning and attainment. There is no unauthorised absence. The good attendance of the pupils is of positive benefit to their achievement. Punctuality to school is good and lessons start on time. Registration is completed efficiently and promptly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. The registration time is used productively by pupils to check spellings, practise reading and handwriting skills. Older pupils sometimes make effective use of this time to identify targets for further developing their language skills by checking the comments made within the marking in their literacy books.

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

18. Teaching and learning are good overall. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when there was too much unsatisfactory teaching. During the current inspection, all teaching was at least satisfactory, and examples of good teaching were observed in every class and from every teacher.
19. Teaching is particularly good in the reception class. A major strength is the very effective partnership between the three members of staff, who pool their excellent knowledge and understanding of how young children learn to ensure consistently high standards of provision. Lively teaching and a wide, exciting curriculum ensure that children make very good gains in their learning. Their independence is promoted very well. Day-to-day assessment is excellent, with staff taking every opportunity to assess what children are doing, building their observations into the planning of further work. This ensures a very good match to children’s needs, so that they make good progress.
20. At Key Stage One, teaching is at least satisfactory and is sometimes good or very good. Teachers have a good understanding of teaching this age group, and teach basic skills well. They generally plan interesting work, which engages pupils’ attention. On occasions, the tasks set are too mundane and do not stretch the higher attainers - this is usually the weakness in lessons that are only satisfactory. The large number of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 1 and 2 class present a particular challenge, and they are generally managed well by the teacher, who is sympathetic but firm. On occasions, too much time has to be spent on managing these pupils, the pace of the lesson slows, and learning can be slowed, although it is always at least satisfactory.
21. At Key Stage Two, teaching is often good and sometimes very good. Expectations are high and pupils are managed well. This supports the good progress in learning over this key stage, particularly in science.

22. At both key stages, the teaching of English, including literacy, is satisfactory and has many good features although the teaching of handwriting is a weakness, which impacts negatively on pupils' achievement. The teaching of mathematics, including numeracy, is good. Lively "mental-maths" sessions at the start of numeracy lessons are a particular strength, and contribute effectively to pupils' high standards in their mental facility with number.
23. The management of pupils is generally good, and is firmly based on clear expectations and very good relationships. Because of this, pupils like their teachers and are keen to please them and to do well. Good questioning is a positive feature of better lessons. Pupils are strongly encouraged to think through and explain their ideas to the rest of the class. They do so confidently because they know their views are valued and respected by the teacher. This was shown during a science lesson with pupils in Years 4 and 5, who were willing to admit they had made mistakes, because they were confident in their teacher's response.
24. The quality of teachers' planning is generally satisfactory, although variable between classes. In better examples, teachers are clear about what pupils are to learn, and make distinctive provision for pupils with different levels of ability. The latter is often a strength of mathematics and English lessons. Work is firmly based on the school's long-term planning, and series of lessons are planned to build pupils' understanding in a systematic way. In weaker examples, it is not clear just what pupils are to learn, or there is insufficient provision made for pupils' differing skills and abilities.
25. Teachers and learning support assistants provide very good help to pupils with special educational needs, so that they have full access to the curriculum and learn well. Higher attainers are generally challenged effectively, so that they gain high standards. The quality of teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. In English, mathematics and science lessons most teachers generally meet the needs of special educational needs pupils well, providing appropriate activities and support. The support teacher has well-established routines and pupils know what to do in lessons. Learning support assistants play a very important part in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs benefit from activities and make good progress. Nevertheless in some lessons pupils with special educational needs are required to complete the same work as other pupils when an easier task would promote better learning. Work in these lessons is planned without direct reference to targets set in individual education plans and this adversely affects progress.
26. Lessons are prepared thoroughly. Teachers work hard to ensure that the correct resources are available. Practical work and a good range of resources are used well to support learning in several subjects, such as science and design and technology. For example, in a design and technology lesson with Year 6, the wide range of materials available enabled pupils to make imaginative designs, and the chance to handle the materials ensured they understood the potential and limitations of the different fabrics. Satisfactory use is made of homework to support pupils' learning, with a gradual increase in what is expected as pupils get older.
27. Relative weaknesses are the teaching of handwriting, and inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work. Lessons that were only satisfactory often had many good points, but sometimes the pace was too slow, so that pupils lost concentration, and the teacher had to spend too much time ensuring good behaviour.

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

28. The overall quality of the curriculum is good. It is broad, balanced and relevant to the ages, needs and interests of pupils and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. The quality of the curriculum in the Reception class is a particular strength which supports the very good start children make in the school. Throughout the school, the curriculum is enriched through a wide range and variety of additional experiences. Pupils are given

numerous opportunities to perform and demonstrate their talents in music, for example, and this supports high standards in the subject. Well-planned educational visits and visitors to the school also enhance the quality of learning and pupils particularly remember such visits and what they learned on them. They particularly value the residential visit to Kingswood last year.

29. While there has been significant progress since the previous inspection, a few of the weaknesses identified have not been fully resolved. Insufficient attention and opportunities are given to the teaching of handwriting. In addition, not enough time has been allocated for the teaching of geography for junior aged pupils. There is a good personal, social and health education programme that ensures good provision for sex education and drugs awareness. Good opportunities are provided, for example in assembly, linking food with healthy diets in preparation for the school harvest festival. There are suitable new policies and schemes that have incorporated recent government guidelines.
30. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is satisfactory. Pupils have sound opportunities to work in small groups to extend and develop relevant vocabulary and are well supported by additional learning support staff. The quality of handwriting and general presentation is weak. For example a large majority of pupils in Year 6 are still writing with a mixture of single and joined up letters with many letters often incorrectly formed, thus reducing speed and fluency. The school's strategy for teaching numeracy skills is good and this is reflected in the rising standards for pupils aged seven and eleven years. Mental arithmetic skills are particularly well developed.
31. Good provision is made for all pupils to be included in having equal access to the curriculum and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report. Most individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are clear, concise and written in a style that is easy to follow against measurable targets.
32. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. The range of activities that take place before school, during play times and after school is a strength of the school. There are many activities including recorder groups and choir, knitting club, science club, lunchtime art and craft club, information and communication technology club and a range of sporting activities. All clubs are well attended. Pupils report how much they enjoy taking part in these clubs. The clubs contribute significantly to pupils' achievements in a range of subjects. Links with the community are good including other local educational establishments. Local firms have contributed significantly to the school's resources. Good use is made of visits to places of interest, and local people with a range of experience and expertise are invited into school to contribute to pupils' learning. Examples include visits to Rutland Water, visitors from the fire service as well as local clergy, discussions with parents and grandparents in history topics, the opportunity to play Kwik Cricket with Leicestershire country cricket team members, and taking part in local music festivals.
33. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good overall, and has improved since the last inspection.
34. Spiritual development is good. Acts of collective worship contain an element of personal and shared reflection. Assemblies leading up to the schools' Harvest Festival encouraged pupils to consider the needs of the wider world, especially countries suffering war and draught, comparing this with the plenty available in Britain. The school has strong and positive aims, which places high value on Christian values, the promotion of a tolerance of others and their beliefs and the valuing and respecting of all members of the community, human rights and the worth of the individual. In lessons teachers foster the development of spiritual awareness. Further opportunities for spiritual development occur through study of beliefs in religious education, poetry in English, experiments in science and appreciation of art and artists. Religious education provides pupils with the opportunity to learn more of the beliefs and customs of peoples of different faiths. During the inspection, for instance, year 1 and 2 pupils were thrilled to handle artefacts from the Jewish faith.
35. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. The positive relationships between all members of the school community enable pupils to grow into mature individuals.

Teachers and assistants make good role models, promoting the schools values of honesty and fairness. Throughout the school pupils respond well to the teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions. Codes of conduct are in evidence throughout the school. "Golden time" is valued and supports pupils' working well together. Personal and social education has an appropriately high priority in the form of "circle" and "bubble" times regularly set-aside for discussions and reflections on moral issues. These provide effective opportunities for social development and for consideration of moral questions at a level appropriate to the age and experiences of the pupils. Pupils are taught effectively to listen to and value the ideas, thoughts and feelings of others, whilst not being afraid to express their own.

36. Teachers create very good opportunities for pupils to show initiative and exercise responsibility. Pupils take responsibility in lessons for resources, they work as monitors, older pupils help younger pupils and they organise resources for assembly. Within lessons pupils co-operate over resources and collaborate in activities, supporting the learning of themselves as well as others. Teachers group pupils very carefully in activities to ensure that all are included and supported to develop as far as they are able. Pupils help those less fortunate than themselves through a variety of charitable activities such as Children in Need and the Poppy Appeal. The school council gives all pupils, elected members and those they represent, a greater sense of responsibility and pride in their school. This group have had input into issues such as the playground rota for football and the vulnerability of reception children at playtimes. Class assemblies and school productions offer pupils further opportunities to work together and to perform to a wider audience. Pupils have further opportunities to develop their social skills on residential visits.
37. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The very good quality and range of extra curricular activities, including music, drama, sports, computer, arts and crafts and book clubs contribute well to this. Pupils' multi-cultural experience have been enhanced by learning to play African drums; learning songs from different countries; about art from different peoples; texts from round the world and by authors from different countries; resources in history and artefacts in Religious Education from the different faiths. Pupils gain a good understanding of human life in different cultures through studying religions such as Judaism, Islam and Sikhism in terms of key features of worship. Many good opportunities are provided for pupils to consider their own cultural traditions.

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

38. The quality of pastoral care provided for all pupils remains a strength of the school since the last inspection. All teaching and non-teaching staff know the children well and make them feel valued. Pupils confirm that they are happy, feel safe, and have confidence in staff and know that they will help them in times of need. Parents at the meeting wholeheartedly praised the help given to children of all abilities.
39. Attendance is monitored effectively. Registrations take place twice daily and are both prompt and efficient. Parents are expected to inform of absences and do so; there is no unauthorised absence. Any concerns are quickly followed up. Good attendance is clearly promoted.
40. Good standards of behaviour are expected and pupils comply. They are involved in setting their own class values and understand clearly their responsibilities. Rewards are keenly sought and good behaviour celebrated. The credit system for Year 6, stickers and the entry in the Golden Book are enthusiastically earned. Inappropriate behaviour is rare and quickly dealt with. Sanctions are well known and pupils consider fairly applied. Parents agree that behaviour is very good with any inappropriate behaviour dealt with in a structured manner. Parents confirm that pupils are helped to understand the consequences of actions. Older pupils proudly set a good example.
41. Although no formal arrangements are in place to monitor personal development, because staff know their pupils well, they are able to give them support when the need arises.



42. Arrangements for Child Protection are very good with staff both trained and vigilant. Good use is made of the outside professional agencies when necessary. Pupils' medical needs are well met; there are sufficient trained First Aiders and parents contacted if there are concerns. The site is clean and well maintained. Regular risk assessments, fire drills and electrical equipment checks ensure there are no health and safety hazards.
43. Good liaison with the local playgroups ensures a smooth transaction for new pupils. Parents of new pupils have the opportunity to meet staff and to have procedures explained. A well-established programme is in place to ensure that older pupils move confidently and happily to their next school.
44. A good personal, social and health education programme involving visitors (for example the school nurse) ensures that pupils receive appropriate guidance in health education and are well prepared for life outside school.
45. Pupils in Year 6 take great pride in helping younger pupils at break-times and lunchtimes, ensuring their safety and well being. Care is taken to ensure that those children leaving by school bus are safely on board. Parents are rightly proud of the caring ethos that prevails.
46. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall and have improved since the previous inspection. However, some weaknesses still exist in the non-core subjects.
47. Baseline assessments are carried out and used very effectively by the reception class staff to provide a very good standard of education for these children. This helps many make good progress towards the recommended early learning goals for children of this age. Compulsory national tests and optional tests for pupils aged seven to eleven provide the school with a growing bank of statistical evidence that shows pupils' standards of attainment compared to all schools and to schools in a similar social context.
48. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science most teachers keep good records. However, there are insufficient effective formal assessment or recording procedures in other subjects. For example in information and communication technology assessments are based on the completion of tasks rather than what pupils have learnt from their experiences and the progress they are making. The quality of written records that teachers maintain on individual pupils is inconsistent in quality and content.
49. All pupils have individual targets for reading, writing and numeracy but at present these are not always linked closely enough to lesson planning, for example handwriting. In the non-core subjects (those other than English, mathematics and science) teachers' medium and short term planning is inconsistent in quality. It does not always clearly identify clear objectives for learning or assessment criteria for different groups of pupils, for example in design and technology. It is therefore very difficult for teachers to evaluate their own effectiveness with respect to learning that has taken place. The practice of collecting a range of pupils' work each term for inclusion in an individual portfolio provides a useful evidence base for reviewing progress made throughout the school.
50. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that insufficient use is made of individual targets in the marking. There is wide inconsistency in the quality of written comments to indicate how pupils might improve. Most teachers take care in recognising pupils' efforts and progress by using verbal encouraging remarks, but these are not consistently thought through, 'everything is wonderful', and can give a false indication of the actual quality of work or progress being made.
51. The progress of pupils with special educational needs in literacy and numeracy is evaluated satisfactorily by teachers and support staff. All legal requirements are met regarding regular checks on the attainment of pupils with special educational needs. The individual education plans clearly indicate additional learning to be undertaken and supported and success against these

targets is clearly identified. There are suitable procedures for identifying pupils and for moving them on and off the special educational needs register. However, the school is aware of the need to involve pupils more fully in reviewing their own progress against agreed targets.

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

52. The school has developed a very effective partnership with parents. This is a great strength of the school, an improvement since the last inspection. Responses, both at the parents' meeting and to questionnaires, were very positive with very few parental concerns. Parents were most pleased that their children work hard, staff are very approachable and that teaching is good. The inspection team agrees with these views. Some parents expressed concerns regarding homework and the range of extra curricular activities. The findings of the inspection team are that homework set is satisfactory and appropriate for the age of the children. The provision for extra curricular activities is a strength; very much more is provided than is usual, particularly in such a small school. Activities are arranged before school, at break, lunchtimes and after school. Clubs include art, computer, science, football, Unihoc, knitting and music - these are popular and very well supported.
53. Pupils benefit from parental involvement in the life of the school. Parents help in class with a variety of activities. Opportunities to attend parents' meetings every term, class assemblies, concerts and other events are greatly valued. Parents are kept well informed through regular newsletters; in addition they receive letters detailing timetables and topics for the coming term. Communications are clear and in a friendly and encouraging style with parental views sought on such issues as school aims, home/school agreement and sex education. The prospectus and Governors' Annual Report are informative and clearly presented.
54. Parents value the opportunities for discussion about their child's progress both through formal and informal meetings. Teachers will advise parents of any concerns when they arise, and this is much appreciated. Presently, reports to parents are unsatisfactory overall. The reports for children in reception are good; parents are informed of the range of experiences and their child's progress in these. However, for pupils in Key Stages One and Two, reports do not consistently or clearly advise parents of what their children can do. Generally these reports are context based and descriptive. Particularly in non-core subjects, strengths and weaknesses are often given only in general terms. There is no specific detail regarding achievement in the subject, or what pupils should do to improve.
55. A well-established and successful Friends of the School host a range of social and fundraising events throughout the year that are well supported. Considerable sums have been raised, enabling the purchase of extra resources such as curtains, television, video and books. Pupils have greatly benefited, adding interest and enjoyment to their learning.
56. The majority of parents have signed the home/school agreement. Parents are actively involved in hearing their children read at home and signing the homework diary. Pupils clearly value this support and encouragement, thus improving their attainment.
57. Parents of special educational needs pupils are invited both to reviews of individual educational plans and to annual reviews, and most attend. Individual education plans are shared with parents. Nevertheless parents do not receive a copy of their child's plan and so plans are not signed. The present plans fail to identify in detail methods parents can use to help their children at home. Parents are informed by letter or formally at parents meetings if their child is identified as needing to be placed on the special educational needs register or if their child is to be moved to a different stage on the register. Parents are generally pleased with the provision for children with special educational needs.

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

58. The school is well led and managed. This is a major improvement since the last inspection, when leadership and management were unsatisfactory. At that time, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses. The good management, and particularly the very good leadership of the headteacher, have been significant factors in the improvements the school has made since then. Good leadership means that the school has a clear educational direction, with all members of the

school community working together well. Staff have worked as an effective team to focus on the main shortcomings identified at the last inspection. Considerable improvements have been made in standards and in teaching, while the strengths in the pastoral aspects of the school's provision have been consolidated. The school's aims and values are now clearly reflected throughout its work. A major factor in improvements has been the school's willingness to take on board the criticisms of the last report and address them whole-heartedly together. In addition, important improvements have been made in how the school analyses its own performance, and this is now good. Staff have worked hard to address any shortcomings that they have identified. The lack of high attainment in the quality of writing at Key Stage One is a good example of the school identifying a weakness and setting up a programme to address it.

59. The subject-leaders have significantly developed their role since the last inspection. The concentration has been on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, as these were identified as showing weaknesses in standards at that time. Despite a number of staff changes, and changes of responsibility, standards have been improved in all three subjects. From being below expectations at the time of the last inspection, standards in English now meet the national expectations, and standards in mathematics and science exceed them by the end of the school. This has been as a result of leaders' monitoring and analysing work in the subjects, including observing their colleagues teach, and introducing improvements. Schemes of work have been improved and are implemented more rigorously, and assessment has been improved. The implementation of the national numeracy and literacy strategies has been consolidated.
60. Subject-leaders in other areas have had much less opportunity to monitor work and to lead developments over the last two years. However, this has been a sensible strategy whilst the school concentrated on the core subjects. There is now a need to extend the good practice developed to other subjects across the curriculum so that all subject-leaders can help their colleagues more effectively. Since the last inspection, the management of provision for the foundation stage (in the reception class) has continued to be a strength. This has maintained the high quality provision for these children, despite changes in staffing.
61. The special needs co-ordinator provides good leadership and is committed to providing high quality support to all pupils with special educational needs in the school. She ensures that teachers and learning assistants are fully aware of the pupils' individual needs. Arrangements are managed in terms of directly supporting, assessing and reviewing pupils' progress in the classroom. All learning support staff have undertaken additional training and this positively enhances the quality of support provided both in the classroom and around the school. The governing body is fully involved with issues regarding special educational needs. Good emphasis is placed upon all pupils having equal access to the curriculum, including those with special educational needs.
62. The monitoring and support of teaching are now good. These have been improved, both through the work of the subject leaders, and through regular monitoring of teaching by the headteacher. Issues have been identified and fed back to colleagues, so that improvements have been made all round. During this inspection, the quality of teaching was good overall and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed; this is a significant improvement since the last report. More challenging work is now generally provided to pupils.
63. Shortcomings in the curriculum at the last report, such as the inadequate time spent on science, have been addressed, and the curriculum is now broad and balanced. The unwieldy setting system has been very much simplified, and such setting as occurs is effective. Planning has been improved, and is backed up by regular and frequent monitoring by both the headteacher and the subject-leaders. The school is well placed to tackle the weaknesses that still remain, such as the unsatisfactory development of pupils' handwriting.
64. The governing body has considerably improved its effectiveness since the last inspection and does a good job in supporting the school. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well, backed up by an effective system of committees. Governors work hard to be involved in the school and they have gained a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses. Specific links between individual governors

and particular classes and subject areas contribute well to this understanding. Good arrangements are in place to feed back the results of visits and meetings to the whole governing body, so that all are kept well informed. Good systems are in place to enable the governors to play a full part in the financial management of the school. They work closely with the headteacher and the bursar to monitor and plan spending. The governing body now plays a full part in helping set the strategic direction of the school.

65. The financial management of the school is good, a significant improvement since the last inspection. The budget deficit engendered by falling rolls has been eliminated, despite further falls in numbers, by careful management. The headteacher, school administrative staff and the governors work well together to manage finances, and to link them effectively to the school's educational needs and priorities. The last auditor's report, about a year ago, evaluated the school's systems as being good, with only a few technical details needing improvement. These have all since been implemented by the school. Good care is taken to spend specific grants effectively. The principles of "best value" are used well. A local consortium, the Local Authority, and expertise within the school are used to decide where money is most effectively spent. The analysis of results and the consultation with parents and pupils, as well as staff and governors, all contribute well to this. For example, parents were consulted about the revision of the school's aims, and pupils contribute their views through the school council.
66. The school development plan, which was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, has improved. The plan that was written to address the inspection issues, was clearly written, included costings, and gave appropriate criteria for success. Responsibilities for different aspects were outlined and clear time-scales were included. This is a good quality document, which has supported the very good progress made in provision since then. The school is currently finalising a new development plan to a three-year time-scale to the same format. This identifies appropriate priorities, although it has not identified all current weaknesses, for example the low standards in geography at Key Stage Two. Nonetheless, it has the potential to provide a good basis for school improvement.
67. The school is well staffed by appropriately qualified teachers and support staff and there is a good match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum. There is a good balance of age, experience and service within the school. The well-qualified support staff are used very effectively to give extra help to pupils in a variety of learning situations. A positive feature of the school is the way all staff, including the premises manager, administrative staff and lunchtime supervisors, work together well for the benefit of pupils, and provide them with positive role models.
68. Performance management is in place and is on schedule. Teaching staff development is linked to the school development plan. Individual staff also have access to development opportunities identified as part of their co-ordination and professional training needs. Support staff also have access to training to enable them to fulfil their role effectively. Teachers new to the school are provided with good support to enable them to work effectively. However, the support to supply staff teachers, while satisfactory, does not always include sufficiently detailed planning for them to function at their best.
69. The school has good accommodation and good use is made of it. It is clean, bright and well maintained throughout. A very good range of display makes the school stimulating and interesting. The classrooms are an adequate size for current classes. The school has a well-appointed library off the hall that is used effectively to support the curriculum. The outside areas are very well used to extend the curriculum. Reception pupils have their own fenced outside area to develop their gross motor skills on a range of climbing apparatus and by riding bikes and trikes. A new classroom is being built next to the reception classroom for younger pupils in key stage one. These children will then be able to share the reception outside area. The accommodation is a good asset to learning.
70. There are satisfactory number and adequate range of resources for most subjects with resources for literacy and numeracy and religious education being good. Since the previous inspection resources

for information and communication technology have been improved. All resources are in good condition and appropriate to offer good support to learning. Resources are very well organised by the subject co-ordinators. Storage has been improved so that resources are accessible both to staff and pupils. Overall, resources contribute well to learning.

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

In order to continue with the improvements in standards, and build upon the current good quality of education, the school should:-

- (1) Improve standards of handwriting, (paragraphs 85. 92. 95) by:-
  - a. Adopting and teaching a common style which will support pupils' fluency in writing.
  - b. More rigorously ensuring that pupils maintain the application of their handwriting throughout their work.
  - c. Ensuring that staff consistently model good practice in their own writing.
  
- (2) Improve standards in geography at Key Stage Two (paragraphs 133. 136. 138. 139) by:-
  - a. Spending more time on the subject.
  - b. Ensuring that more attention is paid to the impact of geographical factors on how people live.
  - c. Enabling the co-ordinators to monitor standards and provision more carefully, so that they can advise colleagues more effectively.
  
- (3) Improve the marking of pupils' work, (paragraphs 27. 50. 110) so that it more consistently tells them what is good and what is weak about their efforts, and gives them clear targets for development.
  
- (4) Improve the monitoring and assessment of standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science (paragraphs 48. 60. 131. 139. 149. 155) by:-
  - a. Enabling subject leaders to systematically check on standards in the different age groups, tailoring the system to each particular subject.
  - b. Ensuring that subject leaders are able to feed back any issues to colleagues.
  - c. Introducing manageable systems of assessing pupils' progress which will help in planning future work, and will help in reporting more clearly to parents.
  
- (5) Improve reports to parents about their children (paragraph 54) by:-
  - a. Including more specific detail about what children know, understand and can do.
  - b. More consistently and clearly explaining what children can do to improve.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	5	12	12			
Percentage	3	17	40	40			

*The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than 3 percentage points.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		126
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		11

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		32

#### **English as an additional language**

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

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	94.8
National comparative data	94.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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



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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	8	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	17	17	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (85)	100(89)	100(93)
	National	83(82)	84(83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	17	17	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100(85)	100(93)	100(96)
	National	84(82)	88(86)	88(87)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	6	14	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	5	5
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	16	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80(63)	90(58)	90(63)
	National	75(70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	5	5
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	13	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65(63)	70(58)	75(71)
	National	70(68)	72(69)	79(75)

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

***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	123
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)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	25.2

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

*FTE means full-time equivalent*

***Financial information***

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	352130
Total expenditure	344476
Expenditure per pupil	2312
Balance brought forward from previous year	-10196
Balance carried forward to next year	-2542

***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.4

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	126
Number of questionnaires returned	56

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	34	2	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	41	0	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	39	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	41	11	0	12
The teaching is good.	62	34	0	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	39	2	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	27	0	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	37	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	54	34	9	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	48	39	4	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	46	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	32	23	4	20

### **Other issues raised by parents**

One parent strongly disapproved of the school's decision to reduce time spent on swimming, blaming this on bad advice from inspectors. Several praised the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.

## **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**

71. This has continued to be a significant strength since the last inspection. The arrangements for children in the foundation stage of their education are very good and a strength of the school. The majority of children achieve all the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> curriculum by the end of reception. Standards in personal, social and emotional development, creative and physical development are good by the time children start Key Stage One. Very good teaching promotes good learning and the children have very positive attitudes to their work and the school.
72. Children enter the school in the September after they are four years old, attending full time in the reception class. The majority of the children have had pre-school experiences in nurseries or playgroups. Attainment upon entry is below the local average for most areas of the curriculum.
73. Teachers use the information gained from baseline assessments to group the children to enable work to be targeted to meet needs. Teachers' very good planning for the range and depth of activities ensures that all children make good progress through the "stepping stones" stages of each of the Early Learning Goals. The teachers ensure that all information gained from these assessments is shared with parents and other staff who support children's learning. Children's progress is subject to frequent and effective monitoring and individual programmes are drawn up to support those with particular needs. This continual assessment enables teachers to deal with any problems immediately.
74. The curriculum provided is very good and children make good progress and achieve well in their learning. By the end of the year most attain the standards expected for this age group. This confirms the judgements made at the previous inspection. The Early Years policy, curriculum, and reception routines are fully shared with parents on their induction visits, with the teachers providing parents with suggestions and examples to help them prepare their children well for school.
75. The quality of teaching for reception children is very good overall, with excellent teaching being seen. This provides children with a very secure foundation on which learning is based. The teachers and nursery assistant know the children's needs very well and plan a curriculum that gives them the opportunity to develop fully. The adults have very good knowledge of the expectations and curriculum for pupils in Key Stage One and ensure that all the activities planned for reception children will support and give a good foundation for future work. Teaching is focused upon the children acquiring a full range of basic skills, especially language and social skills, to enhance learning. The teachers and supporting staff hold very high expectations that children will behave well, think and listen as well as work hard at all they are given to do. Besides the teachers and nursery assistant the school has a number of regular helpers drawn from parents and friends, many coming for the morning to help out and ending up staying the day! Adults ensure that the children enjoy their tasks, concentrate and persevere. The management of children is very good. Children are encouraged to be independent while given support to build their confidence. The high ratio of adults to children is particularly effective as not a minute is wasted and children can rapidly find an adult for support.
76. The school day is well organised to support and develop basic skills. Children undertake activities linked to the national literacy strategy and the national numeracy strategy daily. Good organisation ensures that by the end of each teaching session all children will have undertaken an adult led activity and worked independently. As well as English and mathematics lessons, children have the

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<sup>1</sup> The **Foundation Stage** curriculum is made up of six areas – personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. Standards are measured by the **Early Learning Goals** – what children are expected to know, understand and be able to do in the six areas by the age of five.

opportunity for investigations into science, history, geography and information and communication technology, through the topic for this term of the natural world. All children have the opportunity for structured play, including role-play during the inspection in “*Percy the Park Keepers Hut*” using a range of dressing up clothes. Creative art and design and music sessions also occur. Good provision is made for physical activities including the opportunity to ride bikes and trikes, use sand and water, cut, stick, manipulate malleable materials and use small word construction equipment.

77. Although two teachers share a teaching week, all the reception staff meet on Fridays to evaluate the week’s work, review the tracking notes on children and plan the following week’s activities. All are careful to differentiate activities for the range of abilities of the children and use the weekend to make anything necessary to fully enhance learning. All staff have had appropriate training to enable them to fulfil their role with knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage.
78. Resources are good. Children have access to a good range of books – stories, poems and factual texts as well as pictures, posters, prints and paintings. The puppet theatre has a good range of furry animals to support work in knowledge and understanding while physical development is supported well by a range of new climbing, rocking and riding equipment outdoors. The role play area is currently “*Percy’s Hut*” and well equipped with dressing up clothes, tools such as toy drills, hammers, screwdrivers, wheel barrows and spades.

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

79. Staff place great emphasis on the children’s personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is very good and the children make good progress. As a result the children by the end of the foundation stage often surpass the levels expected for five-year-olds nationally. Teaching and supporting staff create an environment where respect, understanding and the recognition and appreciation that we are all different underpins all the work. This helps the children to settle quickly into class routines and develops a sense of belonging to the school community. All staff are good role models and, as a result, children develop a positive self-image and recognise that everyone has something special to offer. Children clearly enjoy their work and co-operate happily with each other and adults. Staff constantly reinforce good habits via a “*Target of the Week*” such as putting up hands to answer questions or share their ideas and make sure that all children tidy up after activities. Children are also encouraged to select activities thoughtfully and work with care of and with consideration to others. Independence is successfully encouraged as children change themselves for physical activities and collect coats, bags and books at home time.

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

80. The development of communication, language and literacy is very good. Due to very good teaching most children make good progress. As a result, by the end of the foundation stage, all are likely to reach standards expected for children aged five and be in transition into Key Stage One work. Children know that pictures and print mean something; that books have an order and that the writing can be a story, a poem or give information. There are no “*non-readers*” in the reception class, just some who are better at using the writing to tell the story than others. Teachers use aspects of the literacy strategy well to meet the needs and develop the skills of these young readers and this effectively enhances their listening, speaking and reading skills. Sharing books, discussing the content, listening to stories, learning to decode print and the match of developing handwriting skills to their phonic work, all encourage children to consolidate and develop their early writing skills. All staff use precise and clear diction to assist children’s speech and develop their listening skills. Children are encouraged to reply to questions in clear sentences and to take this skill into their writing. Teachers provide good written models for the children and as a result nearly half attempt to write in the same style, even starting with a capital letter and ending with a full stop.

### **Mathematical development**

81. Children’s mathematical development is good. From a low overall starting point, all children are on line to meet the goals set at the end of the Foundation Stage and many to be well on into transition

into Key Stage One. Children are consolidating and developing their number skills through very effective teaching. The use of the national numeracy strategy is supported by number reinforcement across the curriculum. Children count the number of pupils in registration and into groups for activities. When moving round the school children use positional order for instance “...is first...”, “...lead the class...”, “finally.....”. Children are aware that four of them can use the role play area, two work in the sand tray and two at a time on the computer. Not only are all children able to count to 5, but about a half do so to 10, a quarter to 20 and a couple to 50. Over half of the children can identify a number position in a number line up to 6 by the shape of the number and all but a small group can find a missing number by counting up to that position. Children are aware of number operations such as adding and subtracting in 1’s with higher attaining pupils doing so in 2’s using language such as more/less. Children gain a sound understanding of shapes. Through making jam sandwiches they know that a square can be cut into two triangles and again to make 4 smaller ones. Similarly, they know that a square can be cut into four smaller squares but that each person gets less to eat the more the square is cut. Water and sand activities support children developments in capacity and volume while jigsaw puzzles support sequencing work.

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

82. The school provides very well for children’s knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children progress well, and are on line to meet or exceed the goals set for the end of the foundation stage. Teaching is good and adults provide many exciting activities to promote this area of development. The children have many opportunities to explore the natural and man-made world in the development of their scientific skills; for example the difference in texture, feel and use of wet and dry sand. Children are aware that leaves have two sides, one side having veins that can be used to print or make rubbed pictures and the other smooth and enabling the leaf to float in water. Children investigate the properties of man made and natural items - shells, leaves, plastic toys, metal scissors - testing for whether they sink or float and suggesting reasons why they do. The opportunity to study the intricacies of the bird’s nest brought wide eyes and ‘Wow’s’, especially when they realised that birds wove so carefully with only a beak, not hands with five fingers! Children develop their design and making skills well through building animals’ homes using blocks, interlocking plastic bricks and other construction toys. They use the computer with confidence and independence, and handle the mouse with increasing dexterity to select items on the screen. They know the way round the school and the local environment, heading for the hall for assembly and lunch. Children know about relationships within their families, knowing that grandparents are older than their mother or father. They know that to keep healthy they must clean their teeth, wash their hands after visits to the toilet and before meals and brush their hair.

### **Physical development**

83. Children’s physical development is good because of good teaching. Most will reach, or exceed the goals set for this area of learning. They are given access to and use proficiently a wide range of tools such as pencils, crayons, scissors and glue to write, make picture and models. Children are able to manipulate a range of drawing pencils to make a close observational drawing of a leaf and use a pastel sideways to make a rubbing, painting the veins to construct a print picture in autumn colours. They develop their physical skills indoors as well as during outdoor activities and are well co-ordinated and agile. They are able to use a range of constructive equipment, fitting blocks together out of Lego and other construction equipment. They move round the classroom carefully and without bumping or knocking things over. In the outdoor area they are able to play imaginatively on the bikes and trikes, cycling round the outside obeying the instruction that after three complete circuits they move on and let another have a go. They climb and balance on the equipment safely.

### **Creative development**

84. Good progress in children’s creative development ensures that they meet the early learning goals by the time they leave reception. Good teaching ensures that children have the opportunity to

experience a range of creative experiences: to sing; play a range of percussion instruments; draw, paint and crayon; cut and stick and make models and collages both big and small. Children hold brushes correctly and apply paint to paper with confidence, accuracy and good awareness of shape, pattern and colour. They are able to mix a range of colours and different tints and hues within a common colour, using black and white to make such darker or lighter. In the role-play area they imagined that they were in "*Percy's Hut*" discussing what a park keeper does, the stories they had heard about Percy and the park animals, and the jobs needing to be done. Children sing a range of songs from memory, especially during assemblies and can accompany themselves on a range of tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments. Children "*write*" imaginative plays for the animals in the puppet theatre and enjoy acting out the characters attempting different voices to stand for the different characters.

## ENGLISH

85. In the previous report, pupils' standards in English were judged to be in line with the national average for pupil's aged seven but below at age eleven. Since then, major improvements mean that pupils now reach the expected standards at the end of each key stage. The school has conducted a full analysis of results and working practices to produce strategies to improve standards at eleven, especially those of writing. The school has examined the effects of the national literacy strategy upon the timetable and resources; monitored teachers' planning and teaching; provided in-service training to support teachers' knowledge; made regular checks on pupils' work to indicate clearly what pupils know, understand and can do and changed the curriculum to give more time to develop writing skills. Results in national tests have improved as a consequence. Results in writing have improved significantly, more closely matching the reading scores. Over time, although there are fluctuations from year to year because of the different proportion of pupils with special needs in each group, overall results show that standards have risen, particularly in the last two years. Inspection evidence confirms the improvements show in the national tests since the previous inspection. Attainment in English is in line with what is expected for pupils' ages at age seven and eleven. Attainment in writing is average and is improving. Reading standards are at least satisfactory, as are pupils' speaking and listening skills. Handwriting standards, however, are weak.
86. Pupils successfully build on the very good start they make in the foundation stage. Across Key Stages One and Two, pupils make satisfactory progress so that, by the age of eleven, many achieve higher standards than would be expected when they started school. Pupils with special needs, including those with statements of special need, make good progress through the school and are given good support both in and out of classrooms. There is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy satisfactorily in literacy lessons and there is sufficient development of literacy skills in other subjects.
87. Throughout the school, pupils attain satisfactory standards in speaking and good standards in listening. By age eleven pupils fluently and precisely communicate their ideas and opinions when they are encouraged to do so. Pupils with special educational needs are constantly challenged to use their speaking and listening skills. Higher attaining pupils respond clearly and audibly to challenging questions on a range of texts. They contribute to lessons confidently and show awareness of the needs of the listener. Teachers encourage pupils to use appropriate, specialist vocabulary as well as use the vocabulary of the question to focus their answer and demonstrate comprehension and good listening skills. This has a positive effect on their ability to express themselves accurately and to use language effectively to explain, enquire and compare. For instance, a Year 6 group were able to talk about the Bible being written in the languages of the day, Hebrew and Greek. They could put well-known stories from the Old and New Testaments into today's parlance, and plan short dramatic pieces to illustrate them. Throughout the school pupils demonstrate their speaking skills through their reading aloud. Pupils use the punctuation and phrasing from the writing to clarify meaning and in discussions about the text use the vocabulary of the text to illustrate their discussions. Low attaining pupils, including those with special needs,



show increased confidence in reading texts and can talk with easy confidence to visitors. Pupils also have the opportunity to express their ideas through the 'school council'. Not only do they discuss important issues within the council, they communicate decisions and opinions back to their classes. By the end of Key Stage Two, pupils are articulate in most situations, and listen well to complex instructions. Most are confident orally and have a sufficiently wide vocabulary to articulate their ideas and opinions. Effective work in drama enhances the provision. For instance, there are whole school productions each year and there are also opportunities provided for pupils to watch live performances by visiting theatre groups.

88. Overall standards in reading by the time pupils are eleven are satisfactory, with many pupils achieving good levels. Pupils throughout the school read both fiction and non-fiction fluently and with enjoyment. When reading aloud they display knowledge of punctuation and the need for appropriate pausing, emphasis and inflection. They know about the structure of books and are able to talk about characters and plot and express preferences. Most pupils in Year 6 are able to use skimming and scanning to find information. Pupils are familiar with the Internet and are able to locate information using the CD-ROMs. This was particularly noticeable when researching the lives of famous people in history, using biographies to compose autobiographies. Project work in history shows that they are able to research and collate information from a wide range of reference material. The library is used well, and provides a good selection of fiction and non-fiction books. It is a well-organised and attractive space, which helps instil in pupils a real enthusiasm for reading. Older pupils know that fiction is classified alphabetically, they understand the features of non-fiction texts and explain the purpose of contents, index and glossary accurately.
89. More able readers in Year 6 read a wide variety of texts and refer to text when explaining the story. The best readers can predict outcomes in their stories and discuss genre with understanding. Pupils are able to use a variety of skills to read unknown words including phonics, initial letter and context clues. Younger pupils read accurately from the school's reading scheme of progressively more difficult texts and consolidate their skills by reading books at similar levels of difficulty. They recognise a good number of words by sight and use their knowledge of sounds and the illustrations to help them read, and their reading is mostly accurate. By the age of seven higher-attaining pupils read accurately, fluently and with good expression from a greater range of books. They learn to segment words into syllables, identify little words within big words and use the structure of the sentence to ensure that their reading makes sense. As they become more confident, they self-correct, read-on and re-read to clarify meaning. By the time they leave the school, most pupils read accurately, fluently and with good expression. Lower attaining pupils use phonic and context clues to read new words and are developing a range of reading strategies. They express preferences for different authors. They make satisfactory progress, showing a growing knowledge of high frequency words and developing reading strategies.
90. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they read and the stories that are read to them. Younger pupils identify patterns of rhyme and rhythm in poetry and older pupils recognise the use and effect of figurative language. Pupils retell stories well, predict events and identify and describe the characters. They are familiar with a good range of authors. Thorough reading records show that parents give valuable support by reading regularly with their children and this has a positive impact upon standards.
91. Pupils' attainment in writing meets national expectations, having previously been weak. This improvement is borne out in improved assessment scores for each year group. Pupils write for a range of purpose. For example, in the younger classes pupils have learned the features of letter writing using holiday postcards. In Year 1, pupils structure sentences to make comic stories, using rhyme in the style of "Scat Cat". In Year 5 pupils can analyse an instructional text and write a first draft of instructions for making a paper aeroplane, learning about the language and features of non-fiction texts. There are some good examples of pupils developing their writing skills in other subjects. For instance, in year 5 in religious education, pupils are able to list the similarities and differences between Islam and Christianity showing a growing awareness of sequence and use of vocabulary. Pupils review, retell and evaluate books such as "Funny bones" using words such as brilliant, exciting, funny. Average and lower-attaining pupils extend their ideas logically and

organise their writing appropriately. Their ideas are usually developed in sentences, demarcated by capital letters and full stops.

92. As they move through the school pupils build upon their early writing skills and by Years 5 and 6 their writing becomes more varied and interesting. Pupils respond creatively to stories, sustaining their ideas well and use more complex vocabulary. Handwriting is a weakness, however. Many children have peculiar finger grips and curled hand positions, which means that often they cannot see the end of their pens or pencils. Most letters are appropriately formed and orientated when printed, but pencil hold handicaps the correct joining points and there are erratic ascenders and descenders resulting in writing that does not flow and appear as a fluent style. During the course of their work pupils are encouraged to try out spellings for themselves and learn how to identify common spelling patterns, recognising words-within-words and learning spelling rules.
93. By the time they are eleven pupils' range of writing is varied and they have a good understanding of purpose and audience. They write reports, newspaper articles, poetry, letters, chronological accounts in history and take notes using an accurate/correct format with increasing expertise. They use adjectives, adverbs and similes imaginatively to write descriptions. Pupils demonstrate that they understand the characteristic structures and language of non-fiction texts when they write their own autobiographies and take from biographies of famous historical people such as Florence Nightingale to compose an autobiography. They learn to present stories from different points of view and present balanced arguments on a variety of issues drawn from the news of the day. Pupils learn to redraft their work, improving both content and style, in addition to correcting spellings and improving presentation. By the time they leave the school pupils know how to use paragraphs to organise their writing, their spelling and punctuation are generally accurate and a few pupils write in a good, fluent style.
94. Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour are good. Pupils with special educational needs show good attitudes to work, including those who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The majority of pupils enjoy sharing texts and join in reading with sustained interest. Pupils with special educational needs show improving levels of concentration and take pride in emerging reading skills. Pupils usually respond to questions with enthusiasm. They generally have good relationships with each other and are respectful and polite towards adults. They work hard, and can sustain concentration for long periods. They know what to do when they meet a problem and when they have completed their work. Pupils take responsibility for giving out resources and clearing up at the end of lessons.
95. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In some lessons it is good or very good. During the course of the inspection pupils made consistently satisfactory and sometimes good progress because of the quality of teaching. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good and has been greatly enhanced by literacy training, which has enabled them to plan appropriately for the literacy hour. However, the teaching of handwriting is weak, and teachers do not always provide a good model, particularly in marking books. In the better lessons teaching is lively, challenging and fast paced with effective use of visual aids. Good use is made of structured, open questioning to motivate and as a check to understanding, and pupils are encouraged to give extended reasoned answers where appropriate. Teachers have a good balance between teacher talk and child talk. Teachers share the lesson objectives so pupils know exactly what they have to learn. Support staff are used effectively during lessons. Work is linked to individual educational plans for pupils with special needs and their progress is carefully monitored. The best planning has clear objectives, with explicit targets for individual needs, lessons activities are appropriate and targeted to meet the needs of individuals. Big books and enlarged texts are used appropriately and group work is matched to pupils' differing levels of ability. The review time at the end of lessons is used effectively in helping pupils to consolidate and extend their learning and this makes a positive contribution to their achievements. Teachers' expectations are high and they manage their pupils well. Behaviour management is very good overall; teachers rarely raise their voices and use praise appropriately to motivate all pupils.

96. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All pupils participate fully in the literacy programme. Booster classes for pupils have also been utilised to improve attainment. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the close consistent support they receive each day from learning support staff.
97. Assessment in English is very good. The school uses national test results extensively to track the attainment of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. As a result of this, writing has been targeted as an area for improvement. Training and moderating exercises have had a positive impact on assessment. Non-statutory end-of-year tests are used to confirm teachers' assessments and inform planning. Teacher assessment is consistent, identifies strengths and weaknesses and gives a clear picture of progression to the next stage of learning. Pupils have their own personal targets, which they understand and actively work towards. Marking of pupils' work is consistent; it is constructive, indicates areas for improvement and informs day-to-day planning in line with the school's marking policy.
98. The established English co-ordinator retired last term, but a new co-ordinator has been appointed and the two are working together to ensure continuity of standards and working practice. This makes a very good contribution to the development of the subject and provides high quality leadership. Both are highly committed, dedicated and have a clear vision for the development of English. The good leadership of the previous co-ordinator supported teachers well. The policy and scheme of work are subject to frequent review to ensure that they continue to meet the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. Staff have received appropriate literacy training and regular meetings are held to disseminate information and discuss developmental issues. Effective monitoring of the literacy hour has had a positive impact on teaching and learning. Good liaison between the school and feeder schools ensures a smooth transition at the end of Year 6.
99. Resources have been reviewed and enhanced by the addition of books to support literacy. The library area with its collection of non-fiction books provides a valuable resource for research and independent learning. There are fiction collections, group-reading resources and textbooks, available in each classroom, or in accessible areas around the school. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

100. Overall standards in mathematics have risen when compared with the previous inspection which indicated average and below average standards for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 respectively. Standards now exceed the national expectation at the end of each key stage.
101. The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2000 for pupils aged eleven years of age were above the national average when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving above the expected level (Level 5) was also above the national average. The results for pupils aged seven years of age were also above the national average. Provisional results for 2001 indicate that standards have been maintained, although national comparisons are not yet available.
102. Present inspection evidence shows that standards are now above average for pupils aged seven and eleven years of age. Learning, previously identified as unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4, is now good with no unsatisfactory teaching observed. Levels of challenge, and rigour to further raise standards are generally good. Assessment procedures, previously judged as inconsistent, are developing well and are now satisfactory, informing future planning throughout the school. Overall the improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn well and make good progress.
103. Pupils enter the reception class with attainment levels below the national average. By the age of seven in the mixed Year 2/3 class pupils are attaining standards above nationally expected levels. Progress through the Year 1/2 class is sound, reflecting satisfactory levels of teaching. In the

combined Year 1/2 class where there is a high proportion of Year 2 pupils with special educational needs, most pupils are achieving standards below nationally expected levels. However, in the Year 2/3 class almost all pupils are achieving at a standard close to the national average with a good proportion of pupils achieving at a higher level than expected for seven-year-olds. Pupils in this class work confidently with numbers up to fifty and well beyond into hundreds. Most pupils are generally confident with money, adding and subtracting amounts up to fifty pence and giving the correct change. Pupils confidently measure accurately to the nearest centimetre, recording all estimations clearly before undertaking the actual measurement. As observed in a very good oral mathematics session in the Year 2/3 class, most pupils count in multiples of two, five and ten up to one hundred, recognising the link between the written number, its position in the hundred square pattern and comparative size. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of shape, space and measure, confidently naming a range of solid shapes and identifying the shapes of faces accurately. This was very evident in a design and technology lesson where pupils were actively involved in the construction of 'nets' to manufacture a cuboid shape. Pupils' progress in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to collect and interpret data is less well developed. At present there is insufficient planned use of ICT to underpin skills in handling data.

104. Older pupils confidently work with a range of fractions, changing improper fractions to whole numbers. In Year 6, for example, most pupils can explain clearly the difference between four and five sixths and four and five eighths, while looking at fractional parts. In the mental test observed pupils are quick with number and in discussion confidently describe how to work things out using their own strategies to get the answers to problems. However this is limited to work in mental mathematics, and there are too few opportunities for pupils to investigate and record answers to problems in every day life in written form. The setting of work involving real life problems is not a strong feature of many lessons in the upper juniors.
105. Overall the quality of teaching is good. This supports the improving trends in the school's performance. The good teaching in the Year 2/3 class has a significant and very positive impact on pupils' achievements. Teaching is very good in Year 6, accelerating pupils' learning to a point where most are at a level above expectations for their age. The present Year 6 class contains a high proportion of pupils needing additional assistance and some are at present on the school's special educational needs register. In the very good lesson observed in Year 6, the teacher maintained a high level of challenge for all pupils, successfully using a range of mathematical equipment to clearly illustrate parts of one whole.
106. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a very beneficial impact on the quality and continuity of teachers' planning. In the good lessons there is a suitable balance of whole class teaching, individual and group work involving all pupils in discussion. The brisk mental starter, the sharing of lesson targets at the start of the lesson and the gathering together at the end of the lesson to review the learning that has taken place are benefiting pupils' understanding of mathematical language.
107. Although pupils' thinking is successfully encouraged in many lessons, some written work is too closely directed by the class teacher. For example there is too much work in the form of horizontal 'sums'. Pupils are not given the opportunity to devise their own systems. As observed in the Year 1/2 class, many pupils are required to record their answers formally, often in the form of incorrectly formed figures rather than developing a more practical approach to problem solving using practical equipment.
108. Pupils with special educational needs find most difficulty doing the quick fire mental starter at the beginning of lessons, as observed in Year 4/5. Nevertheless when given specific questions appropriate to their ability, most answer confidently. The system of pairing a higher attaining pupil with a pupil less confident in numeracy in Year 6 during sessions involving answering questions on the white board favourably enhances the sharing of strategies, with the less confident pupil often writing on the white board.

109. Pupils have excellent attitudes to mathematics and respond with great enthusiasm in most lessons. This enhances the quality of learning for all pupils. Pupils work co-operatively in groups, collaborating and sharing ideas and equipment. All pupils display good levels of motivation and oral confidence. However most pupils have yet to develop the necessary independence to select their own equipment for a particular task.
110. Leadership of the subject by the senior management team is good. Taken as a whole, arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress and attainment are satisfactory. National tests are analysed to identify trends and used for development. The school is aware of the need to develop this area still further, especially when comparing the performance of boys and girls in relation to a particular question. The school has developed the use of non-statutory test material to track pupils' progress from year to year, clearly projecting the number of pupils who will achieve national expectations. Marking gives praise to individuals and the very best examples observed in Year 6 inform pupils how to improve their work, but this level of help is not consistently given in all classes. The consistent use of homework is developing in most classes which, when given and checked by the class teacher, has a direct impact on standards achieved and consolidates previous learning.
111. Most classroom displays reflect a range of appropriate mathematical language. However, displays in Year 4/5 contain very little of pupils' own work and are generally of poor quality. Very good use is made of support staff. For example in the Year 2/3 class practical measuring activities were suitably enhanced by the presence of supporting adults in the classroom, who also supported those who found aspects of numeracy challenging.
112. The excellent relationships that exist between pupils and adults help to ensure calm, well-organised routines that enhance the quality of good learning. There is a strong positive shared commitment to raise standards still further.

## **SCIENCE**

113. Standards in science are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage One, and ahead of national expectations at the end of Key Stage Two. Standards have improved since the last inspection, when standards were unsatisfactory at Key Stage Two.
114. Results of teacher assessments at Key Stage One in 2000 were well above average because all pupils got to the expected level 2. Similarly, in 2001, almost all pupils achieved level 2. Inspection evidence confirms this picture, with almost all pupils achieving at the expected level, although with few exceeding it. Much of this is due to the good support given to pupils who might otherwise struggle with the work, both by the teacher and by skilled learning support staff. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 showed a secure understanding of the five senses and which organs were associated with them. They could describe the features of a range of animals, and some attempted to explain the differences between them, in the shapes of their noses, for example. Pupils in Year 2 had a good understanding of animals and their young and, with prompting, were able to explain the idea of a life-cycle in simple terms. All were able to accurately sort animals into those that lay eggs, and those that give birth to live young.
115. Results of national tests at the end of Key Stage Two in 2000 were average with respect to all schools nationally, and below average compared to similar schools (those with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals). Following a concentration on raising standards and improving teaching in science over the last year, results for 2001 are much better. Almost all pupils achieved the expected level 4 in the tests, and over half achieved the higher level 5. Although national comparative results are not yet available, this represents a dramatic improvement over the previous year.
116. Inspection evidence confirms these high standards at the end of Key Stage Two. Work in pupils' books from last year reveals a good understanding of a range of scientific topics, which have been

covered in some depth. Standards in these books are high in most aspects of science, and are satisfactory in scientific enquiry. The relative weakness in scientific enquiry is because relatively little time was devoted to this aspect, compared to the time spent on other strands of science. Nevertheless, such work as pupils did reveals a sound understanding of a fair test, and a satisfactory ability to relate practical work to their scientific knowledge. Good use was made of practical work during lessons observed, and pupils performed experiments and investigations sensibly and with understanding of their purpose. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 showed a secure understanding of a fair test and, when prompted, could identify which variables needed to be kept constant. They could suggest reasons why some materials would be better for soundproofing than others. Most pupils could make predictions, and half the class could suggest logical reasons for their predictions. Pupils in Year 6 showed good observational skills when trying to identify different leaves. Higher attaining pupils refined their observations by concentrating on specific features, such as the extent to which a leaf has a serrated edge, or the detailed pattern on the veins. They made good use of a range of reference books to identify leaves, and made careful drawings of what they had found. The majority understand how to use a branching key to aid identification.

117. Teaching in the subject is good. Usually, a good balance is drawn between practical work and the teaching of specific information, so that pupils are able to make connections between the two. Lessons are well planned and structured to systematically develop pupils' understanding. Teachers are generally clear about what they intend pupils to learn, and in better lessons share this with their pupils. Relationships are good and expectations are clear, so that pupils behave well. For example, when Year 6 pupils all went out to collect leaves on a windy day, their behaviour was good, they co-operated sensibly and worked hard. Clear and lively explanations, and a good pace to lessons, hold pupils' interest and attention, so they are involved in their work and make good progress in the time available. Teachers have good subject knowledge, so their explanations are clear, and pupils know what to do. Work in progress is monitored effectively, and advice to groups and individuals helps them to clarify their thinking. In better lessons, challenging questioning gets pupils to think through and explain their understanding, so that their learning is consolidated well. Good use is made of learning support staff to ensure that all pupils are fully involved, and in particular to ensure that pupils with special needs make good progress.
118. Pupils enjoy their work, particularly practical work, and work hard. They show good collaborative skills. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 worked together very effectively and sensibly when sorting pictures of animals and their young, sharing their ideas and arriving at collective decisions. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 worked very effectively in pairs when experimenting with soundproofing, and showed good concentration. Behaviour is good, and pupils are generally enthusiastic about science.
119. The subject is well managed. Since the last inspection, more time has been spent on science, effective schemes of work put into place, and assessment procedures improved. Monitoring of teaching and standards by the co-ordinator has ensured the successful implementation of these improvements, with a consequent rise in standards. Good use is made of assessment information. For example, results of national tests at Key Stage Two are analysed in detail, and areas where pupils had less success identified. This information is then used to modify the curriculum for the following year, to redress any weaknesses. Across the school as a whole, there is good use of practical work, as shown both by the work in pupils' books, and by lessons observed.
120. In general, pupils are encouraged to write about their understanding in their own words, and usually do so successfully. However, last year, in Year 6, too much time was spent in copying out notes, so that too many pieces of work in different pupils' books are identical. While this gives pupils useful revision notes for the tests, it deprives them of the chance to clarify their thinking by explaining things in their own words, and makes it difficult for the teacher to assess just how much they have understood.
121. Some good use is made of ICT to support pupils' knowledge, but the school lacks equipment for sensing physical data. Good use is made of pupils' numeracy skills, particularly in data handling, to support their learning in science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

122. Standards of attainment in art and design meet the national expectation at the end of each key stage, maintaining standards since the last inspection. Pupils have suitable opportunities to work in a wide range of materials, and develop their skills and expertise steadily as they get older. A strength of the work on display in the school is that based on the styles of a range of established artists. All work on display is of sound quality, and some pieces are of a good standard. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
123. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have done paintings in the style of Mondrian, which reflect both his approach and his use of colour, while retaining a sense of individuality in the finished work. Their good quality pastels, based on Monet's "Water Lilies," are notable for their effective use of the possibilities of this medium, in blending and smudging colours. Collages based on Matisse's work show that pupils have extended their skills successfully into yet another medium. In Years 3 and 4, very effective crayon drawings in the style of Kandinsky are characterised by their subtle use of colour, and show the ability to use the elements of the artist's style without simply copying. In Years 5 and 6, work in batik shows a lively use of colour, and some imagination in design. Pupils in Year 6 have sound drawing skills overall, and use them effectively in other lessons, such as when drawing different leaf shapes in science. Their skills cover a wide range, with some showing very accurate representations, and others still somewhat immature.
124. The school has been experimenting in the last few months with different schemes of work, but a decision has now been made to produce their own scheme, tailored to make cross-curricular links with topics in other subjects. The recently appointed co-ordinator has worked hard to produce a draft scheme to this end. This is now in use, and has the potential to provide pupils with a broad and balanced experience in each year group. It does not yet provide a clear framework for the development of pupils' skills in the different artistic elements such as tone and line, but the co-ordinator already has plans to refine and improve the scheme over the next year. She has good subject knowledge, and has already identified a number of areas that need developing in the subject. These include systems for monitoring standards across the age range, as well as simple assessment systems.
125. Finished results suggest that teaching is satisfactory. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, and this was sound. A lively and clear introduction ensured that pupils in Years 1 and 2 got on quickly and enthusiastically with their work, in developing hand-eye co-ordination using their senses. Good relationships contributed to a calm, working environment. However, the provision of templates for some of the work meant pupils did not have the opportunity to use their imagination, or develop their ideas beyond the mundane. They achieved sound standards in their work, behaved well, and enjoyed the lesson.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

126. Most pupils are making satisfactory progress in designing and making throughout the school. This reflects a similar judgement made in the previous inspection. In discussion with pupils in Year 6 they confidently gave examples of evaluating their work and that of others in a very constructive manner, talking about the building of a prototype before starting on the finished product. This shared approach provides good opportunities for their personal and social development, and is suitably enhanced during practical sessions.
127. Attainment and progress for pupils in Year 2 is satisfactory; building upon the very good practical work undertaken in the reception class where close links with language and numeracy are established. During a lesson in Year 2 pupils successfully manufactured a simple 'net' for a cuboid after closely examining a range of cardboard packages before disassembling and refolding them to

their original shapes. The subject is effectively used to inspire learning in other subjects, particularly basic skills in cutting, scoring and measuring accurately in centimetres.

128. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is satisfactory for most pupils. For example, pupils confidently design slippers, labelling the various types of materials to be used following an experiment to test wearing suitability. Pupils confidently refine their original ideas, aware of costs involved, and that aesthetic considerations play an important part in the commercial world. Pupils are encouraged to use their own initiative and solve problems regarding the joining of materials. Projects are skilfully used to integrate the construction of a moving fairground roundabout with pupils giving examples of using an electric motor or an elastic band to provide a source of energy. Planned projects from photographic evidence indicate the bringing together of science, history and literacy in addition to aspects of cultural, social and personal education. For example, in the lunch-time art and craft club, pupils design model cardboard homes, confidently discussing the need for windows to give light and the types of material needed to keep the building watertight.
129. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Most lessons are well planned, for example in Year 6 where an adequate supply of appropriate resources enhances learning and the teacher uses questioning well, challenging pupils to make decisions about the quality and suitability of their designs. Teachers constantly reinforce language skills well, using the relevant vocabulary and encouraging individual and group opinions. In less successful lessons, for example in Year 4/5, practical activities are over directed by the class teacher with pupils given only limited opportunity to create their own methods of recording the taste and texture of a selection of breads. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported because of the effective intervention of the learning support assistant.
130. Most pupils listen attentively to instructions and follow them carefully, responding to health and safety requirements in a positive manner, for example the carrying of scissors or the washing of hands before tasting the samples of bread. Behaviour is good with most pupils sharing equipment sensibly. In Year 6, for example, the tidy up routine is well established, with the minimum amount of time being lost. The response to the subject is very good overall, particularly in lessons where the task being undertaken is challenging and matched clearly to pupils' differing levels of ability.
131. The co-ordination of the subject is barely satisfactory with the present co-ordinator in post for less than three weeks. Nevertheless her energy and enthusiasm and good awareness of the subject's present strengths and weaknesses reflect a growing intention to improve the subject's currently low status. Teachers work well to ensure continuous provision and support each other by collecting and storing a range of resources. A suitable policy is in place and planning is soundly supported by recently introduced government guidelines. Throughout the school the process of making is not supported in all classes by suitable opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work. Assessment of developing skills is unsatisfactory; as a result work in some lessons is often not accurately matched to the individual needs of pupils. The co-ordinator is aware of this weakness and there are plans to introduce a simple recording system. The school has not yet introduced the element of control technology and the use of ICT systems to enhance design skills is at present unsatisfactory.

## **HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY**

132. History and geography are taught in alternate half-terms. They are co-ordinated jointly by two teachers, and the current scheme of work is based on a two-year rolling programme, linked to national guidelines. No lessons were observed during the inspection, and judgements are based on looking at pupils' work, including work from the previous year at Key Stage One, and on talking to pupils at both key stages.
133. At the end of Key Stage One, standards meet national expectations in both subjects. At the end of Key Stage Two, standards meet expectations in history, but fall below what is expected in geography. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection except in geography at Key Stage Two.



134. Pupils make a sound start in history, and by the end of Key Stage One have a satisfactory understanding of some differences between the past and present, such as differences in lamps between contemporary and Victorian times. They know about different styles of homes from different times in England, and have related this to their own homes. They know something of how people change as they get older, and that people in the past had different problems. For example, they were fascinated by the primitive toilet arrangements that existed in mediaeval castles. They know something of famous people in the past and their lives, and why they are important; for example Florence Nightingale.
135. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of aspects of geography by the end of Year 2, and some show a good understanding of the local area and of maps. They quickly located Leicester, Kettering and Corby on a map of England, and knew they were large local towns. They showed an appreciation of some of the differences between large and small towns, such as the presence of a railway station, or the range of shops. They understand direction on a map, and have a good emerging understanding of a key. They know some of the conventions of map-making, such as blue lines for rivers. From their studies of a town in Mexico, they have an emerging understanding of the differences between places, and the effects differences might have on people's lives. They understand the problems that some people face without running water, and the difficulties of washing clothes without a washing machine. They know that people wear different clothes, because the temperature is different in different places.
136. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of what history is, appreciating that it is about the recent as well as the distant past. They also know that historical facts are often revised, as more evidence comes to light. They understand the role of archaeologists in this process. They show a sound factual knowledge of aspects of life at different periods, including the Romans, the Ancient Greeks and Britain in the Second World War. They are able to gain information from a range of sources of evidence, including the internet, the library and various artefacts. They particularly enjoy practical work, and can relate some of what they studied, even from over a year ago. They enjoy visits out, and from their visit related to World War Two, they remember researching various aspects of the topic, including costumes, ration cards and air-raid shelters, and they learned some topical songs. Pupils are starting to make links between events and changes, such as those brought about by the use of electricity. They know that evidence may be presented from a particular point of view, and how this may change our understanding of the past.
137. In discussion, Year 6 pupils showed that their understanding of geography is weak, and they are not reaching the standards outlined in the national curriculum. They have a sound knowledge of maps, and of some aspects of physical geography, such as rivers. However, their knowledge of how geographical factors impact on people's lives is unsatisfactory. They understand the idea of keys and of scale, and other map conventions. They know about the different features of a river, and have a secure understanding of the water cycle. With prompting, they worked out that Hull, Liverpool and Bristol were all built on rivers, but were unable to suggest any reasons why, other than to provide a water supply. They had little understanding of the use of rivers for transport. Pupils were unable to remember studying any specific places outside Britain, or having compared lifestyles of people in different places. They were unable to suggest other than superficial differences between the ways of life of people who lived in different environments. They did not know anything of the industry or economy of the local area, and almost all found it difficult to suggest why people might visit Uppingham on holiday.
138. Although the school identifies a suitable time allocation to the subjects, class timetables suggest that this is not met in practice. At Key Stage One, a suitable balance is drawn between the two subjects, enabling pupils to achieve appropriately in each. From discussion with pupils at Key Stage Two, the time appears to be inadequate to give them a satisfactory understanding in depth of each subject. Although they have reached sound standards in history, their knowledge of geography is too superficial. Too little attention is given to the impact of geographical factors on people's lives.

139. The two co-ordinators have worked effectively to introduce the national guidelines, and adapt them to suit the mixed aged classes in the school. Because the school has had other priorities, the co-ordinators have had few opportunities to monitor the implementation of the guidelines, or the standards achieved by pupils. This means that they had not identified the disparity in older pupils' attainment in the two subjects. Although the co-ordinators explained that some geographical and history topics should be enhanced by the use of suitable materials during literacy lessons, results suggest that this has not been successful for geography.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

140. Pupils' attainment at the ages of seven and eleven is in line with the expectations of the national curriculum. There are no differences in pupils' achievement caused by gender or by their prior attainment. All pupils make good progress in their learning. At the time of the previous inspection standards achieved were higher than expected nationally. Expectations of the subject have changed since the previous inspection and demands on pupils are now greater. Thus standards have steadily risen in line with raised expectations. The use of ICT as a tool in other subjects is well developed throughout the school.
141. All pupils are able to load programmes from a floppy disk or the computer hard drive. Older pupils are able to load directly from the Internet. Pupils control a mouse to move the cursor round the screen, click to enter different parts of programmes and all pupils are learning to use the keyboard with dexterity. At the end of lessons pupils save their work and exit programs efficiently, closing down the machine correctly. Throughout the school pupils develop and practise word processing skills, drafting directly onto the word processor. Most pupils can change the print style, size, and colour and print out their work. Likewise, pupils learn how to use databases, spreadsheets and graphs in mathematics and science and painting and drawing programmes for work in art. Although teachers directly teach skills and identify programs to practice those skills, most work within classes involves pupils using their developing ICT skills across other subjects of the curriculum.
142. Thus year 6 pupils practised their Internet training in their literacy work by entering web pages about well known people such as Geri Halliwell. In science, a group of pupils composed a book about "*Ospreys*". They downloaded information onto the hard drive from the Internet and used a word processing package to edit, selecting cut and paste icons. Pupils moved the text round the page, downloaded pictures, graphs and other statistical information and used such as "*Word Art*" to present the work attractively, ready for display as a bound book.
143. The quality of teaching is good overall. As a result, pupils develop a secure skills base. They are given plenty of experiences upon which to build confidence. Teachers understand well the programs that they choose to use. They match these carefully to support work in subjects such as design and technology, literacy and numeracy. Teachers directly teach computer skills, encouraging pupils to "have a go" and experiment so that they solve problems. They have high expectations of pupils' independence with the equipment. Pupils enjoy this and the result is an improving understanding of their work. Teachers' planning is supportive; they share their own expertise and knowledge and make on going assessments to guide learning further.
144. As they move through the school pupils build up a good skills base across a wide range of communication equipment. Pupils can use an overhead projector in lessons and for assemblies, tape recorders, compact disk players, digital cameras and a programmable robot round a track. The school has a good range of software to support learning in most curriculum areas and pupils are learning well how to use these when researching into and editing information for such as history, geography and science.
145. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, keen and enthusiastic and well supported by the ICT governor and the nursery assistant who is also an ICT qualified trainer. Together they share their expertise generously with teachers, learning support assistants and children alike, supporting those who are

less confident with the equipment. Teacher expertise has developed well and the co-ordinator directs this carefully, ensuring staff training needs are addressed appropriately. The school has yet to start New Opportunities funded training, but a trainer has been selected and staff are looking forward to developing their knowledge and understanding further under the trainer's guidance.

146. The policy for ICT and the scheme of work are subject to frequent review and teachers' long and medium term plans are monitored to ensure pupils' skills are progressing appropriately. Resources are satisfactory. The school does not have an information and communication technology suite; all but two computers are in classes so that pupils have a point of access in lessons to support learning across the curriculum and gain much practical expertise. The two computers not in classes are located in the library area. Learning support assistants can take younger pupils to use these during lessons and when working out of class with special educational needs children to facilitate learning, older pupils can use these independently when undertaking research projects in the library area. During the week the literacy governor, nursery support assistant and the special educational needs teacher run a computer club for some pupils who do not have home access to a computer. Pupils are able to practise skills such as writing and sending e-mail messages to each other, make spread sheets and experiment further with control, art and games programmes.

## **MUSIC**

147. All pupils are making good progress and standards across the school are above expectations. This is similar to the standards observed in the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy music and sing enthusiastically in assemblies and this makes a very positive impact on the standards achieved by all pupils. The strengths of the subject are in performance, both singing and instrumental.
148. No lessons were observed during the inspection due to timetable arrangements. Based on performance in assemblies and reviewing past school productions on video, standards in singing by the ages of seven and eleven years of age are above national expectations. Pupils join in happily and most sing in tune. All the words are heard clearly and are sung together in unison. Their efforts ensure good learning overall. The very good expertise of the music co-ordinator ensures that all pupils develop good levels of technical skill. Skills in playing and performing on instruments are high. The tuition provided by visiting specialists is good and a wide range of extra-curricular groups including an orchestra and recorders add extra opportunities for pupils to perform in front of an audience. This includes performing in assemblies and to many community groups in the locality. The school has made the decision to use the expertise of the headteacher to lead weekly music lessons in most classes. Class teachers benefit from her expertise.
149. The subject co-ordinator has a very clear overview of the subject and is aware of the need to develop the programme of skills in composition and musical appreciation throughout the school. Effective assessment procedures have not yet been developed and this reflects in the variable quality of records and reports to parents. There are sufficient resources to teach the subject and suitable opportunities have been planned in the scheme of work to include information and communication technology. At present the planned use of ICT to enhance standards is unsatisfactory.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

150. Overall, pupils attain standards appropriate for their ages by the age of seven and eleven years of age. Progress is satisfactory for most pupils including those with special educational needs. Standards since the previous inspection have been maintained.
151. In Year 1, pupils perform a series of controlled actions, stopping and starting in response to a wide variety of pre-recorded rhythms. Pupils use space confidently, developing imaginary shapes using parts of the body in a well-controlled manner. They move forwards and backwards under suitable control. In the Year 6 lesson involving a sequence of twisting and turning movements pupils confidently worked together in pairs developing a range of balancing movements. Pupils in the

Year 2/3 class have a very good understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies and relate this well to the 'warm up' and 'cool down' sessions at the beginning and end of lessons.

152. Most pupils are due to undertake swimming lessons during the summer term, a reduction from previously swimming weekly throughout the year. This change was made by the school in order to place greater emphasis on literacy, numeracy and science and has resulted in substantial gains in time for these subjects. Nevertheless most pupils in Year 6 reach the required standard of swimming twenty-five metres using a recognisable stroke by the end of the juniors. Outdoor educational activities are undertaken during a well-planned educational visit that includes canoeing and caving.
153. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Where teachers have good subject knowledge, for example in the organisation of a team game to develop catching and aiming skills, the quality of teaching is good. The planning and pace of lessons is generally good and most teachers ensure that there is appropriate balance between 'warm up', demonstration, practice and performance before final 'cool down'. All teachers use praise effectively, celebrating success, encouraging collective celebration of the work of others. In the lesson observed involving a range of team games, good opportunities were provided for pupils to evaluate each other's performance, giving a strong link to speaking and listening skills. Nevertheless, this good aspect of teaching is not a regular feature in all lessons. Very clear explanations and the use of pupils to model techniques and strategies underpin the excellent relationships between pupils and teachers. Most lessons are enjoyable, undertaken in a calm, relaxed manner, effectively providing a valuable social experience. Teachers usually show good management skills although, for example in Year 4/5, a small minority of pupils do not give their full attention to the teacher, preferring instead to carry on with the activities being undertaken.
154. Pupils behave well; work well independently and with a partner in a group. However, routines for carrying large equipment safely, for example landing mats, are not well established in Year 4/5.
155. The school has a suitable programme of work that covers all aspects of the National Curriculum during the year. The quality of spacious indoor and outside hard and soft play areas enhances provision successfully. The use of equipment at lunchtimes enables pupils to play successfully in teams, consolidating still further skills in catching and throwing. Activities involving counting, especially in games activities, give support to the school's initiative in numeracy. The co-ordinator is aware of the work that is being undertaken in classes, but there is no planned opportunity to observe lessons taking place to monitor standards being achieved and where improvements might be made. Assessment of pupils' developing physical skills is unsatisfactory, failing to inform future planning and learning targets. The school makes very good arrangements for the consolidation of games skills at lunch times when a large range of small equipment, skipping ropes and balls is available for all pupils to use under the guidance of energetic lunch time supervisors. These activities, together with residential visits, contribute very significantly towards pupils' social development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

156. By the ends of both key stages, pupils' attainment matches that expected by the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those of the previous inspection. Lessons and assemblies contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral and social education. Good work has been achieved in developing the policy and scheme of work in line with the new syllabus. Resources have been purchased to enable a full curriculum to be taught. The subject is sensitively linked to other areas of the curriculum and provides a clear and progressive development of pupils' knowledge and understanding across the school.
157. Younger pupils develop good awareness and appreciation of objects and people that are special to them in their own lives and transfer these attitudes towards artefacts related to religion. For instance, younger pupils identify key symbols of the Christian faith such as the cross, candles,

baptism robes, Bibles and hymnbooks and how they are used in worship. In their study of Judaism pupils likewise reflect on the use of the prayer shawl in worship. Christian festivals such as Harvest, Christmas, Lent and Easter are well linked to Diwali, Ramadan and Hannukah, with pupils learning the stories behind each festival. All pupils know and enjoy stories about Jesus and those told by him to highlight moral points - stories such as the Good Samaritan, the feeding of the five thousand and Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection. The life of Mohammed and the early history of the Islamic faith are learned, along with the five pillars in the daily life of a Muslim in Britain today. Pupils know the story of the Israelites from Abraham onwards, including the story of Moses in Egypt, the plagues and the giving of the 10 commandments. They develop an appropriate understanding of the relevance of the commandments for today.

158. Older pupils know about sacred texts, and can identify the language of writing. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils identified that the Old Testament, coming from Jewish writings, would have been written originally in Hebrew, while the New Testament, starting with the life and works of Jesus, would have been written in Greek as that was the commercial language of the day. Taking stories from the Old and New Testaments, pupils composed dramatic sketches to retell the stories for a modern audience, changing the language and perhaps the setting, but keeping to the meaning behind the story. They successfully recounted stories such as Adam and Eve and how the world was spoiled or Noah and the flood, using a modern treatment.
159. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to their religious education work, treating artefacts with respect and listening carefully to information about different faiths and the lives of the key prophets. In discussions they give respect to the ideas and opinions of others, and are making good progress in developing a questioning and thoughtful approach to their work. In general, pupils listen carefully to one another, and combine good speaking skills with a command of appropriate religious vocabulary. They progress well, deepening their own knowledge and comprehension of spiritual matters. They take the work seriously and work well with each other. Work is covered through a good balance of discussion and written work, which enables all pupils to take an active part, irrespective of their literacy skills. Behaviour is good in lessons.
160. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Planning of lessons is related appropriately to the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Teachers are generally confident and create interest in the topic to be covered. Pupils with special educational needs are supported appropriately and pupils are asked challenging questions in the better lessons to further raise awareness. Generally the pace of lessons is good and time is used effectively. Teachers' expectations when setting written work are high. Their expectations of the level of pupils' knowledge and understanding and their ability to identify different points of view are also high. Teachers are good at getting pupils to make the connection between their own experiences and new information so as to reinforce the learning. Teachers are aware of the need to present faiths such as Judaism and Islam not only historically, but also in the context of Britain today.
161. Religious education is carefully managed by the co-ordinator. She has introduced a more systematic approach to the subject through the provision of clear guidelines following the Locally Agreed Syllabus and has taken account of the new national guidance. There is a comprehensive overall scheme, which gives effective guidance to help teachers to plan efficiently. Procedures for assessment are continuing to be developed. Assessment opportunities are identified on planning and work samples have been collected from each year group. This monitoring element is an improvement since the previous inspection. Visits to places of worship are included in the planning.