

INSPECTION REPORT

ARNOLD VIEW PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Arnold

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 131642

Headteacher: Mr A Hickman

Reporting inspector: Mr P H Cole
2616

Dates of inspection: 26 – 29 June 2000

Inspection number: 222069

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gedling Road Arnold Nottingham
Postcode:	NG5 6NW
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Key
Date of previous inspection:	Kingswell Junior School, January 1998 Hill Rise Infant and Nursery, December 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
P H Cole	Registered inspector	Information technology Design and technology Music Equality of opportunity	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
D L Lloyd	Lay inspector		Pupil's attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
A McGregor	Team inspector	English Art Religious education	Special educational needs
A J Edwards	Team inspector	Science Physical education	
J Smith	Team Inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Arnold View Primary and Nursery School was opened in January 1999 following the amalgamation of the previously separate infant and junior schools that occupied the site. With 281 pupils on roll it is slightly larger than most primary schools. A further 52 pupils attend part-time in the nursery unit. The school has mainly white pupils but 16 pupils come from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds and all of them speak English well. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (19%) is lower than the average for primary schools. All of these pupils are on the early stages of assessment and none have statements to support their particular needs. The number of pupils in the school who are entitled to have free school meals is average. Although the pupils come from a range of different social backgrounds there are no extremes of affluence or deprivation. The baseline assessments made of pupils when they enter school show attainment on entry that is average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education for its pupils who are now mostly achieving appropriate standards although past results have not been high enough. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, with real strengths in the nursery and in Key Stage 1. Significant improvements have been made recently to the leadership and management of the school. They are now satisfactory but have yet to overcome all difficulties that remain from the amalgamation. Given the current high cost of educating the pupils, value for money is unsatisfactory.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in the nursery and in writing, mathematics and art at Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in the nursery (where it is supported by good curriculum provision).
- Pupils are positive about learning. Their behaviour is very good and they get on well with each other.
- The pupils' learning benefits from the school's strong links with the community and local schools, and the wide range of out of class activities.
- The school takes good care of its pupils.
- Recent developments in the leadership and management of the school make it well placed to make further improvements.

What could be improved

- The schools' accommodation presents many problems. It creates a significant drain on the budget, and continues to obstruct effective leadership, management, and continuity and coherence in the curriculum.
- The curriculum provides too little time for foundation subjects and has not yet been brought into line with the needs of a combined infant and junior school. Setting arrangements for mathematics at Key Stage 2 are not effective. Currently the legal requirements for swimming and aspects of information technology (IT) are not being met.
- The arrangements for assessing pupils' learning are inconsistent and ineffective in providing information that can fine-tune their learning and help in planning improvements to the curriculum.
- Too little monitoring and evaluation of the schools' performance has been undertaken by governors, senior managers and teachers in their roles as subject leaders.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Although this school has not been inspected, the previously separate infant and junior schools have. Several areas identified as strengths in these reports have continued to be positive features of the new school, including the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils and the care taken of them. The key issue of not providing daily acts of collective worship in Key Stage 2 has been addressed. Progress has been slow in coming to terms with the amalgamation of infant and junior schools that have had very different traditions and approaches. Important aspects of the new school's life need to improve. These include the development of a whole school curriculum. Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 have continued to work with different schemes of work for most subjects, although agreement has now been reached for a common approach in the forthcoming school year. The loss of key staff, for literacy and numeracy, has set back the implementation of these two initiatives, although the new co-ordinators have made impressive progress in the short time they have been in post. The unsatisfactory results achieved in the 1999 national tests reflect the problems faced by the school and the improvements made have been too recent to show themselves fully in the current results. The school has responded very positively to the local education authority's monitoring report which criticised important aspects of leadership and management, as well as the school's curriculum and assessment arrangements. The agreement of the revised school aims and construction of the school development plan has involved wide spread consultation with staff and governors. Both of these documents provide a very appropriate agenda for tackling the school's weaknesses. The recent appointment of co-ordinators for Key Stages 1 and 2 is a positive step in strengthening the senior management team of the school. The school's accommodation still provides a significant obstacle to successfully creating one school. Despite this, the school is now much more strongly placed to make the improvements that are needed.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	N/A	N/A	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	N/A	N/A	C	D	
science	N/A	N/A	D	E	

The results in 1999 were not quite high enough in mathematics and were too low in science, where few pupils achieved the higher levels. Although there are no earlier results for the new school, the results for the junior school have varied over the previous three years from around the national average to well below (1997). The school set itself unambitious targets for the 2000, which it has comfortably achieved. These results show a noticeable improvement in English but cannot yet be compared with national results or the results achieved in similar schools. The results last year at Key Stage 1 were below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics and were below the average in similar schools in mathematics and well below in both reading and writing. However, previous results in the infant school showed improvement in reading and writing. The unconfirmed results for 2000 show a

big improvement in mathematics. Although the results in English were similar to those last year more pupils have achieved the higher levels in writing. The inspection found standards at Key Stage 2 to be higher than those achieved in the tests in science and similar in mathematics and English, where there are weaknesses in spelling and strengths in speaking and listening. Overall, standards at this key stage are now mostly appropriate. At Key Stage 1, pupils are achieving appropriately in English, and science and well in mathematics. Standards in other subjects are broadly in line with expectations and appropriate, except for art at Key Stage 1, where they are above average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Positive in both Key Stage 1 and Key stage 2 and very good in the nursery.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good both in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Well developed particularly in the nursery and Key Stage 1.
Attendance	Satisfactory but holidays taken during term time reduce overall attendance.

Pupils are enthusiastic about school and settle quickly to their work. They behave very well in almost all lessons and get on well with each other and with adults in school. Children in the nursery clear away after sessions and show good independence in choosing activities and getting out what they need. This carries on in Key Stage 1 and by Key Stage 2 pupils collect books from the library, when given the opportunity, and responsibly use computers in the information technology suite without direct supervision.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching in the school is satisfactory. Of the 50 lessons observed, 15% were very good or excellent, over half were good or better and only 7% were unsatisfactory (3 lessons in total). Teaching in the nursery is consistently very good and nearly two thirds of lessons in Key Stage 1 are taught well or even better. Good and very good teaching was seen in all key stages. Two of the unsatisfactory lessons were in physical education and resulted from teachers either expecting too much of the pupils or providing activities that were too complex for the pupils to cope with. In an unsatisfactory mathematics lesson the teacher assumed pupils understood division better than they did and little progress was made. In the most successful lessons teachers in all key stages plan clear objectives for what they want pupils to learn, have appropriately high expectations of what pupils can do, mostly match work carefully to needs of different pupils and often use resources well to support pupils' learning. Overall, the teaching of both literacy and numeracy is effective, particularly in Key Stage 1.

Aspects of teaching that could be improved include marking work so that pupils understand what they need to do to get better and setting homework more systematically.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory but with some weaknesses, including inconsistent planning across the school and relatively little time for foundation subjects. Currently there is no opportunity for pupils to learn to swim.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall and often good when pupils are given additional support.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects.	Overall good, with moral development and social development being promoted well and spiritual and cultural development promoted satisfactorily.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well looked after but there are weaknesses in monitoring and promoting their academic progress.

The school benefits considerably from the positive relationships it has with parents and from their practical support. The information provided for parents is satisfactory, but while some reports on their children's progress are informative, others do not make clear strengths and weaknesses. Parents would be able to help their children more effectively if they had a clearer idea about what they are going to be learning. Although sound overall, the school's curriculum still relies on separate schemes for each key stage, which reduces coherence and progression. With the emphasis given to literacy and numeracy, there is barely sufficient time for some foundation subjects. Setting for mathematics in Key Stage 2 is ineffective. Currently the requirements to teach swimming in physical education and monitoring of events and controlling devices in IT are not being met. There is a good range of out of class activities for pupils to participate in. The school does not have a consistent and effective approach to assessing pupils' progress, which makes it difficult to fine-tune their learning and to improve the curriculum that is taught.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory and improving.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Overall, governors have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are now fully involved in planning the future direction of the school.

The school's evaluation of its performance	This is an area of weakness that has been identified by the school and which it plans to address.
The strategic use of resources	Effective use is made of teaching and other staff and of resources for learning, but circumstances make it very difficult for the school to make efficient use of its accommodation.

The headteacher, governors and staff now have a much clearer understanding of what the school needs to do to improve. Insufficient emphasis has been placed on raising standards and on monitoring and evaluating (results, standards, teaching and learning) to identify strengths and weaknesses that could then be used as the basis for making improvements. Recent developments have begun to positively tackle these shortcomings. The severe problems, in terms of financial burdens and physical layout of the school's buildings, make it very difficult for the school to realise its full potential. Most areas of the curriculum are satisfactorily resourced but the Key Stage 2 library stock is unsatisfactory and there is limited equipment to develop pupils' physical skills in nursery and reception. The computers currently being used are very unreliable and provision for IT is unsatisfactory. This situation is already being addressed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school, work hard and are well behaved. • Teaching is good. • The school is approachable and deals with problems effectively. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent setting of homework across the school. • They could be better informed about how their children are progressing and about what they are learning.

The inspectors support the views of the parents although they have identified weaknesses in the management of the school which have begun to be addressed effectively.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 In the national tests for Key Stage 2 in 1999, which is the last year for which there are comparative figures, the school achieved results that were in line with the average for schools nationally in English and mathematics but were below the average in science. When compared to schools with similar levels of free school meals, the results in English were in line with the average but in mathematics they were slightly below and in science they were well below. Too few pupils achieved the higher levels in science and this depressed the results, overall. There are earlier results for the school but those achieved in the previous junior school were sometimes better than those achieved in 1999 and sometimes they were worse. Results in mathematics and science have not been high enough. Unusually, boys achieved better than boys did nationally while the girls' results in science were worse than those achieved by girls nationally. The unambitious targets set for 2000 have comfortably been achieved. The inspection found standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science to be in line with national expectations and mostly appropriate for the pupils. Although too few pupils are achieving the higher levels in mathematics, more are now doing so in science. There were no notable differences in the standards being achieved by boys and girls in lessons.

2 The 1999 results at Key Stage 1 were below national averages and against similar schools in mathematics and for those pupils reaching higher levels in reading and writing. Teachers' own assessments in science pointed to achievement above the national average. The standards in the previous infant school were clearly below the national averages but had shown small steady improvement. The inspection found improving standards at Key Stage 1, particularly in mathematics where more pupils are now accessing higher levels and their overall attainment was found to be above average. The unconfirmed results for 2000 also show a marked improvement in mathematics. In English, standards were judged to be in line with the national expectations and appropriate for these pupils.

3 The implementation of numeracy strategy has made a more positive impact in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2, where the setting arrangements make it difficult for teachers to match work effectively to the range of ages in each group. In English, the literacy strategy is now making a positive impact on pupils' learning at both key stages and is leading to more rapid progress being made and to higher standards. For example, there have been noticeable recent improvements in pupils' writing, although weaknesses still remain in spelling.

4 Overall, pupils were judged to be achieving broadly expected levels in the other subjects of the curriculum although their achievement is often within a limited range of learning. In history for instance, their knowledge lacks depth and in design and technology skills in using materials and tools are less well developed than pupils' understanding of processes. This restricted range of learning is often more marked at Key Stage 2, where the focus on literacy and numeracy has more obviously resulted in reduced opportunities to develop learning in the foundation subjects. There was too little evidence available to make a judgement on the standards in music.

5 Overall, pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve appropriately. When special needs pupils are provided with additional adult support within individual lessons, they often achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6 Pupils still have the positive attitudes to learning that were identified in the last inspection. They continue to behave consistently well and to maintain the good relationships that create a happy and purposeful atmosphere in the school. Their attendance overall is satisfactory, with very little unauthorised absence. However, there are too many examples of holidays taken in term time, which deprive children of valuable learning experiences. Most parents agree that children enjoy coming to school. Their attitudes in lessons and the numbers who choose to be involved in the good range of extra-curricular activities available for them, make it clear that this is the case. They settle quickly and quietly to their work, concentrate well and are very keen to answer questions and contribute their ideas to discussions. Pupils are enthusiastic about their activities and most apply themselves diligently to make sure of doing their best. They are proud of their achievements and eager to show and explain their work to visitors. The youngest children in the nursery are beginning to develop independent learning skills through choosing activities for themselves and becoming familiar with classroom routines. Older children have fewer opportunities to organise their own work, but respond well, when given the chance.

7 Behaviour in lessons is almost always good, although there are a few examples of inattention and lack of commitment to learning when teachers' expectations are not high enough. Around the school, behaviour is consistently very good. Movement inside the buildings is controlled and orderly, especially by those junior children who have to negotiate staircases and fire doors. In the dining halls pupils behave sensibly and they play happily together outside in the playgrounds and on the field. Only once has the school needed to exclude a child temporarily for extremely disruptive behaviour, but comprehensive arrangements were made to support his return to school.

8 Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are always very good and sometimes excellent. Pupils agree that there is no bullying in school and there is no evidence of racial tension. Pupils co-operate well in lessons and readily offer to help others who are having difficulties. In the nursery, the children enjoy imaginative play, such as selling rolls of wallpaper and paint in a shop, taking turns fairly and sharing the equipment. In an English lesson the oldest juniors showed their respect and tolerance for other cultures by listening with rapt attention to poetry in different dialects. Contributions of all children, including those with special educational needs, are valued and achievements always celebrated; for example, in a games lesson pupils applauded spontaneously when a child successfully caught a ball; in gymnastics, pupils made thoughtful, sensible comments about one another's work.

9 Opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility are not extensive, but where they occur, pupils are keen to take them up. Once a week both key stages come together at playtime and many of the Year 6 children volunteer to look after the younger ones. In some classes children have specific jobs to help the teacher and even the youngest in nursery eagerly help tidy up equipment after lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10 Teaching, overall, is satisfactory. Over half of the lessons observed were judged to be good or better, 15 percent very good or excellent and only 7 percent, which was three lessons, were judged to have weaknesses that made them unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory lessons were not concentrated in any particular part of the school. Good teaching was seen in most classes and in all key stages. However, there was variation in the overall quality of teaching between key stages and within both the foundation stage and Key Stage 2. In the foundation stage, teaching in the nursery was very good, whereas teaching in the reception classes was satisfactory overall. In Key Stage 1, nearly two thirds of lessons are good or better. Within Key Stage 2 teaching of the youngest and the oldest pupils is consistently good, as it is in one class in the middle of the key stage, in other classes teaching was

almost always at least satisfactory. Literacy is taught effectively and often well. Most numeracy lessons are taught at least satisfactorily although, on occasion, there is an unsatisfactory lesson.

11 In the nursery, the staff work very well together. Their planning identifies interesting and imaginative activities for the pupils, whom they know very well as individuals. Staff enjoy excellent relationships with the children and employ many subtle approaches to promote their development. Examples include: hiding numbers each day from the class number line so pupils are actively looking for the number which is missing and are then on the look out for it during the session; only providing some of the materials pupils will need for particular tasks, so they have to collect and return the other things they require. These two examples very successfully develop pupils' recognition of written numbers and their independence and sense of personal responsibility. The day-to-day activities that pupils can choose from are very thoughtfully planned and presented and each makes a valuable contribution to the achievement of the planned learning. The nursery is very well maintained and cared for and children and staff both take a real pride in it. In one of the reception classes the teachers' expectations are not as high as they are in the nursery and pupils take longer to settle to tasks and are more easily distracted. However, tasks and activities have been carefully planned and are mostly appropriate for the children in the class.

12 The teaching in Key Stage 1 is good because teachers plan lessons carefully so that they have a clear understanding of what they want pupils to learn. They mostly match the work effectively to the different groups of pupils in their classes, although on occasion the higher attaining pupils are given tasks to complete that do not demand enough of them. This was the case in an otherwise good numeracy lesson. Their knowledge of the pupils does ensure that they ask appropriately challenging questions of individual pupils. Relationships are good and support the effective management of pupils' behaviour which ensures that pupils work hard in lessons. Teachers make good use of support assistants to help special needs pupils and lower attaining pupils achieve the desired learning, particularly in literacy lessons. The unsatisfactory lesson in this key stage was in physical education; it resulted from pupils being given tasks that required them to have striking and catching skills they had not yet developed and as a result insufficient progress was made.

13 In Key Stage 2, teaching varied from very good to unsatisfactory and there were slightly more good or better lessons than satisfactory and unsatisfactory lessons. There were proportionately fewer good lessons than in Key Stage 1. The best teaching in the key stage was characterised by good subject knowledge, very challenging questioning of pupils, skilful and effective explanations, good use of resources to support learning and well matched of tasks to pupils' needs. All of these were seen, for example, in a numeracy lesson in Year 6 that led to all pupils making very good progress in achieving the planned objectives on measurement and the higher attainers being extended in their learning. Most of the other teaching of numeracy in the key stage was satisfactory, although one lesson was unsatisfactory because, as in the unsatisfactory lesson in Key Stage 1, the teacher assumed that pupils had better prior learning than was the case. Too few pupils had a sufficiently well developed understanding of division to achieve the intended learning and many, particularly those with lower attainment, did not make sufficient progress. This reflects the weaknesses in the school's systems for assessing pupils' learning and for recording what they know. A physical education lesson was also unsatisfactory because the teacher attempted too many activities and did not make sufficiently clear to pupils what they had to do. As a result many spent too little time engaged in purposeful activity and the lesson's objectives were not achieved. The teaching of literacy is often good, reflecting recent improvements in planning that ensure that learning objectives are clearly identified and appropriate work is given to the different groups in the class. Classroom assistants work effectively to support targeted children in achieving the planned objectives.

14 Two areas that reduce the overall effectiveness of teaching, most noticeably at Key Stage 2, are marking and homework. Neither of these is approached consistently or systematically enough across

the school. It is the exception when teachers through their marking of work help pupils to improve by identifying what they need to do to get better or by acknowledging when they have made progress in addressing a weakness. Homework does not often enhance learning initiated in class by, for example, giving pupils opportunities to engage in extended writing activities or to research information that would support their learning across the curriculum.

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

15 Overall, the curriculum provides satisfactory learning opportunities but has weaknesses and thus does not promote well enough the achievement of high standards. The quality and range of the statutory curriculum provided for under-fives is good. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory. All the required National Curriculum subjects and religious education are taught. However at the time of inspection, swimming was not being provided, though this statutory element of the curriculum will be in place in September 2000. Also, units of work on monitoring and control are not taught within information technology.

16 Overall, the curriculum is broad and balanced, given the priority that has to be given to literacy and numeracy. It is relevant to the needs of pupils. A wide range of learning opportunities is provided. There are imaginative approaches to science and history at Key Stage 1 and a broad range of educational visits and interesting local studies in history at Key Stage 2. Because of the emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy within the curriculum, there is limited time for the foundation subjects, for example geography at Key Stage 2 is taught for only twelve to fifteen hours in a year. The teaching time within the school day is broadly in line with recommendations at Key Stage 1, but is less than the recommended time at Key Stage 2. The organisation of teaching sessions at Key Stage 2, particularly in the mornings, does not allow the most efficient use of teaching time and reduces the potential for the school to provide more time for subjects other than English and mathematics.

17 There is a lack of coherence within the curriculum. There is no overall curriculum plan and different long and medium term planning approaches are used at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. There are no whole-school monitoring systems to ensure all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered and an appropriate balance is maintained. From September 2000 the school intends to develop subject plans in line with schemes of work produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). This has the potential to bring improved coherence, progression and continuity to the curriculum in the school as a whole.

18 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Pupils are set tasks appropriate to their abilities within the classroom and benefit from good quality support from learning support assistants and other adults when available.

19 Mostly, effective strategies are in place at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils and teachers in both key stages are positive about the impact of numeracy and the structured lessons. The emphasis on mental work and concentration on mathematical language and skills appears to have significantly contributed to the increase in standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1. However, the setting arrangements at Key Stage 2 require the teacher to plan for 2 or 3 year groups and this is not working effectively. In literacy, links with other subjects are being developed though are not yet fully utilised.

20 The statutory curriculum is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities, such as the clubs for drama, recorders and dance. A school magazine provides good opportunities for pupils to develop skills in reporting, editing and graphics. Pupils participate in a variety of sporting activities such as football, cricket and chess. The school also visits many places of interest, such as Newstead

Abbey and the local town centre, and these substantially extend their experience and enjoyment of the curriculum in such subjects as history and geography. The Year 6 residential visit to Hathersage, and the Year 2 school camp provide opportunities to develop mapping skills and environmental knowledge and understanding.

21 The local community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Visits take place to the local library, places of worship, shops and visitors to the school include a range of Ministers from a number of local churches and other members of the community. Nottingham University carried out a science project at the school, with certificates being awarded to pupils who took part. Nottinghamshire Cricket Club runs coaching sessions at the school on an annual basis. The school also actively supports the local carnival. Governors and parents provide valuable assistance for such things as the Christmas Fair and the residential visits.

22 The school has good links with partner institutions. Student teachers from Nottingham University carry out teaching practices at the school and work experience opportunities are provided for pupils from local secondary schools. Effective transfer arrangements are in place with nearby secondary schools and there have been examples of secondary school teachers visiting to teach specific subject lessons.

23 The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of its pupils is good, overall, with moral and with social development being promoted well and spiritual and cultural provision being satisfactory.

24 Spiritual development occurs in most assemblies where pupils are given the opportunity to reflect and to develop an appreciation of values and beliefs, of a mainly Christian nature. The visits of local ministers and imaginative presentations from other religious groups who lead worship provide an atmosphere of spiritual awareness within which pupils are encouraged to reflect on their experiences, feelings and beliefs. During the inspection, there was no singing in assemblies and little opportunity to explore feelings and emotions associated with the music that is played before and after each assembly. Subjects such as religious education and history, for example, provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on the lives of children in Victorian times and make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

25 The promotion of moral values is implicit in the school's code of conduct and within the positive ethos which exists throughout the school. Standards of behaviour are consistently high, demonstrating that pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Some classes have evolved their own rules and a high regard is given to respect for both property and adults in the school. Some older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and set good examples for younger pupils. Pupils have a good understanding of the plight of the less fortunate and are involved in supporting a range of charities, such as the Poppy and Blue Peter appeals, and collections for the NSPCC.

26 Pupils throughout the school work collaboratively in their lessons and get on well at play. They are confident in performing in public, such as the annual carol concert held in the local church, and in dance festivals. The school is successful in the management of residential experiences where pupils share opportunities to work and play together in a secure environment. Their social development also benefits from the support of additional adults, parents and governors of the school. The school makes positive use of the experiences of other adults in the community to contribute to pupils' learning. This was seen clearly in the contributions made by senior citizen recalling her experiences in a history lesson and helps pupils to feel part of their community.

27 Through their work on local history projects and, for example, opportunities to perform a range of English folk dances, pupils are gaining a good understanding of their own culture. Pupils experience other cultures in cooking, and in the past further insights have been gained through Chinese events and a successful Caribbean week. They are able to compare life in England with that of an Indian village in their geography lessons. Christian festivals are celebrated, but few pupils have visited a synagogue or a gurdwara, for example, and overall pupils have much less understanding and experience of other faiths and cultures than of their own. .

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28 The school makes very good provision to ensure pupils' health and safety. Both within lessons and through extra-curricular activities, the school tries to promote a healthy lifestyle. Children learn about healthy eating and are encouraged to look after themselves through cycling proficiency training. They take part in an externally organised drugs awareness programme and there are plans to formalise the sex education programme next year with the help of the school nurse. There are effective arrangements for child protection, which are known by all staff and which are also made clear to parents. All the required procedures that relate to health and safety are properly in place and supplemented by the school's careful concern for its pupils. Detailed risk assessments are carried out whenever pupils go on trips outside school and care is taken to see that all possible hazards are identified. There are well-documented arrangements for first aid and routine medical care and teachers are careful to emphasise safe practices in lessons such as physical education and design technology.

29 A parapet on the tower of the two storey upper school building is crumbling badly and, although children do not play in its vicinity, it is a cause for concern. The headteacher and governors are aware of this and are making efforts to deal with the matter.

30 Pastoral care throughout the school is good. Staff know pupils well and show genuine concern for them as individuals, so that pupils are confident that they may approach any adult for help with problems, either academic or personal. Personal development is very well monitored in the nursery but the Records of Achievement for older children vary in quality, with more attention paid to self-assessment, parental comments and target setting in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2.

31 The school successfully relies on the promotion of self-discipline, respect and consideration for others to ensure good conduct. This approach has also proved very effective in creating good relationships and avoiding any kind of oppressive behaviour. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good but there could be greater efforts to reduce the number of holidays that are taken in term time, which account for a high proportion of pupils' absences.

32 Transition arrangements from Year 6 to secondary schools are appropriate and there are particularly good arrangements for helping children to move from the adjacent playgroup into the nursery, and from nursery into main school. Familiarity with the environment and daily routines ensures that children have few anxieties about moving on. The schools' good links with a local special school bring tangible benefits for pupils with special educational needs.

33 There is no whole school policy or approach to assessment and in practice there is little consistency in what is done. There is effective assessment of pupils in the nursery, which includes appropriate baseline assessments and subsequent assessments of learning that has been covered. These are recorded appropriately and useful information is passed on to the reception teachers. The

identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good and individual education plans have a clear focus and are reviewed regularly. All teachers have access to these plans and mostly take them into account when planning lessons. Although teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 maintain records of pupils' work and reading records are up to date, there is no consistent assessment of pupils' learning that would provide easily accessible information to teachers on emerging strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. It is difficult, therefore, for teachers to base their planning on what pupils already know. Two of the unsatisfactory lessons seen during the inspection resulted from this weakness. There has been little analysis of results from standardised tests such as end of year and end of key stage tests. Consequently little use has been made of valuable information that could have been used to fine-tune the curriculum and to set targets for individual pupils and groups of pupils. The lack of appropriate assessment procedures and limited use of assessment information has slowed the process of raising standards in the school. This situation has now been recognised and there are plans to tackle the issue in the future.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34 The majority of parents who completed the inspection questionnaire or attended the meeting are very satisfied with what the school offers to their children and with what it achieves. They feel strongly that staff are approachable, that their children like school and are expected to work hard. A small number of parents did not feel well informed about their children's progress, did not feel that the school worked closely with them or that it provided an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team agrees that the quality of school reports is variable and that there could be a more consistent approach to letting parents know what is being taught and to the setting of homework. However, evidence suggests that the school does work well with most parents and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities.

35 The school tries to take account of parents' needs when organising events, for example, appointments to discuss pupils' progress are offered at varying times and a crèche is provided for parents who might need it. There are plans to arrange more meetings to inform parents about aspects of the curriculum, especially the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Booklets that tell parents how they can help their children learn, for example those covering mathematics and nursery activities, are well produced and useful. The information that the school provides for parents about administrative and pastoral matters is mostly of good quality. The prospectus and newsletters are written in a friendly, simple style and are well illustrated with children's drawings. Written reports about pupils' progress are not all of the same standard. Some give detailed accounts of what children know, understand and can do and set targets for improvement. Others are more general and tend to concentrate on children's attitudes to work rather than on their strengths and weaknesses.

36 Many parents are closely involved in school life. They take advantage of daily opportunities for informal contact with teachers, especially in the nursery and Key Stage 1, and some provide valuable practical support in classrooms, helping with baking, art work or listening to children read. Attendance at formal parents' consultation meetings is very good, and those parents whose children have special educational needs are fully involved in reviews of their progress. The school is never short of parent volunteers to accompany children on trips or to help with the camping weekends and residential visits. A flourishing Friends Association organises social events which help to bring a sense of community to the school and raises funds to provide additional resources for the benefit of the children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37 Overall the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher's approach encourages staff participation and involvement in decision-making and in developing aspects of the school's life. Until recently he has not placed sufficient emphasis on comparing how well the school performs with similar schools in respect of the results it achieves at the end of the key stages. As a result, senior staff and governors have not had as their first priority the achievement of appropriately high standards. Following the local education authority's review of the school, much greater emphasis has been placed on this and it is now central to the planning of school improvements.

38 In the last few months this refocusing of the school's work has begun to pay dividends in the improved learning and higher standards now being achieved in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The teachers responsible for these subjects are providing clear leadership and have well thought out plans to accelerate the progress that is being made in improving standards. Governors are now also playing a full part in planning school developments. They have a sound understanding of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses, and a good understanding of the problems that resulted from the amalgamation and that are only now beginning to be overcome.

39 Initially, progress in successfully bringing two very different schools together was slow, but staff changes and the impetus provided by the local education authority's review, referred to above, have led to much more rapid and effective progress being made over the last two terms. Weaknesses in the school's management structure have been addressed through the appointment of key stage co-ordinators who, with the deputy headteacher and headteacher, will form an appropriate senior management team. However, the school still faces considerable difficulties in realising its full potential. Having to operate in two very different buildings set some distance apart makes communication, developing effective team work and encouraging pupils to see the school as one school all very difficult. Staff work hard to overcome these problems but until the issue of the school's accommodation is satisfactorily resolved it is unlikely that these problems will be fully overcome. A considerable strain is placed on the school's budget by the cost of maintaining two buildings, particularly a half empty Key Stage 2 building that is expensive to heat and in common with the Key Stage 1 and nursery building is in a poor state of external repair. The pieces of concrete falling from a parapet in the Key Stage 2 building are a major health and safety issue and indicative of the seriousness of the accommodation situation.

40 The staff and governors are well aware of what still needs to be done to make the school fully effective. The very detailed and much improved school development plan, produced with the full participation of staff and governors forms a good basis for action. It is a useful management tool that should enable governors and senior staff to monitor and evaluate the progress they make in tackling issues and achieving their priorities. There are sensible and very appropriate plans to improve key areas, such as the monitoring and evaluation of standards and the quality of the teaching and learning, which have rightly been identified as weakness within leadership and management. Effective links are being established between the school development plan and the management of the school's budget and this should help to ensure that funding is used wisely to support pupils' learning.

41 The major obstacle to ensuring that the school is soundly placed financially is the resolution of the accommodation issue. Following deferment of the rationalisation of the school's buildings by the Department for Education and Employment last year the school, with the full support of the local education authority, is again applying to take out surplus places and to consolidate the school into one building. The governors have taken sensible action when faced with expenditure related to the buildings. They insisted, for example, on replacing the worn out boilers in the Key Stage 2 building with new gas boilers that could be moved to the Key Stage 1 building should this form the basis for future building development. The routine administration of the school and financial control are effective.

42 Staff changes since the amalgamation, in key areas, such as literacy and numeracy, have slowed progress in making improvements, but, as already mentioned, the new co-ordinators are making a considerable impact in their areas and this is leading to more effective teaching and learning and improved standards. Professional development has been well matched to teachers' areas of responsibility but appraisal has been on hold while the new arrangements for performance management are being put into place. Most subjects have satisfactory resources but there are significant weaknesses in the quality and reliability of computers and in the quantity, quality and condition of books in the library in Key Stage 2. A relative weakness in an otherwise well resourced area is the lack of large toys, such as scooters and tricycles, that would enhance pupils, physical development in the nursery and reception classes.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43 In order to raise standards and further improve the quality of the education the school provides the governors, headteacher and senior managers should:

- (1) Actively and vigorously pursue a resolution to the problems of running the recently amalgamated school in two buildings, which results in a significant number of excess places, high costs and makes effective leadership and management of one school very difficult.
- (2) Ensure that sufficient time is provided for all subjects and that common schemes of work are used throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. This should entail:
 - Looking at how the school day can best be used to ensure there is optimum use of session times (the school should also ensure that the recommended time for teaching at Key Stage 2 is provided).
 - Producing a long term plan for the curriculum that provides appropriate time allocations for each subject across a year.
 - Adopting the same schemes for teaching subjects in both Key Stages 1 and 2. The school's proposed adoption of the national schemes of work would be appropriate.
- d. Reviewing the setting arrangements for mathematics at Key Stage 2 in order to make the implementation of the numeracy strategy more effective.
- (3) Improve assessment and record keeping systems and practices by:
 - a Developing a programme of assessment that gives information on the progress pupils make in achieving the key learning objectives identified in the literacy and numeracy frameworks and the schemes of work that are to be adopted for other subjects.

- b Devising simple class records that can be used to record the progress made by each pupil as they are taught the key learning objectives.
 - c Using information that emerges from these records and from the analysis of standardised tests, non statutory year end tests and end of key stage tests to: modify what is taught to pupils in order to address any weaknesses that become apparent; set targets for groups of pupils and individual pupils that help them to achieve higher standards.
 - d Introducing a consistent approach to marking that enables pupils to understand what they need to do to improve and what they do well.
- (4) Gain a better understanding of the school's performance and use the information acquired to inform the planning of school improvements by:
- a Using more fully national performance data (the Autumn Package, the school's Panda) and other information (as in 3c) to identify what the school is doing well and where there is room for improvement. Particular emphasis should be placed on how cohorts are progressing each year and, at the end of each key stage, how their performance compares with their peers in similar schools.
 - b Establishing a planned programme for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. This should involve all co-ordinators systematically analysing teachers' planning for subjects to ensure that the curriculum is being effectively covered, sampling pupils' work to see if teaching has been effective in ensuring pupils learn what was planned, observing lessons where this helps teachers to become more effective.
 - c Monitoring and evaluating other information such as attendance and incidents of inappropriate behaviour.
 - d Finding out what parents and pupils think about the school. This could be done by using surveys based on, for example, the Ofsted questionnaire.

In addition the following matters should be addressed:

- Improve the quality and quantity of books in the Key Stage 2 library.
- Provide a more systematic programme for homework.
- Improve pupils' skills in spelling

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	15	41	37	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	281
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	NA	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	54

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	16	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	12	12	11
	Total	25	25	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83	83	80
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	13
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	26	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87	80	83
	National	82	86	87

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	22	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	19
	Girls	14	13	15
	Total	31	29	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72	67	79
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	19
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	30	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70	70	77
	National	68	69	75

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	7
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	5
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	4
White	222
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.5
Average class size	28.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	48

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	525225
Total expenditure	508666
Expenditure per pupil	1798
Balance brought forward from previous year	8473
Balance carried forward to next year	25032

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	281
Number of questionnaires returned	108

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	33	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	39	7	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	51	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	43	15	4	7
The teaching is good.	55	43	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	40	14	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	24	3	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	34	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	34	44	16	0	6
The school is well led and managed.	52	44	1	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	43	4	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	40	14	3	12

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

44 When children start nursery their overall attainment is average. Pupils across the range of attainment often make very good progress in nursery reflecting the very good teaching and imaginative curriculum that is provided, while in reception their progress is satisfactory reflecting teaching that is satisfactory, overall, and a curriculum that is less securely based on the learning goals for pupils of this age.

Personal, social and emotional development

45 Children's personal, social and emotional development is above expectations by the end of the foundation stage, and this gives them a head start in their education. The nursery staff are consistently good role models and their teaching is very good. They understand the importance of helping children to follow and settle into routines and skilfully encourage their independence by creating situations where they have to find resources or collect items from other members of staff. They do this sensitively and gradually. In the nursery, staff set high expectations of the children's behaviour through their positive relationships with them and through working closely with their parents. They give children plenty of opportunities to practise their personal and social skills. Consequently, children enjoy coming to nursery, work confidently and happily with different adults and other children, behave very well and understand that they come to learn as well as to play. They can work independently when adults are helping other children and they can make choices about what they will do next. They treat each other and school equipment with care and respect. Children's response to activities in all areas of their work is always at least good. Although not always quick to settle in one reception class pupils continue to develop their personal and social skills steadily. They accept responsibility for maintaining areas of the classroom, share resources sensibly, sustain tasks and mostly behave well. One reception teacher's expectations of how pupils should behave are not as high as in the other class for the under fives and one or two pupils do not pay as much attention as they should during whole class sessions.

Language and literacy

46 Effective teaching helps children to make steady progress and attain appropriate standards in both nursery and reception classes. Teachers and supporting adults provide plenty of opportunities for children to practise their speaking, listening and literacy skills in lessons and in activities, such as role play. Supporting adults make an effective contribution to improving children's speaking and listening skills because they are particularly skilled at questioning children. Early reading and writing skills are taught well, and children quickly learn that print has meaning in reading and writing. Nursery pupils soon develop an interest in books, and knowledge of letter sounds. Most are confident in writing their names by the time they enter reception. Teachers in reception have adopted the methods of the National Literacy Strategy. The full hour is used and this is a little too long for some of the pupils who find it difficult to maintain their concentration for the whole lesson. They learn to use different methods of reading new words, including looking closely at individual letters and the sounds they represent and many know the alphabet and can put simple words into alphabetical order. They learn to write letters and words correctly. By the end of the reception year, most children have started to read and write by themselves. They enjoy talking about books and stories, and they recognise and name full stops, capital letters and sentences. Many try to put emphasis into their voices when reading aloud in response to the teachers' effective use of expression during shared reading sessions. In nursery, children listen well and answer questions thoughtfully, such as when they were talking about their exploration of the nursery's jungle. This is carried on in reception, although in one class they tend to shout out unnecessarily during class discussions.

Mathematical development

47 Children comfortably attain expected standards by the end of the reception year. Teaching is imaginative in nursery where children are regularly provided with little problems to solve, such as working out which number on the “elephant” number line is missing and when they find it around the nursery putting it back in correct place. Because teachers plan many different practical activities that help children to understand numbers and mathematical patterns and ideas. Many nursery pupils count past 10, recognise common shapes and successfully make patterns. Although a little long for some reception age pupils, the numeracy time allocated is effectively used to develop pupils’ understanding of numbers, patterns, shapes and measures. Their teachers make effective use a wide variety of approaches, including singing counting songs, demonstrating using different objects, asking quick fire questions and providing careful explanations, to successfully introduce and then reinforce learning. By the end of the reception year pupils can, for example, add and take away, count in twos, compare groups, identify longer and shorter, identify and make patterns using shapes and numbers.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

48 This area of learning is developed well in the nursery through a rich provision of interesting displays and opportunities to engage in imaginative play. During the inspection, for example, pupils’ explored jungles and were decorators. Through these activities they found out about animals and plants, bought decorating materials and used them to “brightened up” the outside of the nursery. In both of these activities teachers ensured children were properly equipped and explored and worked safely. There are many on-going opportunities for nursery children to use computers, tape recorders and to explore different materials. The approach in reception combines elements of the early years and Key Stage 1 curriculum. For example, they have been taught about the parts of plants and discussed and investigated what plants need to grow but also have had the opportunity to learn through playing in the class garden area where they could plant and care for their own plants and go on a minibeasts hunt. The benefits of the role play are reduced because the provision made by the teacher is not as well maintained as it could be.

Physical development

49 Children in both the nursery and reception class have opportunities to develop their coordination through lessons in the hall. In the nursery they have regular access to the safe outdoor play area where they have limited opportunities to climb and to crawl, twist and turn in a play tunnel but they do not have opportunities to develop skills in balance and controlling large toys such as trikes and scooters. In the nursery pupils are consistently encouraged to handle materials, such as modelling dough, and tools, such as scissors and brushes, with good control and there are many opportunities to develop their fine motor control through playing with large and small scale construction kits and materials. In reception more structured activities, such as designing and making sandwiches successfully contribute to pupils’ achievement of most of the expected skills in their physical development. At the present time reception pupils have little access to outdoor play, which will form an important aspect of the foundation curriculum they will follow in September.

Creative development

50 In the nursery pupils are given a rich variety of experiences to promote their creative development. They model using dough and by cutting and sticking materials together. They use and create pictures in paint, different sorts of crayons and combinations of these, by printing and by using fabrics and other materials in their collage work. Space limits their access to paint on a daily basis but

staff ensure that pupils have good opportunities to experience all forms of mark making. In reception there are fewer opportunities for pupils to engage in creative activities but more formal sessions often lead to high achievement as in a drawing lesson where pupils in the mixed reception Year 1 class were skilfully encouraged to use good quality pencils and paper to observe and record the different fruits the teacher had provided. A strong foundation is laid in nursery and reception for the good quality art work in Key Stage 1. It was not possible during the inspection to judge pupils' achievement in the musical aspects of creative development other than singing, which was often tuneful and enthusiastic in reception.

51 The nursery staff have made a positive start with preparing to introduce the revised curriculum for children in the foundation stage from September 2000. Planning in the nursery is firmly based on the early learning goals and the desirable learning outcomes for children under five and the activities and variety of provision supports their achievement well. In reception more emphasis is placed on the learning identified for Key Stage 1 although in the afternoons younger pupils in reception in particular, have opportunities to choose from a range of activities. More needs to be done to bring the overall provision for nursery and reception into line with requirements for the foundation stage of learning. Children in the nursery are carefully assessed in their learning and useful information is shared with the receiving reception teachers. The assessment and recording of the progress made by pupils in reception needs to be developed to reflect the requirements of the foundation stage.

ENGLISH

52 In the 1999 national tests for pupils at the age of eleven, standards of attainment were in line with the national average and the results in similar schools. As this is a newly amalgamated school, there is no official trend information, however, these results represent a significant improvement on the 1998 results for pupils at the end of the Junior School, which had showed a big dip against a general trend of slowly improving results in previous years. Boys achieved noticeably better than girls in English, although girls achieved similar results in this subject and mathematics in relation to national trends. Evidence from the inspection finds that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly in line with expectations in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Targets have been set by the school to raise standards in the next few years, although these appear to be rather modest; those set for 2000 are below the 1999 results and insufficient account seems to have been taken of improving trends in the school associated with the introduction of National Literacy Strategy. In the equivalent national assessment results for seven year olds in 1999, whilst attainment for those pupils reaching average levels was broadly in line, for those pupils reaching the higher levels the results were below average for both reading and writing. Again, in this new school there is no official trend information, but for Key Stage 1 results appeared to show a slow rise, overall. As in Key Stage 2, girls achieved less well than boys in English compared to national figures. Inspection evidence finds that very recently, there have been significant improvements in pupils' achievement, especially in writing and particularly at the end of the infants and by those reaching higher levels.

53 The quality of learning, overall, is good in Key Stage 1 and sound with good aspects in Key Stage 2. The staff are working hard to enhance the quality of pupils' learning in literacy and have successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy into the curriculum of the school. Recently there have been major developments; strategies and materials are increasingly well used to support teaching and learning. Although there have been significant improvements in the provision made for pupils, it will take more time to fully impact on overall standards. Nevertheless, clear evidence of improvements are already beginning to emerge. The school is beginning to monitor attainment and progress more closely and to use this information to make appropriate adjustments and modifications to provision.

54 In speaking and listening, pupils learn to listen actively for increasingly longer periods of time and in a wider range of more demanding activities. Most pupils show at least appropriate levels of competence in their listening skills and in their responses, through answering questions, making their own suggestions and putting forward their own ideas by the ages of seven and eleven. The majority of pupils also demonstrate good levels of confidence and understanding in their speaking, very readily making their own contributions to discussions and lessons. Most pupils use appropriate subject vocabulary well and draw effectively on their previous learning, for example; Year 3 pupils discussed in considerable detail, a wide range of favourite authors and identified similarities and the differences between two opening texts by the same author; in Year 6 pupils used a range of more advanced terminology such as “blurbs” and analysed well “persuasive” texts, such as that from the “Hermit Shell”. Similarly, infants in Year 2 showed good levels of competence in discussing the distinction between “fact” and “fiction” and characteristics of “non-fiction” books. Teachers provide ample opportunities for speaking and listening; the positive and challenging approach, which is used effectively by teachers throughout the school, is enabling many pupils to make good progress in the development of these skills.

55 Pupils’ early reading skills are taught well, helping them to make a successful start. Many pupils in both key stages go on to practise and improve their reading skills on a regular basis. They learn to read fluently using a variety of appropriate methods. By the age of seven, most pupils can read to the expected level for their age and some are able to read more complex books and other texts. Many, by the age of eleven, are accurate, fluent and expressive readers who discuss what they have read with an appropriate level of comprehension. In literacy lessons pupils study a wide range of texts and have a good knowledge of the terminology of books. They also have an appropriate knowledge of fiction, poetry and authors although their opportunities to use the library for reference and research are limited by the nature and volume of time which is made available and, not least, by considerable limitations in the range and quality of the book materials available; it is important for pupils to have access to a good range and quality of books in the junior library, on a planned and regular basis with further opportunities for pupils to develop library skills and carry out more personal research. Although further books are also needed in the infant library, the range and quality for this age group is much better than that available for the older pupils.

56 Overall, pupils are currently making good progress in their writing across the school and the quality of pupils’ learning has been improved significantly, especially in Key Stage 1, since the last inspection. Pupils learn to record their ideas appropriately in the majority of subjects in a good range of styles for a number of different audiences. Whilst grammar and punctuation are now in line with expectations, on occasions, handwriting and much more often spelling, falls short of expectations in both key stages, although substantial attention is now being given to these aspects throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well provided for and make good progress, especially in Key Stage 1. Best progress is made by these pupils where additional support is available and where work is carefully matched to their particular needs, as seen very effectively in Year 2. Teachers frequently try to make provision to extend pupils with higher levels of attainment. Whilst many good examples were seen, not least in Key Stage 1, on a few occasions too limited opportunities were provided for such pupils to stretch their knowledge, understanding and skills to an appropriate level. On some occasions, mainly but not always at an earlier date, the progress in some pupils’ writing is too slow, in particular where insufficient guidance is given to pupils’ in the teachers’ marking to advise them how they can improve; on rare occasions, much earlier marking showed some significant inaccuracies. Overall, in spite of major improvements in the quality of provision for pupils’ writing, linked particularly to national strategies, and levels of attainment, there remain a number of inconsistencies in marking and responding to pupils’ work which need to be tackled.

57 Pupils often have good attitudes to the subject in both key stages. In many lessons pupils clearly enjoy their work as in making nonsense rhymes using different phonemes in Year 2, discussing

different authors in Year 3 and analysing different texts in Year 6. Pupils often show sustained levels of concentration, determination in the face of difficulties, and work well together on joint tasks. On numerous occasions, pupils engaged very actively and relished the opportunities for oral work including answering questions, offering their own ideas and suggestions and making a case for and against a particular point of view. Most pupils take pride in their work and the way it is presented. On a few occasions, however, pupils are less attentive where the work is insufficiently challenging and less well matched to their previous learning in the subject. Overall, the quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and sound in Key Stage 2 with a number of good features. There is clear evidence of recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning over the last few months in particular, with a sharpening of precision, skills and consistent approaches directly related to the National Literacy Strategy. All teachers have positive attitudes towards literacy and are keen for the pupils to do well. Expectations of behaviour, pupils' progress and attainment are often high but realistic and teachers clearly can be seen to make significant demands on their pupils in lessons, closely reflecting national strategies and approaches. Planning is usually thorough and the quality of short and medium term planning, especially learning objectives for lessons, has been improved considerably, recently. Resources are often well selected and used effectively to meet the learning intentions for lessons. Lessons are frequently well organised, structured and managed. Emphasis is placed on good quality direct teaching of classes and carefully targeted group work. In many lessons, but not all, the pace is rapid and in the best examples a great deal is achieved by pupils in a single lesson. Very often teachers make effective use of questions to consolidate and extend pupils' understanding and knowledge. Good use is also frequently made of support and specialist staff, who make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in the subject. In the best lessons, the plenary session at the end is used very well indeed to tackle misconceptions, consolidate, extend and enhance pupils' learning. On occasions, good use is made of homework to complement work in lessons, although practices are somewhat varied and now need to be drawn together more effectively as part of a whole school approach which reflects the developments which are now taking place in the school.

58 Considerable improvements have taken place recently in relation to the quality of teaching and learning, especially in Key Stage 1 where limitations were identified in the last inspection, but also in some high quality teaching seen in Key Stage 2. The new co-ordinator, who will move from his temporary post to a permanent post in the school in September, is already giving a strong, informed and effective lead in the subject and is well supported by the staff and the headteacher, as part of a whole school approach to literacy. Arrangements for staff development are good and make effective use of valuable outside support from the local education authority. Monitoring and evaluation have been developed considerably since the last inspection. They are being used with increasing effectiveness to identify and target areas of underachievement. The school recognises that more can still be done, however, including developing more demanding school targets to reflect the major improvements which are taking place in English, particularly recently.

MATHEMATICS

59 Standards at Key Stage 1, as measured by the National Curriculum Tests, have improved significantly in 2000. In 1999 the standards were below the national average, and below those achieved by similar schools. However there has been an increase from 80 percent of children gaining Level 2 or above in 1999, to 95 percent in 2000. Also attainment at Level 3 has more than doubled from 17 percent in 1999 to 35 percent in 2000. These high standards of attainment match those seen during the inspection, when talking to pupils or observing lessons. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls and test results are broadly in line with teacher assessments.

60 At Key Stage 2, the results of the 1999 National Curriculum Tests indicate attainment in line with the national average but below that achieved by similar schools. This matches standards seen

during the inspection when attainment was seldom above national expectations. The attainment of boys in 1999 National Curriculum Tests was higher than that of girls but during the inspection no obvious differences in attainment were evident. Test results were broadly in line with teacher assessments. Targets set for 2000 National Curriculum Tests lacked challenge and being below the results achieved in 1999, were easily achieved. The targets set for 2001 and 2002, of 75 percent of children gaining Level 4 or above, are in line with national targets and are more appropriate for these pupils.

61 At the time of the last inspection of the infant school, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were judged to be in line with national expectations. These have been maintained and results of National Curriculum Tests in 2000 indicate a significant improvement. At the time of the last inspection of the junior school, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were judged to be in line with national expectations and this has been broadly been maintained.

62 At Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 1 and 2 are taught in year groups which helps to facilitate the appropriate match of level of work to the age and ability of pupils. Pupils throughout the key stage show a good understanding of number. Reception pupils can recognise number patterns as when pairs of the same number are added together and they can use mathematical language as in "longer than" and "shorter than." Year 1 pupils can count and recognise multiples of three and describe strategies to add numbers. Year 2 pupils can recognise multiples of five and relate this to telling the time. They can recognise half and quarter hours and the differences between analogue and digital times. Pupils apply themselves well to set tasks and respond enthusiastically to questions. They are confident and independent when using mathematical resources such as number squares and shape cards. Higher and average attaining pupils make good progress in lessons, and lower ability pupils benefit from support from other adults in the classroom, which enables them to make sound progress as when adding three single digit numbers in Year 1. At the end of the key stage, higher and average attaining pupils can understand odd and even numbers, recognise and describe two and three dimensional shapes, select appropriate units of measurement and calculate simple equivalent fractions. This indicates good understanding of number, shape and measure and reflects good progress over time.

63 At Key Stage 2, pupils are taught in ability sets which are not linked to age and cover two and usually three year groups. This makes it difficult to match the level of work and expectations of attainment to the age of pupils and leads to examples of attainment below national expectations within the key stage. In Year 3 all pupils observed are able to tell the time and relate it to seasons and family events and use appropriate vocabulary. However not all pupils indicate a clear understanding of basic principles of division. In Year 4, 5 and 6, in a low ability set, the majority of pupils know their tables including seven and nine times and are clear about rounding numbers and using key words. However some pupils are unable to complete simple number calculations. In a Year 4, 5 and 6 set pupils need significant prompts from the teacher to describe alternative methods of addition and few pupils completed the set task. In a Year 6 pupils in a high ability set have a very good understanding of place value and can calculate $1/100$ of 10.1 and can relate problems to everyday life. They can also convert imperial to metric measures. Very able pupils in this group indicate mathematical conceptual understanding well above that expected for the age group. They undertake appropriate tasks and engage in mathematical discussion of a high order. Across the key stage there are variations in the progress made by low and average ability pupils. Where progress is limited, tasks are not based on previous knowledge and understanding of pupils, or the pupils are not fully engaged in the lesson.

64 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, with some that is good and very good, but there are instances where teaching is unsatisfactory or has weaknesses. Where the teaching is good or very good, the quality of pupil learning and pupil behaviour is good and often very good. Where teaching is unsatisfactory or has weaknesses, there is a lack of challenge, or low expectations of pupil attainment and behaviour, or an inappropriate match of work to pupil abilities or weaknesses in managing pupil

behaviour. In these situations, the quality of learning is unsatisfactory, standards of attainment are lower and pupils' behaviour is satisfactory but not as good as usual.

65 Teachers' knowledge and understanding is generally good and lessons begin with the sharing of clear lesson objectives, usually written on the board. All lessons follow the structure recommended by the National Numeracy Strategy. The mental starter is well used to reinforce number skills and engages the pupils in a range of questions, games and activities which often link to the main teaching points. Teaching points and tasks set are clearly explained and are supported by appropriate resources. In the best lessons, pupils concentrate well during this part of the lesson and are keen to respond and answer questions. In these lessons, well-targeted and challenging questions engage all pupils and extend pupils' use of mathematical language and speed of thinking. Tasks are generally well matched to pupil abilities but, on occasions, are inappropriate or lack challenge. The plenary is generally well used to consolidate and sometimes extend learning through the introduction of new skills. Teachers' planning is generally sound with activities planned in line with objectives and the lesson being evaluated. Assessment is carried out informally within the lesson through the use of questioning. Systematic approaches to the assessment of pupils' work are not in place and need to be developed. The quality of marking of pupils' work is variable, with some instances of positive, constructive comments giving clear guidance to pupils as to how they can improve. On occasions work, is praised when it is of poor quality, spelling errors are not corrected and often there is a lack of guidance as to how pupils can improve.

66 Homework is set in Key Stage 2 and is used to reinforce and sometimes extend learning. Worksheets are sometimes sent home or pupils are asked to apply mathematical skills in the home environment. Direct teaching is generally effective and where used well leads to clear explanations of concepts, skills and required tasks. Support staff are used very effectively, and they receive clear instructions from the class teacher as to how they can support the lesson. They are particularly effective when working with slower learning pupils and demonstrate a positive, purposeful, attentive approach which leads to good progress being made by the group.

67 The numeracy co-ordinator has carried out the role for one year and has successfully managed the introduced the National Numeracy Strategy from September 1999 within the school, providing effective training and support for staff. The significant improvement in standards at Key Stage 1 can be linked to the introduction of the Strategy. Teachers express positive views about the Strategy, and pupils demonstrate good mental skills and use of mathematical language, consistent with the Strategy. At Key Stage 2 there is no evidence yet of improved standards resulting from the Strategy. Pupils however are positive about the changes in teaching which it has brought about, such as the greater emphasis on direct teaching, the opportunities for mental work and the use of mathematical games and activities to stimulate thinking. A draft policy and Action Plan to Raise Standards contains appropriate strategies to raise expectations and introduce individual targets and these documents are a good framework for a whole-school approach to raising standards.

SCIENCE

68 In the assessment results at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieved standards which were below the national average although there has been an improvement in the current year. The number of pupils achieving higher levels has increased when compared to similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2 the number of pupils achieving expected levels was close to average but the number of pupils who achieved the higher levels were well below the national average. In the lessons observed, reviewing pupils' work and discussion with pupils, the standards at both key stages are in line with national expectations.

69 Pupils at both key stages develop sound investigative and experimental skills. At Key Stage 1 pupils know that a simple electrical circuit needs a battery and must be complete to light a bulb. They know that plants need light and water to grow and that plants produce seeds to reproduce. They are also able to identify the position of the main organs of the human body, and understand how the skeleton supports them. Their basic understanding of the senses to hear and see is good.

70 At Key Stage 2 pupils know the major bones in the body and some understand the function of the heart. They know the difference between evaporation and condensation but are unable to identify the main differences between solids, liquids and gases. Knowledge of electricity and magnetism is more secure and they know that like poles of a magnet repel and unlike poles attract. Some pupils are able to discuss the higher level work on the planetary system. They know that the sun is the centre of the universe and they are able to name the planets. Their understanding of the rotation of the moon around the earth, night and day and the seasons is good. In Year 3 pupils have good knowledge of the range of teeth in a human and understand the need to protect them. Pupils in a Year 3/4 class understand the need for a balanced diet and that too much fat has a detrimental effect on the heart. At the end of the key stage pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of a fair test.

71 Pupils' attitudes are generally good, being very good at Key Stage 1. They are enthusiastic, enjoy practical work and investigations and are prepared to predict outcomes when given the opportunity. They work collaboratively in groups and their behaviour is always good in lessons.

72 Pupils' progress is at least satisfactory and sometimes good at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 it is very good when pupils use observation to identify the range of seeds in fruit and plants and understand that some seeds grow inside fruit and outside some plants. Pupils are able to recall previous work when they grew their own plants from a seed. At Key Stage 2 pupils use their knowledge of the structure of teeth to explain decay and the effect of sugar, and understand the need for hygiene. The contents of food packets were observed by pupils and identified as to their suitability in a balanced diet. Pupils record their results of experimental and investigative work on worksheets and have limited opportunity to write extensively. Tables of results and blocks graphs are evident at both key stages. There was limited evidence of the use of information technology.

73 Teaching is very good at Key Stage 1 and at least satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned with clear outcomes indicated. All teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and are enthusiastic in their teaching. Pupils are challenged to predict outcomes, discussion is encouraged and demonstration used when appropriate. Very good use was made of resources. The present curriculum at Key Stage 1 uses the QCA schemes of work and that at Key Stage 2 uses a two-year plan to ensure coverage of the curriculum. The school intends to use the QCA schemes throughout the school from September. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and keen to raise the standards throughout the school, but little monitoring of teaching has taken place. Test results have been analysed recently but the school has yet to adopt criteria to improve the range of higher level results at the end of the key stage tests. Resources are adequate at both key stages but those at Key Stage 2 should be reviewed as to their quality.

ART

74 During the inspection only one lesson was seen in art and a wide range of evidence is also drawn from other sources including, pupils' work, teachers' planning, displays of pupils' work and through talking to pupils. In Key Stage 1, a wide range of good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop in art and the quality of learning is consistently good. Most pupils, by the age of seven, are able to work well with a variety of appropriate tools and materials; they can express their ideas and feelings with confidence through painting, drawing, collage and a range of other work. Bold paintings,

such as those linked with the visit to “Goose Fair”, high quality pastel and other drawings by pupils, such as those of hyacinths are to be seen in abundance. The art work of younger pupils is often linked very effectively with other subjects, for example in music where pupils were asked to listen to the work of different composers such as Rimsky-Kosakov, Strauss, Mancini and in two stages of colour mixing and mark making to add fine detail, create high quality paintings related to pieces of music such as “The Flight of the Bumble Bee”, “Morning Papers Waltz” and “Baby Elephant” respectively. Elsewhere pupils’ art work is very effectively linked to most other subjects at one time or another, such as movement in physical education, models made in design and technology, stories and poems, drawings from visits to the park in geography and work linked with history. In Key Stage 2, attainment is in line with expectations, with a few examples of high quality work. However, the range of art is more limited than that seen for younger pupils, particularly related to such activities as painting where special arrangements need to be made to provide access to water. Three dimensional work can be seen in each key stage but opportunities again are much more limited for pupils in the juniors with some notable exceptions. Some very good quality pastel work is to be seen, however, particularly in that, for example, of rocky shorelines after the style of Dame Laura Knight. Indeed, throughout the school, pupils’ art work based on the style of a very wide range of well know artists is often of high quality, such as in the infants where pupils used lines and created their own rules after the style of Klee, and older pupils created drawings and prints linked with work such as ”Blackthorn Wallpaper” by William Morris, and similarly followed up on other artists such as Klimp. In the work on Mondrain, very good examples of progression are to be seen, for example, related to “Autumn Maze” and “Crisscross”.

75 Pupils have good attitudes to art in the juniors and very good in the infants. In both key stages they often really enjoy the tasks they are given, work hard and show sustained levels of concentration on numerous occasions during multi-stage tasks and extended studies. They take a real pride in the presentation of their work, the quality of the results and often show high expectations. Additionally, younger pupils are able to use a much wider range of ways to express themselves through their art and respond very enthusiastically and with high levels of commitment to these opportunities. The quality of teaching is consistently good in the infants and broadly sound in the juniors with some examples of high quality teaching, which could be quickly extended further with the widening of the range of opportunities provided for older pupils. Overall, careful attention is given to the planning and organisation of individual lessons. Expectations of pupils’ behaviour, progress and attainment are often high and there is much evidence of good quality direct teaching of the subject. Many staff see the subject as very important, work hard at it with their pupils and build effectively on pupils’ previous learning and experience, although on occasions, progression and continuity in some elements of artwork is more limited in Key Stage 2. Numerous displays of good and some very good quality can be seen throughout the school in classrooms and central areas. Valuable use is made of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum for pupils. It is recognised by the school that the documentation now needs to be updated in the light of recent national advice and to reflect some of the good levels of work currently taking place in the school. The school is well resourced for the subject in the infants but the range of tools and materials available in the juniors needs to be significantly extended for some aspects such as painting and three dimensional work. The new co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the subject and keen to build on the many examples of good practice in both key stages to take developments further. As yet, monitoring and evaluation is insufficiently developed.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

76 During the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson in design and technology. Judgements about standards are based on scrutiny of pupils’ work as well as this lesson. Standards in both key stages are broadly in line with national expectations. Skills are not consistently developed and refined at Key Stage 2 because there are limited opportunities for pupils to undertake design and technology activities.

77 The focus for much of the design and technology undertaken at Key Stage 2 has been pupils designing and making bridges. Year 6 pupils' work shows that they have clear understanding of the processes involved in this subject. They have been able to investigate structures, develop, test and evaluate their own structures and have been making a larger model using some of these ideas. The models that have been made show sound skills in using tools and fastening materials together. Younger pupils have undertaken similar work on bridges and have also looked at how they can make toys move using levers, springs and pivots. Again their work shows a sound understanding of the processes in design and technology. In the one lesson observed, the teacher was knowledgeable and provided clear guidance to pupils that enabled them to develop their technique and the accuracy of their work. There are plans for pupils in lower Key Stage 2 to work with food within their topic on India. They will be making and evaluating their own sweets having first worked to a recipe. This should help in broadening their understanding and skills. Many pupils in this key stage benefit from the voluntary teaching of groups by an enthusiastic governor with an interest in the subject.

78 At Key Stage 1 pupils have more opportunity to practise skills and to work a range of materials including construction kits that are appropriate for their ages. Pupils in Year 2 (and also some in Year 1) have made well thought out models of equipment for their ideal playground using a commercial construction kit. Their fabric work models of Joseph were carefully planned and show good skills in cutting, joining and decorating. Card and wood were used effectively in their models of vehicles. These again were based on good plans that included annotated designs and lists of materials would be needed.

79 Over the last two years there has been little development in design and technology as the main focus in school has been on literacy, numeracy and the amalgamation. The national scheme of work has been adopted in Key Stage 1 and will be used as the basis for planning in Key Stage 2 from September. This should help to ensure that there is a broader and more consistent approach to delivering the design and technology curriculum in Key Stage 2. At present there is no system for assessing and recording pupils progress across the school and at Key Stage 2 there is little difference seen in the standards being achieved by pupils across the key stage. If teachers had a better understanding of what pupils already knew they would be able to plan the next steps in their learning more effectively.

GEOGRAPHY

80 The number of geography lessons observed during the inspection was small. However further evidence from pupils' books and folders, displays and talking to pupils and teachers indicates that overall the children are given worthwhile experiences in their study of geography at Key Stages 1 and 2.

81 Standards are broadly in line with national expectations at Key Stage 1 and 2. At Key Stage 1, a topic on "Ourselves" is used to bring together geography and other foundation subjects. By the end of Year 2 pupils can recognise differences in the environment in a discussion about holiday postcards and the seaside. Pupils' work reflects an appreciation of the location of Arnold on a map of the British Isles.

82 By the end of Key Stage 2, in the context of a study of Chembakoli, pupils can describe basic differences in climate, dwellings and clothing between cultures, and make reasoned comments on how improvements in living conditions can be brought about. However a significant number of pupils demonstrate a limited knowledge and understanding of the topic and describe those living in the village in stereo-typical terms which does not include positive aspects of such a way of life. Pupils can identify

rivers in England and pupils' work indicates coverage of the water-cycle. Year 3 pupils are able to describe convincingly the positive and negative aspects of living in their own community, showing a good understanding of the importance of employment opportunities, leisure and recreational facilities, schools and shops.

83 Previous inspections of the infant and junior schools indicated appropriate standards of attainment, which have largely been maintained. However the large amounts of time allocated to numeracy, literacy and related activities now provide a limited amount of time available for teaching geography; currently twelve to fifteen hours in a year for Years 4, 5 and 6. This limits the range and depth of learning opportunities provided and the ability of the school to maintain standards in the subject.

84 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, with good features and also some weaknesses. At Key Stage 1, there is an emphasis on oral work and discussion. Good use of questions deepens pupils' understanding of their own locality and holiday destinations. At Key Stage 2, good teaching is demonstrated in Year 3. It is characterised by high expectations, clear instructions, effective pupil management and an imaginative role-play situation. It leads to well-behaved pupils, who are confident and articulate in carrying out roles, co-operate well with each other, and make good progress in the lesson. Where teaching demonstrates low expectations of work and behaviour, pupils do not fully apply themselves to the task set and a significant minority of pupils makes limited progress. Informative displays on Chembakoli in Key Stage 2 and the seaside and maps in Key Stage 1 provide useful aids for teaching. The trips, visits and visitors to the school provide a valuable resource for learning. The visitor to Key Stage 1 who brought in a suitcase full of items of interest stimulated both curiosity and enquiry in pupils and led to a high quality discussion. The Year 2 camping weekend within the school grounds provides an opportunity to develop a valuable understanding of the environment. The school grounds provide a rich resource for the whole school and are used for activities such as orienteering, which develops pupils' map skills. The Year 6 residential visit to Hathersage provides a very useful range of teaching opportunities in geography, such as map-reading, study of land forms and land use. There is little evidence of the use of information technology within the subject.

85 The geography co-ordinator recognises the need to develop a long-term curriculum plan for the subject which links Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 within a continuous programme based on schemes of work produced by the QCA. Developments within the subject have been held back by the introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies and issues arising from the amalgamation. Links with Key Stage 1 are being developed through discussions with the science co-ordinator to develop cross-curriculum links. Monitoring of teaching, planning and pupils' work is not carried out systematically and there is a need to develop whole school approaches to assessment and recording for standards to improve.

HISTORY

86 Standards in history are in line with those expected for pupils at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. History at Key Stage 1 is taught as part of a cross-curricular, topic-based approach, linking with geography and other foundation subjects. By Year 2 pupils can identify and discuss differences between ways of life at different times and ask relevant questions to a visitor to the school regarding toys, clothes and domestic appliances from earlier in the twentieth century. Through asking about materials used for clothes and the development of plastics and technology for use in the home, pupils gain an understanding of changes in their own lives, the lives of their own family and within the community around them. Pupils of all abilities make at least satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and benefit from good use of a wide range of resources and artefacts to stimulate learning.

87 Pupils at Key Stage 2 build on prior learning in history and currently follow a two-year rolling programme of studies of historical periods. By the end of Year 6 pupils are able to distinguish factual evidence from assertion and hypothesis and can relate events from the Industrial Revolution to changes taking place in current society. They can understand the impact of change on their own community and recognise Victorian buildings and other historical features in the locality. They are able to use literacy skills well in writing about Victorian Nottingham and can use information technology to interpret and access data. They contribute written work, models and art work to stimulating displays of Victorian times and other periods. Pupils across Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress over time. When pupils with special educational needs have additional support, they make good progress within the lesson.

88 Improvements since the last inspections of the infant and junior schools have been satisfactory overall. Standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

89 The quality of teaching is satisfactory across the school, with some good and excellent features. Teachers show interest and enthusiasm for the subject and are able to stimulate and motivate the pupils. This has a positive impact on the learning that takes place. In Year 6, the teacher's knowledge and enthusiasm for local history, for example, encouraged children to ask a range of perceptive questions and make well thought out comments on social conditions in previous times. Teachers use pupils' own experiences, where appropriate, as the basis for learning, and in Year 2 questions about holidays are used to extend pupils' chronological understanding. Where opportunities are provided for extended writing, within history, as in Year 3 where pupils have written about Tutankhamen, the quality of work produced reflects care, independent study and interest on the part of pupils. Where there is a reliance on worksheets which require limited application on the part of pupils, the work produced is of lesser quality. It reflects limited opportunities for independent study, use of information technology or the development of a depth of historical understanding. The very good visit to Newstead Abbey, undertaken by Year 6, provides opportunities for pupils to experience historical clothing, artefacts and domestic conditions. It brings the subject to life and stimulates good quality learning on returning to school. Where cross-curricular links are utilised, pupils are able to transfer skills and experiences, as in reading a piece of contemporary Victorian writing and discussing words used, or discussing time in Year 2.

90 The subject is led by the history co-ordinator who is knowledgeable and committed to the subject. Developments within the subject have been held back by issues arising from the amalgamation of the two schools and the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to implement a long-term plan which links Key Stage 1 and Key 2. A draft action plan sets out a time-scale for this to happen, and the decision has been made to adopt schemes of work produced by the QCA, from September 2000. Monitoring of planning across the school, teaching within the subject and the quality of work produced has not taken place. Consistent approaches to marking and assessment are not followed across the school. There is a need for a whole school curriculum plan, effective monitoring and consistent approaches to assessment within the subject, for standards to rise further.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

91 Standards in information technology (IT) are in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 2 in communicating information and in handling information. Pupils in Year 6 can change font, styles and sizes of letters and use effects such as bold to create emphasis in their work. They are able to format their work by justifying or centring the text. They make effective use of the mouse to select art tools when producing pictures on the screen and can change colours and the orientation of objects. Although pupils tend not to remember the terms used to describe data files, such as record and field

they can talk about storing, retrieving and searching information and they understand that computers are powerful tools for managing and handling data in the real world and are used, for example, in school to manage pupil records. At present pupils have no opportunities to develop their understanding of how computers can be used to control models and other devices or how they can be used with sensors to monitor and record events as they happen, such as changes in the outside temperature. Pupils are confident in using computers. They know how to log onto a network, launch programmes, retrieve their files, save changes and print their work.

92 At Key Stage 1 pupils' skills are mainly in using a word processing programme to produce polished pieces of writing and art programmes to make simple drawings. Their skills in these aspects of IT use are sound. Insufficient progress has been made in other aspects, such as information handling and control, for example, of programmable toys.

93 IT lessons are regularly, but not always frequently, planned for and at Key Stage 2 teachers are able to use the IT suite to teach specific skills that pupils are then able to practice. This works effectively when the network is functioning reliably, but too often there are difficulties logging on, loading programmes and printing work and when this occurs too little progress is made in lessons. Teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory and good. Too few lessons were observed to make an overall judgement. Both teachers were well prepared and in the well-taught lesson the teacher was confident when explaining to pupils how they could use the facilities in the database to easily produce graphs to present information. Her questioning successfully encouraged them to work out solutions to the problems they encountered. She enabled higher attaining pupils to make good progress by successfully encouraging them to search information using two fields. The other lesson had to be changed when problems were encountered with the network and the planned objectives were not achieved, although some useful revision of earlier learning took place.

94 The recently appointed co-ordinator has considerable expertise in the subject. He has already made improvements to the effectiveness of current hardware provision and has produced a very appropriate plan to improve the curriculum and to address the problems with hardware in the medium and longer term.

MUSIC

95 During the inspection it was only possible to observe one music lesson, which was in Key Stage 1. There was limited evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work and it has not been possible to judge standards in the subject or to judge the quality of the teaching of music in the school. In the lesson observed, pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrated sound skills in singing, including singing in parts. They were effectively taught by the teacher who worked closely with and was well supported by a skilful and knowledgeable peripatetic pianist. There is evidence that pupils in this key stage are also encouraged to respond to music, through for example producing paintings based on how the music of Prokofiev and Straus made them feel. The teaching of pupils in Key Stage 2 is based on commercial schemes and provides opportunities for pupils to use percussion instruments, to compose simple pieces, listen to and appraise pieces of music and to sing. There are few opportunities for pupils to sing in assemblies and only occasionally do pupils who are learning instruments, such as the recorder, get an opportunity to perform. The different approaches to teaching music in the two key stages is being addressed in September by the adoption of the national scheme of work and the peripatetic pianist will be working with teachers in both key stages. This should help to ensure that a more coherent programme is provided for pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

96 Overall, the standards observed in lessons are broadly in line with those expected in games at Key Stage 1 and in gymnastics at Key Stage 2, which were the aspects of physical education it was possible to evaluate. However, in two lessons standards were below those expected for the age of the pupils. In one lesson in Key Stage 1, most pupils lacked the necessary throwing and catching skills to play a game of rounders, some were unable to accurately hit a ball with a racquet and could not therefore make the required progress. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to link a sequence of activities on the floor in their gymnastics tasks and transfer it to apparatus. Working on the theme of balancing, the quality of work from pupils in Year 6 was high. In a lesson on athletic skills, pupils in Year 3 lacked the necessary technique to perform the throwing and jumping tasks required in the lesson. As a result progress was unsatisfactory.

97 Pupils' attitudes to their work are very positive and most work enthusiastically. They are keen to be involved in physical activity and listen intently to instructions. Their behaviour in lessons is often very good. When given the opportunity, pupils work co-operatively with a partner and in a group and support each other in their work.

98 The majority of teaching seen was at least satisfactory, sometimes good. Teachers plan their lessons well and have a sound knowledge of the subject. Pupils are often challenged to produce a high standard of work, such as in the gymnastics lesson where pupils in Year 6 demonstrated good body management in their balancing activities. Most pupils at Key Stage 1 have limited skill in catching and throwing but are able to play a simple game of rounders. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was the result of too high expectations by the teacher when pupils did not demonstrate the skills to progress into a game. At Key Stage 2, unsatisfactory teaching resulted from too much content in the lesson and the pupils' inability to manage some of the tasks set by the teacher in athletics. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are always of a high order and teachers manage their classes well.

99 There is no curriculum plan in place at present although the school intends to follow the QCA schemes of work from September. There has been no swimming in the curriculum over the past year but this is to be reinstated into the Key Stage 2 curriculum in the next academic year. The residential experience at the school for Key Stage 1 pupils, and at Hathersage for Key Stage 2 pupils makes a valuable contribution to support outdoor and adventurous activities in the curriculum. The co-ordinator is a specialist and has plans to monitor teaching throughout the school and to improve the quality and range of the gymnastics apparatus at Key Stage 2. There are no formal assessment procedures and reports to parents do not always indicate what pupils know, understand and can do. The school attempts to provide a range of extra curricular activities in sport and school teams have achieved success, particularly in cricket.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

100 In the course of the inspection three lessons were seen in religious education and evidence is also drawn from a wide range of other sources including, pupils' work, teachers' planning and records, displays of pupils' work, assemblies and through talking to pupils about their work in the subject. Overall, appropriate opportunities are being provided for pupils to develop in religious education and pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is broadly in line with expectations, related to the local Agreed Syllabus. By the age of seven, pupils are beginning to understand many of the stories and their meanings from the Bible. They are aware that it is a special book and know about holy books, places of worship and customs associated with Christianity and several other major religions including Buddhism. In one lesson, pupils were able to make practical suggestions, after hearing the story about the Monkey King, about what they could do to look after the world around us. Younger pupils are

beginning to develop an understanding and empathy for others, as seen in the responses during a Key Stage 1 assembly where pupils readily reflected on the plight of a young girl saying her prayers during the war. Older pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding about Christianity and aspects of other major world religions such as Islam and Hinduism. Many understand the concept of fairness and justice and relate this to detailed studies in religious education and other subjects such as history and geography. This was seen in a Year 4/5 lesson which focused on beginnings and endings related to life's journey, during which pupils gave good examples of types of unfairness related to equal pay, religious prejudice and educational opportunities. The majority of pupils are developing caring skills and an understanding of people in less fortunate situations.

101 Pupils often enjoy listening to stories in religious education, are attentive and readily respond in answers to questions and with their own ideas and suggestions. Most pupils have positive attitudes to the subject, see it as useful and interesting and behave well in lessons. They often show an appreciation for the views of others. Teaching and learning in both key stages are sound and sometimes good. Lessons are usually well planned, organised and directly linked to the local Agreed Syllabus. Discussions are often well led by teachers with good use of a range of different questions to extend and consolidate pupils' understanding and knowledge. Appropriate and sometimes good quality direct teaching is a feature of most lessons, to which the pupils respond with interest and work hard on the set tasks. Resources are generally adequate for the subject, although the school recognises that there is a need to extend the range of artefacts and some book and other materials to match the curriculum on offer. Monitoring and evaluation are, as yet, insufficiently developed.