

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SILVERHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Mickleover, Derby

LEA area: Derby

Unique reference number: 112765

Headteacher: Mr P J Robinson

Reporting inspector: Mr R Sharman  
1696

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2000

Inspection number: 224064

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



## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Draycott Drive Mickleover Derby
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr I Nicklin
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

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Mr R Barnard 13526	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers Accommodation Learning resources
Mrs J Gold 32057	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Foundation Stage Equality of opportunity	Efficiency Staffing
Mr P Nettleship 23887	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Music Physical education	Assessment
Mr D Hughes 20444	Team inspector	Religious education Art and design Geography Special educational needs	Curriculum Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a large primary school with 375 full-time pupils. There are slightly more boys than girls. About one pupil in ten comes from ethnic minority origins but very few of these pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English. When children start in the reception class their attainment, especially in communication and literacy, is generally above that found typically. Attainment in their personal, social and emotional development is average. Forty-five pupils have special educational needs, a proportion which is about average. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals, a proportion which is below average. There is little mobility in the school population. The school serves the local area where many pupils come from supportive homes and where there is little social disadvantage.

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

Silverhill Primary School is a good school. The standards attained in English and mathematics are above average when compared with similar schools. Pupils read well and an above average number reach standards higher than those expected for pupils of their age. Teaching is good. Teachers make clear to their pupils what it is they are to learn and pupils work hard and speak well of their school. The headteacher provides very good leadership and works closely with the very effective governing body. This has enabled the school to make good improvement since the last inspection. The school is managed well and gives good value for money.

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

- Standards in English and mathematics are above average when compared to those attained by pupils in similar schools.
- The teaching is good and has led to the raising of standards.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good, the school is well managed and the governors are very effective. This has contributed considerably to the good improvement since the last inspection.
- Pupils' personal development is good and relationships are very good.
- Behaviour is good and this helps pupils to make good gains in their learning.
- The provision made for pupils' social development is very good and that for their moral development is good and this leads to their good personal development.
- Parental support is very good and this makes a significant contribution to the standards pupils attain.

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

- Not enough eleven-year-olds reach standards in writing above those expected for pupils of this age.
- The standards attained in information and communication technology and in music are below average.
- The marking of pupils' work is not consistent, nor does it give pupils advice on how to improve their work or set targets for them to aim for.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996. Overall, its strengths have been maintained. The ethos is very positive and pupils are well cared for. Consequently pupils' attitudes and personal development are good.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Increasing emphasis on the identification and support for pupils who are capable of attaining standards higher than those expected for their age has led to improved standards for these pupils. However, more still remains to be done to improve the standards of writing. Standards in information and communication technology and music are below average but the school has sound plans to deal with this. Together, the headteacher and governors have established a clear educational direction that is made explicit in the school development plan. This is effectively linked to the school's finances and to the development of the staff's expertise. Careful restructuring of the management of the school has enabled both key stage and curriculum co-ordinators to monitor standards and the quality of teaching more effectively. Planning of the curriculum has improved, with greater continuity between the key stages. This has led to better teaching and higher attainments.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in the National Curriculum tests in 1999.

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

Standards in English and mathematics have improved since the last inspection. The targets set in 1999 and 2000 were slightly exceeded in mathematics and broadly met in English. The number of eleven-year-olds who reach standards higher than those expected nationally for pupils of this age has been improving steadily. The results of the national tests in 1999 showed that the proportion of these pupils was well above the national average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. When compared with similar schools, the number of pupils reaching these higher standards was above average in mathematics, average in English and below average in science. The provisional test results for 2000 show these standards have been maintained in English and mathematics and improved in science. In Key Stage 2, not enough pupils reach high enough standards in writing and too many pupils have not developed well-formed handwriting by the age of eleven.

The standards attained by the seven-year-olds are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics, both nationally and in comparison with similar schools. The proportion that reaches higher standards is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools the proportion is well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. In science, the teacher assessments show

standards above the national average and average standards when compared with similar schools. The proportion that reach higher standards is average nationally and below average compared with similar schools. The provisional results in 2000 show an improvement in science due mainly to better arrangements being introduced for teachers to assess levels of pupils' attainment.

The five-year-olds are very well placed to reach the targets that have been set nationally at the end of the reception year in language, communication and literacy, in numeracy, in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative, physical, personal, social and emotional development. Across the school, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and music are below average. In ICT, this is due mainly to a lack of sufficient equipment and teacher expertise, which is already being rectified. In music, with the emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy, not enough time has been devoted to the subject and teachers' own knowledge of the subject is patchy. The achievement of pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. The very few pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. Those pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the individual targets that have been set for them.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are keen to learn and do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. At times, a little boisterous in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good personal development and relationships are very good.
Attendance	Good.

Pupils speak well of their school and their teachers. They are encouraged to do well and take pride in their achievements and those of others. Relationships are very good. Pupils from a range of cultural origins work and play well together. Attendance is good and lessons start promptly.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 6 years</b>	<b>aged 6-7 years</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good across the school, including the Foundation Stage. It was good or better in two-thirds of the lessons seen. Almost one lesson in four was very good and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers work hard and want their pupils to do well. Pupils respond well to the frequent good teaching and their learning is good. In a small minority of lessons in Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory but rather lacklustre, usually because of an over-reliance on the use of worksheets. Care is taken to ensure that higher attaining pupils do well in English,

mathematics and science. Although these pupils are often given work to extend them in most other subjects, opportunities are not always provided for them to learn in different and more challenging ways. The good teaching of literacy and numeracy reflects the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Pupils' work is marked regularly but inconsistently. Pupils are not given enough written advice as to how to improve their work. The good teaching of pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress. Good support is provided for a pupil learning to speak English, who is making good progress.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but not enough time is provided for music. There is a very good level of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Support is carefully targeted.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Good teamwork between the class teacher and the visiting specialist teacher.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Very good provision for pupils' social development and good provision for moral development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides very good care for its pupils.

The school has a very good partnership with parents who are very supportive of their children's learning. Due attention is given to sex education and the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Arrangements for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics are good and the information is used effectively to set targets for pupils to aim for and to keep track of their progress towards them. The assessment in other subjects is satisfactory. Staff know their pupils well.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is very good, well supported by the key stage co-ordinators. The management of the school is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very effective. They work closely with the headteacher, especially the chair, to set a clear educational direction for the school. Finances are prudently managed.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and key staff have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use this information effectively to make improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Good.

There are sufficient staff to meet the requirements of the school's curriculum. The accommodation is satisfactory, but lacks an outdoor play area for children in reception. Although there are gaps in history and music, overall there are sufficient learning resources. The very recent purchase of computers and software has made good a previous shortfall. The management structure has improved considerably since the last inspection. The role of the subject co-ordinator has been developed successfully. Due attention is paid to the principles of obtaining best value.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and make good progress.</li> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching.</li> <li>• The partnership with parents.</li> <li>• The management of the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency of homework.</li> <li>• Behaviour at lunchtimes.</li> <li>• Not enough emphasis on the arts, especially in the extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

Parents are very supportive of the school. The inspection findings confirm parents' positive comments. Homework is set regularly and pupils are tested each week on the spellings and number combinations they have been asked to learn. The setting and use made of homework in other subjects is inconsistent. Behaviour overall is good. There is a little boisterous behaviour at break and lunchtimes. Not enough time is given to music in the curriculum and standards are below average. There have been recent improvements in the extra-curricular activities with an art club and the formation of a choir, about which parents spoke well.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The standards attained by the eleven-year-olds in the national tests in 1999 were well above the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. These are broadly in line with the results over the previous two years. In comparison with similar schools the standards in 1999 were above average in English and mathematics and average in science. The proportion of eleven-year-olds who reach standards higher than those expected for pupils of their age was well above the national average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. In comparison with similar schools, the proportion was above average in mathematics, average in English and below average in science. The provisional results for the higher attaining pupils in 2000 are broadly similar in English and mathematics but show an improvement in science. Not as many pupils reach higher standards in writing as they do in reading. The attainments of boys and girls are similar, with girls doing marginally better in science. The targets set by the school in 1999 and 2000 were slightly exceeded in mathematics and broadly met in English.
2. The 1999 national test results showed that the seven-year-olds attained standards in reading, writing and mathematics that were well above the national average and well above the standards reached in similar schools. The proportion that reached standards above those expected nationally for pupils of this age was well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the proportion was well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. This shows an improvement, especially in reading and mathematics, but less so in writing. In science, the teacher assessments in 1999 show standards above the national average, and average in comparison with similar schools. The proportion that reached higher standards was average nationally and below the average found in similar schools. This is mainly due to the way in which teachers made their assessments, specifically in how pupils were developing their understanding of scientific enquiry. The provisional results from the tests in 2000 show some improvement. The attainments of boys and girls are similar at the end of Key Stage 1.
3. These results, especially for the higher attaining pupils, show a good improvement since the last inspection. In Key Stage 2, considerable effort goes into keeping track of how pupils are doing against the targets that have been set for them. Extra support is given effectively through 'Booster classes' and through the 'SATs Club' after school. Teaching has improved across the school, especially in Key Stage 2, and this has contributed to the improved standards. The planning of the curriculum has improved and teachers are much clearer about what they want pupils to learn in lessons. In other subjects, higher attaining pupils are often given extension work, but as a rule this does not provide these pupils with more challenging ways of thinking.
4. Inspection findings accord with the results of the national tests. Standards in mathematics are high. The introduction, on a trial basis in Key Stage 2, of grouping pupils together into classes for mathematics lessons on the basis of the standards they have reached (setting) has had a significant impact on the standards attained, especially by those pupils who have been identified as potential high attainers. In conversation these pupils say that they find the arrangements better and that the work is more challenging. Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science of

those pupils who have been identified by the school as higher attainers have improved, but less so in writing.

5. The standards reached by the seven- and eleven-year-olds in speaking and listening are well above average. Pupils build on the skills they bring to school and teachers place considerable emphasis in getting pupils to explain their thinking and how they have arrived at the answers they give. Pupils across the school read well. They are interested in books, and teaching is systematic with good attention given to the use of phonics. The very good home-school reading arrangements make a significant contribution to the standards of reading.
6. Standards in writing are not as high as they could be. Not enough pupils reach high enough standards in their writing. This is partly because the skills pupils learn in the literacy hour are not being developed further in other subjects. There is an over-reliance in these subjects on the use of worksheets which provide little opportunity for pupils to write at length. For example, in a study of Ancient Greece undertaken by pupils in Year 6, most of their written work consisted of the completion of commercial worksheets or those provided by the teachers. Consequently the written work of almost all pupils was broadly of a similar standard. Pupils' handwriting skills are not well developed. Too many pupils towards the end of Key Stage 2 do not have well-formed handwriting which is presented neatly. A start has been made in Key Stage 1 to teach pupils to join their letters, but overall there has been little improvement in this since the last inspection.
7. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is broadly above that typically found nationally, except in their personal, social and emotional development, where it is average. Many children have already developed good skills in speaking and listening. They enjoy books and are keen to read. Most are well placed to reach, or possibly exceed, the new standards set for children at the end of reception year in communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development, in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their creative, physical, and personal, social and emotional development. Children have made a good start in learning to read words by sight and by using the sounds letters make (phonics). They have started to count and order numbers to ten.
8. At the end of both key stages, the standards attained in physical education are above those expected nationally for pupils of these ages. This is an improvement since the last inspection and reflects the extra emphasis placed on the subject and the provision of a good range of sport-based extra-curricular activities. The standards attained by the seven and eleven-year-olds in art and design, geography, history and design and technology are average. In religious education, the seven- and eleven-year-olds attain the standards that are required by the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus.
9. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and music are below average. In the case of ICT, this is mainly because pupils in the past have not had enough opportunities to develop the necessary skills. New computers and software have now been purchased and detailed plans are in hand for the development of the subject. Not enough time has been given to music. Staff expertise is limited, reflecting the position at the last inspection. A recent impetus, recognised by parents, has been given through the appointment of a new co-ordinator.
10. In the Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils achieve well. This is an improvement. They are keen to learn, and respond well to the challenge provided by the predominantly good teaching. Pupils achieve particularly well in physical education due to the good provision made and the number of staff who have specialist expertise in

coaching. There is underachievement in ICT and music, as pupils do not have the necessary experience and skills to reach the standards that are expected nationally. The achievement of potential higher attainers in mathematics and reading is good and their achievement in science has improved in the past year. However, these pupils are underachieving in writing. Pupils learning to speak English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they receive good support. The pupils from ethnic minority origins achieve similarly to the majority of pupils.

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

11. Pupils' good attitudes to school, good behaviour and good personal development contribute well to their levels of attainment and achievement. Attendance is good.
12. Pupils speak well of their school and enjoy their time there. Children in the Foundation Stage have made a good start with their personal, social and emotional development. They have quickly settled into the life of the school, behave well, and show a good enthusiasm for their learning. This was evident in a numeracy lesson where their obvious enjoyment of counting and working with numbers, together with the sense of fun engendered by the teacher, ensured good learning by the children.
13. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes in lessons are good and this shows a steady improvement as they move through the school. Pupils are keen to get on with their work and concentrate well. They listen carefully to instructions and appreciate other pupils' contributions. Their positive attitude to learning is a significant feature of many lessons. Pupils are very keen to read and this contributes well to the high standards. For example, a good reader in Year 3 said 'I love reading, it is one of my hobbies'.
14. Pupils' behaviour in lessons, assemblies, around the school and in the playground is good. Some parents expressed concerns about behaviour on the playground, especially at lunchtime. A small amount of boisterous behaviour occurs in the playground. This is handled well by staff and pupils themselves do not see it as threatening. There have been no temporary or permanent exclusions during the past two years, a figure well below the national average for primary schools. Pupils know the rules and are aware of how to behave appropriately. They have good manners, are polite and show good respect for the feelings of others.
15. Relationships are very good and this has an important effect on their personal development. All pupils play and work together well. There is no hint of racist or sexist behaviour or language. This is confirmed by pupils' firm condemnation of racism. Good co-operation and the very good relationships between staff and pupils contribute to pupils' learning in many lessons.
16. Pupils' personal development is good. Tasks, such as returning registers or setting up and tidying up equipment and resources, are undertaken in a keen and responsible manner from an early age. House Captains carry out a wide range of duties with great enthusiasm and pride, which both contributes to their own development and sets a good role-model for younger pupils. Many pupils respond with great enthusiasm to the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided. The strong emphasis on developing teamwork was particularly evident in a lunchtime football session. The confidence shown by many pupils has a positive effect on their learning and personal development.

17. Attendance is good being higher than the national average. It has shown an improvement of over one per cent during the last year. Levels of unauthorised absences are lower than the national average. Very few pupils are late and lessons start promptly.

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

18. Overall, the teaching is good. Almost one lesson in four seen was very good and two-thirds were good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teaching is equally good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2, and learning is good. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when unsatisfactory teaching was reported. Teachers are hard-working and conscientious. They have high expectations and let their pupils know that they want them to do well. The climate in most lessons is one where pupils work hard and where relationships are very good. Discipline is firm but unobtrusive. Pupils speak well of their teachers and say that they are getting on well. What they particularly like is the way in which teachers help them when they get 'stuck'.
19. Teaching is usually enthusiastic and the best teaching is also imaginative. 'Who left that sack there?' asked a teacher at the start of a history lesson in Year 3, pointing to a large sack. After considerable discussion as to who it might have been, the pupils decided to look inside to see if there were any clues. To their amazement they found clothes that could have been worn by Queen Boudicca, the focus for the previous lesson. Pupils spontaneously applauded when one pupil finished dressing in these clothes. In a literacy hour in Year 1, pupils helped to make bread when learning about giving instructions. This led to much excitement and anticipation and caught their imagination. 'I can smell it baking!' exclaimed several pupils after only two minutes. In lessons such as these the teachers' enthusiasm is infectious and pupils are keen to learn.
20. A small minority of lessons, which are satisfactory overall, are rather lacklustre. In these lessons teachers often are over-reliant on the use of worksheets and making sure that the pupils complete them. This was seen as a major weakness in the majority of lessons at the time of the last inspection. In these lessons pupils are not as well motivated and learning lacks the enthusiasm seen in most lessons. Pupils, especially the potential higher attainers, 'go through the motions' rather than being inspired to go further.
21. A considerable improvement since the last inspection is that the purpose for a lesson is made clear at the start. Consistency is assured by the effective use of plastic sheets on which the purpose is written in a standard format. These are used effectively to ensure that pupils know what they are doing. Often they are well used at the end of lessons to check on what pupils have learnt. Such practice provides a good example of the effective response made to the previous report.
22. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Emphasis is given to extending children's skills in speaking and listening and in developing their knowledge of phonics. Planning is detailed and thorough and careful links are made with the teacher in Year 1 to ensure continuity, especially in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The teacher and the nursery nurse work well together and have already created a stimulating classroom, which is inviting and also helps children to become self-sufficient.
23. Throughout the school, teachers prepare their lessons carefully to build on what has gone before. Generally work is appropriately matched to pupils' learning needs and this helps pupils to learn well and make good progress. Although extension work is often provided in subjects other than English, mathematics and science to extend the

potential higher attainers, it does not always provide them with opportunities to think in more challenging ways. Due account is taken of the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs who make good progress. Good collaboration between teachers and visiting staff leads to good support for pupils who are learning to speak English, and they make good progress. For example in Key Stage 2, the visiting teacher provides good support by working with a pupil in her first language, ensuring that she is clear about what she is doing as well as helping her to learn to read the words that are most commonly used. In addition, the class teacher regularly takes opportunities to bring the pupil into the class discussions, especially in mathematics where an aid to counting is written with English and Japanese numerals.

24. Teachers use questions effectively to consolidate what pupils have learnt, as well as probing to check their levels of understanding. In science, teachers regularly ask pupils to explain what they are thinking or how they have arrived at the conclusions they have. In mathematics, questions such as, 'How did you work that out?' together with, 'Explain how you got that answer' are used well. This happened in a lesson in Year 2 where pupils were learning about tens and units. A good review of the problems that had been encountered in the previous lesson made sure that little time was wasted. The good use of quick-fire questions and more challenging questions enabled the teacher to make adjustments to her lesson to ensure that pupils had work that was appropriate to their learning needs.
25. At the end of most lessons, teachers recapitulate effectively on what has taken place during the lesson to assess how well the pupils have got on. This information is used effectively to plan work and to check pupils' progress. Often they ask the pupils to tell them something that they know now that they did not know at the start of the lesson. Pupils are eager to share their new knowledge and skills and this consolidates their learning effectively, as well as showing the pupils that they are making progress. This gives them confidence to try more difficult work. In a science lesson in Years 4 and 5, pupils particularly enjoyed remembering the correct Latin names of the most important bones, for example clavicle rather than collar bone.
26. Teachers generally have a good command of the subjects they teach, with the exception of ICT and music. In the case of ICT this is due to lack of experience with the software and new computers being introduced. As a result ICT is not used well in most other subjects. In the main, teachers are not confident in teaching music due to the level of their own knowledge of the subject, and standards in music are not as high as they should be. The teaching of physical education is good and leads to above average standards. In history, the teaching is good but standards are not high as pupils' skills in making historical investigation are not well developed.
27. Lessons are well organised and most proceed at a good pace. Teachers choose appropriate methods for the tasks in hand. There is good collaboration with support staff and with volunteers and parents to the benefit of the pupils. Good and effective use is made of the formats recommended by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies for the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lesson. In mathematics, good emphasis is placed on pupils working in their heads and in quickly recalling number facts they have learnt. In literacy, the teaching of phonics is seen as being important and good emphasis is placed on them in the teaching of reading, but less so in the teaching of spelling. Overall, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good.
28. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work. Praise and encouragement are given, but little written advice is provided to let pupils know how they could improve their work. Nor are targets set for pupils to aim for. Opportunities to enhance learning are missed.

Comments such as 'neater please' do not tell pupils how to make their work neater nor let them know the standards they should be aiming for. The implementation of the school's detailed marking policy is inconsistent.

29. A strength of the school is the effective arrangements made to encourage pupils to read at home regularly. This contributes to the good standards of reading. Parents report that they find the arrangements made for homework to be inconsistent across the school. Homework is set regularly for the learning of spellings and number tables. Pupils are usually tested at the end of each week. When homework is set and completed regularly, pupils improve their knowledge and skills. The setting of homework in other subjects is inconsistent. Where it is set and then used effectively in subsequent lessons, pupils benefit. In a Year 4 and 5 class, pupils had been set the task of listing as many vertebrates and invertebrates as they could. In the science lesson the following day, the good use of the work pupils had done led to good gains in their understanding of the differences between these groups of animals.

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

30. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, and the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education. It is a broad but not sufficiently balanced curriculum. In music, the requirements of the curriculum are being met but not enough time is given to the subject to enable pupils to reach standards expected of them nationally. A sound start has been made with the introduction of the new National Curriculum. The recently purchased equipment and software for information and communication technology, together with the detailed plans for improvement, now ensures that pupils have full access to this aspect of the curriculum. The school has successfully implemented both the National Numeracy Strategy and the National Literacy Strategy. This has resulted in an improvement in standards in both English and mathematics, especially for those pupils identified by the school as being potential higher attainers. Good emphasis is placed on ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and that any potential barriers to learning are removed. More attention has been given to investigative work in science, which is an improvement. However, pupils still have relatively few opportunities to use their knowledge and skills in mathematics in practical situations or in other subjects.
31. Curriculum planning has improved considerably since the last inspection and this has improved the quality of teaching. Good use is made of the schemes of work provided by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In addition, national guidance for planning in the other subjects of the National Curriculum has been successfully adopted. Together with teachers planning collaboratively, this now provides a secure basis for ensuring that pupils' knowledge and skills are systematically developed. Planning is carefully monitored both by subject and by key stage co-ordinators. This is an improvement and has ensured a consistency in planning across the school. Planning in subjects other than English, mathematics and science has ensured that the curriculum is covered, but has not indicated in the past the standards pupils should reach. The new National Curriculum now indicates clearly the standards to be attained. The planning arrangements in place show that the school is well placed to deal with this.
32. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is well planned and children make good progress. Planning takes due account of the requirements of the new Foundation Stage and the subsequent National Curriculum requirements. This is an improvement since the last report. There is good collaboration with Year 1 to the

benefit of the children. The lack of a secure outside play area limits children's opportunities for outside play and for their physical development.

33. The governors are well informed about the curriculum through their curriculum committee and the effective links between individual governors and subject co-ordinators. Curriculum policies are discussed and then approved. The governing body has approved a policy for sex education. The school's programme for health education includes the required emphasis on the dangers of the misuse of drugs. However, the external support for this work is no longer available and the implementation of this aspect of the policy is in abeyance at the moment.
34. The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good and enhances pupils' learning. The overemphasis on sport at the expense of the arts has been a concern of some parents. The activities now include aspects of the arts such as music, as well as very good opportunities for sport. The 'SATs Club', which provides extra support for pupils in Year 6, has contributed significantly to the improvement in results in the national tests. Effective use of residential and day visits to places of educational interest further supports pupils' learning. Good use is made of the local environment to aid learning and pupils are enabled to relate their learning to the everyday world. Effective links with local sports teams enhance the development of pupils' skills in physical education.
35. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils make good progress. Procedures for identifying pupils are good and recent changes in the school's policy ensure early and effective intervention and consequent improvement in their learning. The Code of Practice is fully established and pupils registered are well provided for, with carefully monitored individual education plans in place to support their learning. The school meets its statutory requirements. Good use is made of specialist staff from the local education authority and school support staff are appropriately and effectively deployed to the benefit of the pupils.
36. Opportunities for spiritual development are broadly satisfactory. The recent development of a memorial garden dedicated to a pupil and a teacher who died has provided a good focus for reflection and made good use of a local building firm. The acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and have a better sense of community than that reported in the last inspection. However, they offer few opportunities for spiritual development and this aspect of the acts of worship remains much as it was at the time of the last inspection. Lessons in religious education provide appropriate occasions to promote pupils' spiritual development. Opportunities in other lessons do occur; for example in a science lesson when a teacher wondered with the pupils how the first apple was created. However, such opportunities are not common.
37. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils are taught to understand right from wrong, not only in keeping to and understanding the need for rules, but also in a moral sense. The good provision for sport, both within lessons and in extra-curricular clubs, enables pupils to understand the importance of working together and keeping to the rules. The school provides a well-ordered learning environment and pupils are aware of what constitutes acceptable behaviour towards others.
38. The provision for social development is very good. Adults provide good role models for their pupils in the way they work together. There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility; for example, as house captains and through a wide range of 'monitors' who look after the library and computers, as well as the simpler responsibilities for younger pupils such as the return of registers to the office. Pupils learn of their responsibility to others through their good support for local and national

charities. Residential and adventure holidays, such as the recent visit to Shropshire, further enhance pupils' social development.

39. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory with a wide range of extra-curricular activities that now include artistic activities such as the school choir. This is an improvement since the last inspection as until recently there has been little provision for the arts in these activities. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities to learn about cultures different from their own as well as celebrating local customs such as well dressing.

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

40. The school provides good care for its pupils. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is good and helps them to improve their attainment.
41. The school is a caring community where staff know the pupils well and provide good personal support. Good procedures enable the youngest pupils to settle quickly into the reception class and good care is taken of them at the end of the day. In all classes, staff take good care to ensure pupils are confident, secure and valued.
42. Procedures for child protection are very good. The member of staff designated to deal with issues ensures all staff are given regular and informative updates on awareness and liaises well with health and social workers. Health and safety procedures are effective. The school is clean and tidy.
43. Measures to promote and monitor good behaviour, for example the charters for behaviour in assemblies and when eating at lunchtime, are effective. Procedures are applied consistently by all staff. The strong emphasis on encouraging pupils' self-confidence and esteem is having a positive effect on pupils' personal development. All staff use praise and rewards well and consistently. The pride shown by pupils when their name is entered in the 'gold book' demonstrates the success of the reward system. There are good procedures for dealing with the few incidents of bullying. Pupils feel that these are taken seriously. Parents show confidence in the school to deal with such incidents properly.
44. The monitoring of attendance and the promotion and encouragement of good attendance are effective, and have achieved an improvement of one per cent in attendance levels over the last year. The headteacher takes steps to discourage parents from taking their holidays in term time.
45. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievements are good. Detailed and effective systems are strong in English and mathematics, especially in Year 6. Science is assessed slightly less rigorously but satisfactorily. These systems have been a key factor in the raising of standards. In most other subjects, regular assessment has not been undertaken as systematically. However, most of the new national schemes of work now being implemented have regular tests included. These are to be used to assess individual performance in most other subjects. A major factor in improving assessment has been the close monitoring of test results and standards of pupils' attainment by the headteacher. In Year 6, for example, he interviews each pupil individually to agree on the targets that, through hard work, she or he is capable of achieving in the national tests. Increasingly, subject co-ordinators and key stage co-ordinators are taking greater responsibility for assessing standards in their own subjects and key stages. This enables them to have a clearer perception of the teaching that is provided and the learning that takes place.

46. In reception, children are carefully assessed against standards that children of this age are expected to achieve. From their entry into Year 1, good tracking procedures are in place. These show how each pupil is progressing through the effective use of a range of external and internal test results, together with teachers' judgements.
47. Those pupils with any special educational needs are well identified and suitable programmes are drawn up that are specific to their individual needs. These are reviewed regularly to ensure that new targets are set and good progress is maintained. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are also well met and their progress is well monitored.
48. Results of the national tests undertaken by seven- and eleven-year-olds are closely analysed to identify any patterns. Those sections of a test in which the pupils scored lower than expected are located, and then targeted for improvement. Comparisons are made between the results of girls and boys. The performance of pupils from ethnic minority origins is carefully monitored. Scores achieved by individual pupils are noted to ensure that accurate targets are set for them. A good example of the efficiency of these new procedures is the increase in the number of pupils attaining above average levels in the national tests at the end of both key stages. The school identifies a group with the potential for high grades. Classroom extension work and weekly 'SATs Club' input then provide the pupils with the knowledge and skills that they require to achieve these grades.
49. Short-term assessment within lessons is also good. Examples were seen of lessons being quickly adapted, as teachers realised that the work set was inappropriate. Instant assessment skills were often demonstrated, as teachers enabled pupils to gain new insights through careful questioning. These are examples of teachers using their judgements well to modify or refine their teaching. They are less successful at using marking to assess. The best marking seen is thorough and encouraging, and promotes high standards. However, in most classes, opportunities are missed to use marking as a means for improving learning.

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

50. The partnership between the school and parents is very good and makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. This continues to be a strength of the school.
51. Twenty-three parents attended the meeting prior to the inspection and forty-five per cent of questionnaires were returned. The great majority of parents expressed the view that they supported most aspects of the school's work, with a few minor concerns relating to homework, information given to parents, the range of extra-curricular activities and behaviour at lunchtimes. Parents say that the school has improved since the previous inspection. These views are supported by inspection evidence.
52. Parents receive very good information on their children's achievements and the life of the school. Annual reports and parents' consultation evenings ensure parents have very good information about their children's progress and attainment. A particularly strong feature of reports is the consistent approach to providing parents with details of areas for future development. Newsletters, the school prospectus, and the governors' annual report give parents very good information about the life of the school. The recent creation of a school website has further enhanced this provision. Parents already report that they find this facility useful.

53. Staff, including the headteacher, are very approachable if parents have concerns or issues to raise. Useful meetings, such as those to introduce the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, keep parents up-to-date on what the pupils are being taught and on how they are being taught.
54. The school has very good parental support and enjoys a good reputation. The great majority encourage their children's learning with the support they give them at home. This is very strong in relation to reading, which, along with the very good use of home/school reading records, contributes significantly towards pupils' high standards and positive attitudes to reading. Many parents and volunteers give valuable support and help in the school. For example, they read with pupils and help with swimming and pottery. Parents ensure their children come to school regularly and on time. The Parent Teacher and Friends Association provides good support to the school in relation to fundraising and social events, and as a forum for consultation.

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

55. The school has a positive ethos which reflects its clear expressed aims. It is committed to improvement and to ensuring that its pupils do well. The vigorous response to the action plan that was drawn up following the previous inspection shows this commitment by the governors, headteacher and staff. Considerable effort and thought have gone into the implementation of the plan, which has been effective and has led to good improvement.
56. The headteacher provides very good leadership. Central to this leadership has been the drive to raise pupils' attainment, especially that of those pupils who are potentially higher attainers, and to improve the quality of teaching. The management of the school has been effectively restructured and the key stage co-ordinators collaborate well. Together with the headteacher, they form an effective senior management team which has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. A little fine-tuning is needed to clarify respective responsibilities. For example, it is not clear where responsibility lies for pupils' spiritual development. The management of the school is good.
57. Considerable improvements have been made to the arrangements to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. The key stage co-ordinators effectively monitor teaching and standards of pupils' attainment within their respective key stages. Most subject co-ordinators observe teaching and monitor teachers' planning. Overall, good communication and good teamwork ensure that the outcomes of monitoring are acted upon and lead to improvement. This is seen in the consistency of the teaching, especially in the way in which lessons have a clear purpose – a significant weakness in the previous report. These actions have led to rising standards.
58. The governing body is very effective and fulfils its statutory duties. Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Detailed analysis of the national test results is undertaken. Effective links have been established between subject co-ordinators and individual governors, especially for literacy and numeracy. Reports are written both by co-ordinators and by governors. This enables the curriculum committee to have a good understanding of the curriculum, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Governors are fully involved in the school development plan. Clear short- and long-term priorities are set which have a focus on improving standards; for example the purchase of equipment for ICT, and the adaptation of the accommodation in the classrooms for the youngest pupils in order to provide better provision for the newly established Foundation Stage.

59. The school development plan usefully details what needs to be done to improve the school and sets targets to raise standards. A strength is the effective link made between the analysis of pupils' attainment and the action to be taken; for example, the development of better arrangements to assess pupils' progress in science. This is an improvement since the last report. Subject co-ordinators write a plan for the development of their subject, which is then carefully prioritised by the senior management team for inclusion in the overall plan. Effective and appropriate links are made to the school's finances.
60. The governing body keeps proper oversight of the provision being made for pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that the Code of Practice is fully implemented. The provision made is carefully monitored. The limited funds available to support pupils with special educational needs are spent wisely, and efficient use is made of the available support staff and resources.
61. Good emphasis is placed on ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunity and that any potential barriers to learning are removed. The provision made for pupils learning to speak English is good and the school's ethos is very supportive. Pupils from a range of ethnic origins work and play well together. Older pupils show very positive attitudes towards the rejection of any form of racism.
62. Teachers are suitably qualified and they have the appropriate knowledge and experience to meet the needs of the Foundation Stage, the National Curriculum and the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Teachers have good expertise in teaching English and mathematics and this is reflected in the standards pupils attain. Many of the staff have good expertise in physical education and have coaching qualifications. This results in a good range of sporting activities that lead to above average standards in physical education. Staff are not as confident in their teaching of ICT and music and standards are below average in these subjects. Subject co-ordinators are appropriately qualified and are well placed to fulfil their role. Non-teaching members of staff who have received additional training in literacy make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress in reading.
63. Staff development is good and this has a positive effect on standards in English and mathematics. Structures are in place to identify and prioritise training needs. The response to national initiatives such as those in literacy and numeracy has led to improved cohesion as a team. Most teachers who are qualified to do so have applied to cross the 'threshold' and appropriate training in performance management has taken place. Good informal networks ensure that new members of staff are mentored by their key stage co-ordinator. Satisfactory arrangements are in place for briefing support staff about their role and they feel very much part of the school.
64. The educational priorities of the school are well supported through the secure planning of the school's finances. Planning of the future use of resources has improved since the previous inspection. The governors and headteacher have a clear view of the financial position of the school, and have produced a prudent and well thought-out financial plan for the next three years. Current balances of monies are high at about eight per cent of the total budget, but this provides a sensible contingency to cover fluctuating, and currently falling, pupil numbers, and possible building issues, such as roof repairs. Procedures to monitor and control the budget are very secure. The recent auditor's report raised no major areas of concern. The school has very good administrative support which allows other staff, especially the headteacher, to spend the minimum

time on day-to-day administration. New technology is used well to support the school's administration.

65. The governors and headteacher have a sound grasp of the principles of best value and have established satisfactory procedures to implement them.
66. Accommodation is adequate. Recent adaptations have made good use of the space available in relation to the Reception and Year 1 areas. The good use of shared areas between classrooms helps compensate for the size of some classrooms where there are large numbers of pupils in some classes. The accommodation is tidy and clean, and the good use of display, especially when celebrating pupils' work, makes the school an attractive place for staff and pupils to work in. There is a very good amount of outdoor space, which includes a pond and wildlife area. This is used effectively to support science and physical education. The creation of a memorial garden provides a very useful area for pupils to sit quietly. At times during the lunch break this area is not as quiet as it is supposed to be. There is no secure outside play area for children in the Foundation Stage, which limits their opportunities for physical development and outside play.
67. The school has sufficient resources for most subjects. Very good resources are available for mathematics. Those in science, design and technology and physical education are good. These are used well to help pupils' learning. Standards in music are limited partly through the lack of musical instruments, especially those which aid composition. There are not enough historical artefacts, which hinders the development of pupils' skills in historical enquiry. A considerable amount of new equipment and software has recently been purchased in ICT which will ensure that pupils have better access to the subject. The equipment arrived shortly before the inspection and is about to be installed.
68. The school has improved considerably. The pupils' attainment has risen, especially that of the potential higher attainers in English, mathematics and science. Teaching has improved and the planning of the curriculum is better. Standards have fallen in ICT and music but this has been recognised and sound plans are in hand to rectify this. Expenditure is below average. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

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

69. In order to continue to raise standards and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
  - ◆ Improve standards in writing by:
    - planning for the teaching of writing in subjects other than English;
    - reducing the use of worksheets and creating more and challenging opportunities to write at length in other subjects;
    - teaching handwriting regularly and systematically and ensuring that pupils have tools of good quality to write with.  
(Paragraphs 6, 85, 118,124)

- ◆ Improve standards in information and communication technology by:
  - effectively implementing the plans already drawn up for the improvement of the subject;
  - ensuring that all staff are given the necessary training to make the best use of the new computers and software;
  - establishing effective arrangements for monitoring the standards attained and the quality of teaching.  
(Paragraphs 9, 26,126,131,132,133)
  
- ◆ Improve standards in music by:
  - providing more time in the curriculum for the teaching of music;
  - raising levels of staff expertise through well planned and relevant in-service training;
  - purchasing equipment to provide opportunities for pupils to compose music.  
(Paragraphs 9, 26, 30, 134,137)
  
- ◆ Improve the marking of pupils' work by:
  - giving pupils advice on how to improve their work and setting targets for them to aim for;
  - making better use of the information gained from marking to plan work;
  - monitoring the quality of marking to ensure consistency across the school.  
(Paragraphs 28, 90, 97)

### **Other issues which should be considered by the governors**

- Improving the opportunities for higher attaining pupils to learn in different and more challenging ways.  
(Paragraphs 23, 90, 97)
  
- Ensuring that homework is set and used more consistently.  
(Paragraph 29)
  
- Improving the provision made for spiritual development, both in acts of worship and in the curriculum.  
(Paragraph 36)
  
- Fine-tuning the roles in the senior management team to clarify where responsibility lies for aspects of the school's work such as the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.  
(Paragraph 56)
  
- The establishment of a secure outside play area to provide opportunities for children in reception for outside play and physical development.  
(Paragraphs 66, 76)
  
- Improve resources in history, especially the provision of historical artefacts.  
(Paragraphs 67, 125)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	24	41	35	0	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)	0	375
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	45

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
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	29	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	28
	Girls	27	28	29
	Total	55	56	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (91)	95 (98)	97 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	27	29
	Girls	28	27	28
	Total	56	54	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (91)	92 (100)	97 (93)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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	27	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	23	29
	Girls	30	29	28
	Total	53	52	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (81)	88 (66)	93 (81)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	24	26
	Girls	32	29	31
	Total	56	53	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (80)	90 (83)	97 (93)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (69)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	8
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	0
Indian	17
Pakistani	9
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	335
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

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

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29:1
Average class size	31

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	89

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	552,154
Total expenditure	525,634
Expenditure per pupil	1398
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,513
Balance carried forward to next year	43,033

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	375
Number of questionnaires returned	170

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	38	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	35	2	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	49	2	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	47	15	2	1
The teaching is good.	62	34	4	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	39	8	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	25	6	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	29	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	40	50	8	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	49	44	1	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	41	2	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	38	5	0	6

### Other issues raised by parents

- Pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes.
- Not enough emphasis on the arts, especially in the extra-curricular activities.

## **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**

70. Children enter the reception class in September if they have their fifth birthday before the 31st of March the following year. A second class is opened in January for the younger children. Useful arrangements are made for the induction of children into school. Parents report that they find these helpful. Children enter the reception class with levels of attainment broadly above those found typically, especially in speaking and listening. In their personal, social and emotional development, standards are average. Despite the short time they have been in school, the children have made good progress. Most are well placed to reach, or possibly exceed, the new Early Learning Goals set for children to reach at the end of reception year in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their creative, physical, personal, social and emotional development.
71. Children are making good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Teaching provides varied and well-structured opportunities for children to work and co-operate with each other. They respond well to familiar school activities such as registration and lining up. Children are responsive, and interested in what they are doing, and they concentrate and persevere in their learning. The children speak well and are keen to share their experiences. They readily use the teacher's structure and only speak when it is their turn to hold a hedgehog. They listen well to each other using this device and are also learning the 'hand up' rule for asking questions. Children are learning to take responsibility for their classroom and are effective in tidying apparatus on the tables. They enjoy stories, and good easy relationships encourage the children to contribute and to feel secure. Children dress and undress independently for physical development. The caring attitudes of all adults make a good contribution to the development of children's personal and social skills.
72. Children show their good listening skills and make appropriate responses to questions asked of them. They sustain interest for as much as half-hour at a time. For example, in a literacy session re-enforcing the use of rhyme, they sound out known letter sounds and follow the writing of those sounds. Children respond well when the teacher gives them new vocabulary, for example 'hibernacula' as part of a study of autumn. They already show an interest in the early stages of learning the sounds letters make (phonics). The adults provide good opportunities for children to handle books and already many follow the print as an adult reads. A minority of children are well on the road to being 'readers'. They turn the pages of the books and enjoy browsing. Good home-school partnership develops with the 'book bag' that goes home with each child. Each bag contains a reading book, an envelope with letter sounds being learnt and a home-school reading record. The nursery nurse and the child check these carefully each day. Children readily understand the teacher's pictorial chart, with ticks and crosses to help them to choose an activity when they have finished the task in hand. Most children recognise their names and many enjoy practising letters on their individual whiteboards. Children have made a very good start and are well placed to reach and exceed the standards expected nationally at the end of the year.
73. Children are making good progress in their mathematical development, particularly in their recognition of numbers. The teacher provides a good range of number and singing

games. Children use terms such as 'smallest' and 'largest' correctly. Most recognise numbers one to ten and count accurately. They are confident. For example, one child said, 'I can count to infinity!'. Children enjoy mathematics and most have smiles on their faces for the whole of a mathematics session. The quality of teaching in this area is very good and children learn number skills readily, with a sense of fun. The use of a puppet enhances the teaching and children listen and count his squeaks carefully. Children are already showing awareness of simple addition and one pupil counts to 15 correctly.

74. The teacher provides interesting activities to help the children to develop an understanding of the world around them. They make good progress. For example, after a nature walk looking for 'Treasures' and exploring the colour of leaves, most recognised yellow and brown and learnt new vocabulary of 'dark' and 'light'. They looked closely at leaves and fir cones, used their senses and explored words that described them. Children have opportunities for a range of scientific experiences, including experiments with sand and water. The teacher ensures that effective links are made with their experiences outside school and events in their personal lives. In role-play, children drive buses to a number of well-known local destinations, and to places further afield where they have been on holiday, such as Spain and Florida. Children have access to a computer but were not seen using it during the inspection.
75. Children make good progress in their creative and aesthetic development responding well to the wide range of opportunities provided by the teacher. They show an enthusiasm for painting, and express their ideas through a sound range of materials. This happened after their walk to collect autumn leaves. They make reasonable attempts to represent what they see. They enjoy singing and clapping rhythms. In their creative play, they arrange the furniture to make a bus on which they take their friends on interesting journeys. They insist that the driver always wears a hat!
76. Children's progress in physical development is good but is somewhat limited by a lack of outdoor play facilities. For example, children do not have daily access to climbing equipment or to bicycles. They match their movements carefully to sounds made by the teacher as well as to music. Pupils handle scissors, glue, paintbrushes and crayons competently.
77. Overall the quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good; it is never less than satisfactory and on occasion is very good. The teaching of literacy, especially phonics, is good. Teaching of children's mathematical development is very good as it is imaginative and well planned. The teaching builds effectively on the knowledge and skills children bring to school. It is enthusiastic and children learn with a sense of fun. The adults have very good relationships with the children, which encourages their learning. The class teacher and the nursery nurse have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and of the curriculum to meet those needs. The teacher has attended relevant training, which has enabled a sound start to be made in the implementation of the Foundation Stage. The adults collaborate well to the benefit of the pupils and have already created a stimulating classroom. Planning is detailed and thorough and careful links are made with the teacher in Year 1 to ensure continuity, especially in the teaching of literacy and numeracy.
78. Good links have been established between the reception teacher and the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator to ensure that the curriculum in the Foundation Stage fits neatly into the National Curriculum.

## ENGLISH

79. The results of the 1999 national tests showed that the standards reached by the seven-year-olds were well above average in reading and writing, both nationally and when compared with similar schools. The proportion that reached standards above those expected for pupils of this age was well above the national average in reading and writing. When compared with similar schools it was well above average in reading and above average in writing. There was little difference in attainment between boys and girls.
80. The standards attained by the eleven-year-olds in the national tests were well above average, and above average when compared with similar schools. The proportion reaching higher standards was well above the national average but average when compared with similar schools. The provisional results for 2000 are similar to the 1999 results at the end of both key stages. Overall, the results show the attainments of boys and girls to be broadly similar. However, detailed analysis by the school of the results showed that a significant minority of pupils, especially boys, failed to reach the expected standards in writing. The results show that standards in reading are much higher than in writing. Plans are already in hand to look closely at ways of improving standards in writing. Inspection findings show that standards are in line with those indicated by the test results. These standards show an overall improvement since the last inspection, especially for the pupils identified as potential higher attainers. Overall, pupils' achievement is good.
81. At the end of both key stages, pupils attain above average standards in speaking and listening. By the time pupils enter Key Stage 1, their skills in speaking and listening are well developed. Pupils listen to their teacher carefully, are eager to give answers and are becoming articulate and confident. In Year 2, pupils' increasing confidence enables them to give considered and relevant responses and to express their ideas well, with the teacher only occasionally having to reframe their answers. In Year 3, pupils confidently explore their partially formed ideas with the teacher. This happened in a discussion in the literacy hour when pupils were discussing the book they were reading which was about children who lived on a twelfth floor. When talking about the meaning of 'floor' a pupil said it was like a sandwich. The teacher carefully teased out the idea of layers of a sandwich being like floors and this led another pupil to introduce the word 'storey'. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 speak with increasing fluency and varying pace, pause and vocabulary to the needs of the listener.
82. The seven- and eleven-year-olds read well. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of phonics, which they use effectively to read unfamiliar words. Pupils are confident to tackle more difficult books and are aware of mistakes they make. They use a wide range of strategies to correct such mistakes. Pupils read a wide range of books, and know about the differences between fiction and non-fiction and the use of contents and index pages. The eleven-year-olds read confidently and enjoy their reading. Many are avid borrowers from the school's fiction library. Pupils know how to use the reference library but few were seen using it for independent research during the inspection. They understand what they read and distinguish fact from fiction. For example, one pupil in Year 6 was reading one of her mother's favourite books about Queen Victoria, which she had brought from home. Although the text was challenging, the pupil was strongly motivated by her choice and could recall many salient features of the Queen's life. At times, pupils use dictionaries to check spellings but there was little evidence of the use of a thesaurus.

83. Good tracking of pupils' progress and the provision of timely support are key in the school's success in teaching pupils to read. Teachers have a good understanding of phonics, which they use to good effect. The home-school reading programme is very effective and good use is made of the parents and other volunteers who read with pupils in school. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs in reading, and they make good progress. Good collaboration between the class teacher and a visiting teacher ensures a good level of support and progress for a pupil at the early stages of learning to speak English.
84. Most seven-year-olds spell frequently used words with reasonable accuracy. They use full stops and capital letters correctly most of the time. By the age of eleven, pupils use the spellings they have learnt with a satisfactory degree of accuracy. They have a sound understanding of basic grammar and use speech marks, commas and question marks correctly. Children with special educational needs make good progress in learning to spell accurately commonly used words.
85. In both key stages, but especially in Key Stage 2, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length. In the literacy hour, they satisfactorily develop skills in writing. For example, in Year 6, pupils wrote dialogue and stage directions to dramatise and enact an excerpt from 'The Wizard of Oz'. They explored the use of writing a diary when recounting an excerpt from a book about a girl's diary. However, opportunities to use and improve these skills are not provided in other subjects. In addition, too often pupils are given undemanding worksheets, which hinder pupils in developing and improving their skills in writing. Consequently, too many pupils at the end of the Key Stage 2, especially those identified as being potential higher attainers, do not reach high enough standards.
86. Standards of handwriting at the end of Key Stage 2 are not as high as they could be. A significant minority of pupils have not developed their writing so that they join the letters properly and neatly. Not enough time is given to the development of these skills, nor are pupils always writing with good quality tools. More attention is now being paid to handwriting in Key Stage 1, in particular to teaching pupils to join their letters. Parents welcome this and report improving standards.
87. Overall, teaching is good in both key stages. It is never less than satisfactory and just over a quarter of lessons seen were very good. Pupils learn well and make good progress overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Good use is made of the format provided by the literacy hour. This has had a positive effect on learning and the standards attained by pupils. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and hold high expectations for their pupils. Writing is taught satisfactorily but not enough emphasis is placed in lessons in subjects other than English on helping pupils to improve their writing.
88. The very good teaching is well planned and imaginative, and involves pupils in a wide range of activities. This happened in a lesson in Year 1 where pupils were reading a story which involved the making of bread. As part of the lesson, pupils helped the teacher to use a bread-making machine. Through good use of a spotlight a 'stage' was created for pupils to enact a taped playlet. The pupils were enthralled and keen to participate, and they made good progress in understanding how speech is written down as they wrote the words they had been using in 'speech bubbles'. In a small minority of lessons, which are satisfactory but lacklustre, the tasks given to the pupils are more mundane, often involving the use of rather undemanding worksheets.

89. Lessons are well planned and take due account of the scheme of work from the National Literacy Strategy. Although potential higher attainers reach higher standards in the national tests, at times in lessons there is an over-reliance on providing them with extension activities rather than providing more challenging ways of learning. Good use is made of questioning both to consolidate what pupils have learnt in previous lessons and to review learning at the end of a lesson. Whilst ICT is sometimes used as homework, insufficient use is made of it, particularly to improve pupils' writing.
90. Pupils' work is marked regularly and they are often given praise and encouragement. Rarely are they given written advice on how to improve their work, or given targets for them to attain in the short-term as a result of the marking. Generally, the quality of marking is inconsistent.
91. Pupils regularly read at home as part of the home-school reading programme. The success of this is reflected in the high standards attained by the pupils. Spellings are regularly set and completed as homework. This helps pupils to improve the accuracy of their writing. Some pupils send e-mails as part of their homework.
92. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. This is an improvement and has ensured a successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The results of the national tests show improvement. These results are carefully analysed. This information has been used effectively to draw up plans to raise standards in writing. The quality of teaching has been carefully monitored.

## **MATHEMATICS**

93. Standards reached by pupils at the ages of seven and eleven in the national tests in 1999 were well above national averages. In comparison with similar schools, the standards attained by the seven-year-olds were well above average and those attained by the eleven-year-olds were above average. The proportion of seven- and eleven-year-olds that reach standards higher than those expected of pupils of these ages was well above the national average. When compared with similar schools, the proportion of seven-year-olds reaching these higher standards was well above average and that of the eleven-year-olds was above average. Inspection findings confirm these standards. At the previous inspection, standards were judged to be average at the end of both key stages. Since then, very good progress has been made. Overall, the trend in standards has been one of improvement.
94. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has greatly increased pupils' ability to calculate mentally. The quality of the teaching has also improved markedly, due to good staff training. The recent appointment of a new co-ordinator for the subject has also helped to raise the quality of teaching. Pupils' attainment is much improved, across all ability levels, as a result of very accurate assessments and by keeping close track on their progress. This has led to extra training in special booster classes and in the very well attended 'SATs Club' after school. High targets set by the school for mathematics have been slightly exceeded. Work seen during the inspection shows that pupils have a good knowledge across all aspects of the subject. However, they have relatively few opportunities to use their knowledge and skills in practical situations or in other subjects. Overall, boys and girls perform equally well.
95. The improvements made ensure that pupils who experience problems with mathematics are given much better support. Those who have a talent for the subject are given work to stretch them, particularly in their early and final years. This was clearly seen in Year 1, when children completed various counting activities that

extended all ability levels. Counting money to buy seaside toys was successfully undertaken in Year 2. Rapid questioning and varied activities ensured good concentration levels. In the Year 2 classes, the higher attaining pupils were given harder worksheets after they had completed the same tasks as all their classmates. In Year 3, doubling was introduced, with higher attainers being able to treble numbers in their head. They were also able to give clear explanations of how they had mentally calculated the correct answers. Detailed planning ensured that all the pupils progressed very well.

96. In Years 4 and 5, there continues to be an emphasis on worksheets, with all pupils completing the same activities, before some groups are given extension tasks. Those who have a talent for numbers spend too much time undertaking exercises that they find too easy. This restricts their progress. However, in the weekly 'setted' classes, where pupils work alongside others of similar ability, tasks planned were always challenging. Pupils were able to break up numbers into their constituent hundreds, tens and units, and then add these together. The setting of pupils into ability groups was equally successful in Year 6. All parts of the lesson were well planned to challenge a group of higher attainers in number games and in work on the long-multiplication process. They were also expected to know the squares of all numbers up to 20. In all classes, extending pupils' language in mathematics is well identified weekly. The words connected with each new theme are introduced and learned systematically. Pupils make the most progress when teachers have a clear set of learning goals for each lesson that are planned to meet the needs of all attainment levels within the class. These 'Learning Objectives' are explained to the class at the beginning of each lesson and, at the end, are reviewed to assess the learning that has, or has not fully, been accomplished by each group.
97. Overall, the quality of the teaching is good in both key stages. It is never less than satisfactory and is very good in almost a fifth of lessons seen. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented enthusiastically. Teachers have high expectations of pupil behaviour. Classroom assistants and parents provide very high quality support for the teachers, especially in helping those who learn at a slower pace than most others. Teachers are able to spend a high proportion of lesson time purposefully teaching. Pupils enjoy the work they are given. Most lessons have a rich variety of learning opportunities that spark high levels of interest and pupils make good gains in their learning. For example, the use of a puppet dog, Nicola, in one class immediately raised interest levels further as pupils, and Nicola, counted in tens! However, there is an over-reliance on worksheets and at times those used do not sufficiently extend all pupils and slows learning. Lessons are well linked, but few opportunities are given for groups to undertake extended investigations over several days. In most classes, the marking of pupils' work is not used well to plan work. Opportunities are missed to assess the work and to provide written guidance for pupils to help them improve their work.
98. The headteacher plays a very active role in mathematics, both by teaching in the 'setted' classes and by measuring pupil standards and their rates of progress in the subject. The school has been very successful at setting targets for pupils in Year 6 and giving them the coaching they need to reach higher standards. The newly appointed co-ordinator has already gained a very clear view of what needs to be done to improve standards further. Higher and more consistent standards of presentation will be expected, with pupils working in books more appropriate for their age. At the moment insufficient use is made of information and communication technology in lessons.

99. The success of grouping pupils with those of similar ability is being measured. It is popular with pupils and provides a regular and useful comparative measure of the standards that pupils of all levels of attainment reach when they are fully challenged. Resources and equipment for mathematics are very good and play a significant part in raising standards. For example, pupils enjoy writing on their individual small whiteboards. These are used regularly in lessons for calculations or for writing the answers to sums they have worked out mentally.
100. A major factor in the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been the whole-school commitment to improvement. Standards, both of teaching and learning, have risen markedly. With this team approach, the school is well placed to improve standards even further.

## **SCIENCE**

101. The teachers' assessments in 1999 showed that the seven-year-olds' attainment was above the national average; in comparison with similar schools it was average. The proportion of pupils that reached higher levels of attainment was average when compared nationally but below average when compared with similar schools. This is partially explained by the concerns teachers had regarding the assessment of pupils' development in experimenting and investigating. Since then more objective tests have been introduced and the provisional test results for 2000 show an improvement in the numbers reaching higher standards.
102. The standards attained by the eleven-year-olds in the national tests in 1999 were above the national average. When compared with similar schools the standards were average. The proportion that reached higher standards was above average nationally and below average in comparison with similar schools. The provisional test results for 2000 indicate that more pupils reached these higher standards. Good use has been made of the 'booster classes' and the 'SATs Club' after school. Overall, the attainment of boys and girls at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly similar but with girls doing slightly better than boys at the end of Key Stage 2.
103. Inspection findings broadly confirm these levels of attainment. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the attainment of pupils identified by the school as being potential high attainers. The seven-year-olds have a good understanding of how animals and plants grow. They understand how a lifecycle works when teachers provide opportunities to study frogs and butterflies. When undertaking a study of birds, they learn the names of the different types of feathers and where birds live. Pupils have a good understanding of the different nature of materials and of physical processes such as electricity. Their ability to observe, describe and explain what they see is good, but the opportunities to write independently are limited by the number of worksheets used.
104. The eleven-year-olds understand physical processes such as evaporation because their teachers provide them with good opportunities to experiment by boiling salty solutions and solutions with a mixture of ink and water. Pupils use scientific terms such as solution and condensation accurately, following the good model set by their teachers. In the lessons seen, pupils were confident in making predictions. For example, they predicted what would condense on the lid of a pot when a solution of water and ink were boiled. They were delighted when their predictions were found to be true. When they grow tomato plants and sunflowers, they develop a good understanding of what is needed for growth. They understand the functions of the human skeleton and how important organs such as the heart and lungs work.

105. Teaching is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. There is no unsatisfactory teaching, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Overall, pupils make good progress in their learning, including those with special educational needs. Good teaching is characterised by teachers providing interesting and challenging opportunities for pupils to develop their scientific understanding. This happened in lessons in Years 4 and 5, where pupils learned about the human skeleton and about the differences between vertebrates and invertebrates. Good questioning enabled pupils to consolidate learning from previous lessons, and also to make suggestions as to the function of different parts of the human skeleton. Pupils were keen to do this and to ask more questions related to their own experiences. After a period of reflection, one pupil commented, 'Apparently my dog is arthritic'. In lessons such as these, pupils learn well and show their considerable interest in what they are learning. Where teaching is less effective, but still satisfactory, pupils spend too much time completing a worksheet at the expense of thinking for themselves. Overall, learning is good.
106. Lessons are well prepared, drawing effectively on the scheme of work and teacher's knowledge of what pupils have already learnt. Due attention is paid to safety. The purpose for the lessons is clear and this is shared with pupils. Enough time is given to the teaching of science. These are improvements since the last report. Teachers have a sound command of the subject. Higher attaining pupils are often provided with extension work, but are not regularly given opportunities to try more problematic questions. Insufficient use is made of ICT in lessons.
107. Through her monitoring of planning and observation of teaching, the co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and of pupils' attainment. The arrangements to assess pupils' progress are sound, but more effective systems are about to be introduced, especially to challenge the higher attainers. Good use is made of events such as the science festival at a nearby university by focusing the visit on areas in the curriculum that need extra attention. These visits capture the pupils' imagination and encourage them to learn. The resources are well organised and this helps teachers considerably.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

108. Pupils at the end of both key stages attain standards in art that are expected for pupils of these ages. These standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. In Key Stage 1, teachers enable pupils to develop skills in painting and collage work; for example when they carefully draw leaves and fruits as part of a study of autumn. Pupils have worked successfully in three dimensions, for example producing masks of papier-mâché. The eleven-year-olds have sound skills in drawing and painting. These are seen in pupils' careful reproduction of the designs of William Morris as part of their study of the Victorians. They understand the concepts of light, shade, texture and tone and how pattern and texture are created in designs and pictures. Pupils produce realistic and detailed drawing from life studies. Within the key stage, teachers provide a satisfactory range of artistic experiences for pupils, using a variety of materials and techniques, including those involving clay and fabrics. The subject is well linked to other areas of the curriculum, particularly history.
109. The teaching of art in both key stages is satisfactory and on occasion good. It is never less than satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress, enjoy their lessons and try hard to do well. Teachers plan their individual lessons well, with a good balance between the introductory explanation of the tasks and the practical activities. This

ensures the satisfactory learning of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers' expertise in the subject is satisfactory and due attention is given to developing pupils' skills. When art is one of a number of activities, teachers make sure that they arrange to focus their attention on developing pupils' skills in art. The teachers and co-ordinator provide a sound structure to longer-term planning, enabling pupils to experience a range of artistic experience. Where the teaching is good, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and provide suitable tools to enable pupils to develop artistic skills.

110. Resources in art are adequate to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum with a satisfactory range of materials. A well-equipped pottery, complete with kiln is effectively used, with outside volunteers providing advanced expertise in this area. At the moment they are working with pupils to make picture frames to celebrate the millennium. Due attention is given to health and safety. A lack of a sufficiently wide range of tools, such as a greater variety in size and type of paintbrush and more varied drawing materials, inhibits the progress of more talented pupils. Only a small amount of work in three dimensions was seen during the inspection.
111. There have been improvements since the last report and the newly appointed co-ordinator has clear plans to improve the subject further. These include the enhanced monitoring of the subject as the school moves further into implementing the new National Curriculum. Pupils' work is well displayed throughout the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

112. It was possible to see only four lessons in the subject, but additional evidence was gleaned through a scrutiny of school documents, pupils' previously completed work and discussions with staff and pupils. The evidence indicates that standards at the end of both key stages are similar to those expected for pupils of these ages. In some classes, standards are well above those seen in most schools. At the previous inspection, they were judged to be above average. The current inspection findings do not indicate a fall in standards, but rather reflect that, with the recent strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, less time has been made available for the teaching of design and technology.
113. By the age of seven, good foundations have been laid in the basic knowledge and skills needed for the subject. Pupils plan their work carefully and adapt these plans in the light of experience. They have begun to grasp that certain materials have properties that make them suitable for specific tasks. They develop an understanding of different ways of joining these materials together. Work is often linked to other areas of the curriculum. Arising from their work in English, pupils design and build houses for the 'Three Little Pigs'. Wheeled vehicles are produced for experiments on forces in science. Such connections with other subjects gives added relevance to pupils' design and technology work and enhance their learning.
114. The teaching in one Year 3 class is particularly strong, where the subject plays a central role in many topics undertaken. The development of pupils' skills continues at a satisfactory pace through Years 4 and 5. By the age of eleven, pupils have a wide experience across most elements of the subject. They speak with much enthusiasm about projects that they have undertaken. Especially memorable are those occasions when elements of competition are introduced, as when pupils design and construct a bridge to carry the heaviest load. However, skills of using computers, either at the design stage or for controlling models, are under-developed. The school now has the

computers that have the potential to extend pupils' skills in a wider range of design and technology tasks.

115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound gains in their learning. Lessons seen in Year 2 contained work that was too prescribed by the teacher and gave only limited opportunities for pupil creativity. There was also a lack of pace, with pupils being insufficiently challenged. However, good examples were seen of the teaching of food technology. Pupils produced attractive designs for fruit salads and later wrote mouth-watering analyses of the finished products! Construction kits are also well used. Multi-cultural themes are a feature of work developed in the older classes, as in the study and production of various types of slipper. Proper attention is paid to working safely. Teachers are well supported by the co-ordinator who has a good oversight of the subject and is very keen to promote it. The new National Curriculum guidelines are being very well incorporated into the planning throughout the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116. Geography was not being taught in all classes during the inspection because of the overall planning of the school's curriculum. The lessons seen, together with a scrutiny of work previously completed, provided sufficient information. Pupils at the end of both key stages reach standards expected for pupils of these ages. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.
117. The seven-year-olds develop a sound understanding of where Great Britain is in relationship with the rest of the world, and of the use and interpretation of maps. For example, they identify correctly places they have visited within Britain and Europe and find them on an appropriate map. They learn about other countries such as India and teachers make useful links with work being undertaken in religious education. The eleven-year-olds make good use of the educational visits organised by their teachers to study the local area and places further afield such as the Isle of Wight. Pupils develop a sound understanding of how climate affects the vegetation and economy of an area. In Years 4 and 5, pupils study more complex geographical ideas such as the water cycle. They understand how water circulates and the dangers of pollution to this process.
118. The quality of teaching of geography is satisfactory and on occasion good. It is never less than satisfactory. Teachers plan their work well and are clear about what pupils are to learn. This is made clear to the pupils at the start of all lessons. Teachers collaborate well in their planning so as to make best use of available resources. The use made of national guidance ensures that pupils cover the curriculum and build on what they have learnt before. The good use of the local environment to enhance pupils' understanding is exemplified by visits to Carsington Reservoir and the study of the River Dove. Information and communication technology is well used with relevant software reinforcing pupils' learning. As a result, pupils make sound progress in their learning, including those with special educational needs. They enjoy geography, work hard, and are particularly interested when they make educational visits. An over reliance on worksheets limits pupils' opportunity to write for themselves and restricts the chance for potential higher attaining pupils to learn in more challenging ways. Teachers' marking does not always help pupils to improve their work, nor does it give them targets to aim for.
119. The role of the co-ordinator has been developed by increased emphasis on monitoring of teachers' planning. This is an improvement. She has a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Plans are in place for improvements, such

as increased observation of lessons, and these form part of the school development plan.

## **HISTORY**

120. Most lesson observations were in Key Stage 2 as little history was being taught in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. Previously completed work and teachers' records provided further useful information. Most pupils at the end of both key stages reach the standards expected for pupils of these ages. These standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection.
121. The seven-year-olds have a sound knowledge of famous people such as Florence Nightingale and of how hospitals have changed since she was a nurse. Teachers make good use of the local area to help pupils understand how everyday life has changed. A visit to look at the Victorian buildings in Derby enabled the seven-year-olds to see how buildings have changed and the reasons for this. They identify the 'Deer in the Park' emblem on many buildings and learn more about the city's past.
122. In Key Stage 2, teachers' planning enables pupils to study successfully periods of history such as Ancient Greece as well as the Roman and Victorian periods of British history. They understand about the passage of time as they place important events in the correct order, for example important events in the Victorian era. Pupils learn satisfactorily about different aspects of these periods, such as lifestyles, living conditions, clothing and housing. They satisfactorily explain some of the differences that distinguish these periods. Pupils' skills in using evidence for historical investigation are not as well developed, partly because of a lack of historical artefacts in the school's resources.
123. The teaching is good in both key stages, which is an improvement since the last report. It is never less than satisfactory and at times is very good. Pupils' learning is good, including that of pupils with special educational needs. The strength in the teaching is the imaginative ways teachers introduce history to their pupils. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, the teacher made good use of toys her grandmother, her mother and she had played with to help pupils develop an idea of the passage of time. In another lesson in Year 3, the teacher made very good use of her voice as she described Boudicca, and also of historical accounts of the period. Lessons such as these capture pupils' interest. They are eager to get on with their work and learn well.
124. Despite the imaginative teaching, too often pupils are asked to complete worksheets. These provide few opportunities to write at length and develop the skills in writing they are learning in the literacy hour.
125. Teachers make effective use of the scheme of work and lessons are well planned. Good links are made with art and design. The present co-ordinator holds the post in an acting capacity but already has identified what needs to be done to raise standards further. Resources are underdeveloped. They rely heavily on commercial worksheets and are not well organised. Although good use is made of historical artefacts, such as Victorian clothes, which are borrowed, there are very few historical artefacts in the school's own resources. This hinders the development of pupils' skills of historical enquiry.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

126. The standards reached by pupils at the end of both key stages are below average. The introduction of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies over the past two years has taken priority over the development of information and communication technology (ICT). During this period pupils did not have enough experience of using computers to enable them to reach the expected standards. The unreliability of some older computers has further impeded pupils' progress. The gaps in pupils' past learning and experience, combined with limited access to computers, have led to unsatisfactory and variable progress over time. At the last inspection standards were average.
127. The seven-year-olds show a growing competence in use of the mouse and basic keyboard skills. Pupils are developing increasing proficiency in word processing. They are learning how to save and retrieve information and to print out their work. Most eleven-year-olds save and retrieve information independently. Word-processing skills are well developed but pupils combine text and pictures at an uncomplicated level only. Most pupils print out the finished product. Pupils have experience of entering, sorting and classifying data, and they present their findings graphically, but the analysis of data is not at a high enough level. Pupils draft and re-draft their work for presentation to the rest of the class for display or for inclusion in their portfolio. Across the school, pupils have not had enough experience of using ICT to plan and give instructions to make things happen.
128. In Year 6, pupils access the Internet and use e-mail with confidence. However, access to the Internet is limited to one machine and careful records need to be kept to ensure each pupil's entitlement. Pupils are beginning to use the Internet to access materials for their work on William Morris and Victorian childhood. Some pupils skim and scan for detail and select sites to explore independently, but most need an adult to guide them through the wealth of detail. Some interesting work is taking place with pupils e-mailing each other or their teacher and receiving e-mails. The class teacher has plans to link up with another school to build on this work.
129. A number of pupils have computers and access to the Internet at home and share their knowledge and understanding with their friends and classmates, giving advice and support. They work well together when sharing machines. Many pupils can access the Internet independently.
130. Pupils in both key stages display good positive attitudes to ICT. Most talk about computers with animation and enthusiasm and clearly enjoy their work. Throughout the school, however, computers are underused. At times they are used for undemanding tasks such as producing a fair copy of work rather than drafting or re-drafting.
131. Little direct teaching of ICT was seen during the inspection. The new equipment arrived shortly before the inspection and had not been installed. The limited amount of teaching seen was satisfactory. Teachers maintain records, but these are not part of a whole-school procedure for rigorously charting individual experience and progress and for ensuring that pupils receive their entitlement. ICT is not generally well used in other subjects. However, in geography good use is made of the software available.
132. The subject is well led but the clear direction for the subject provided by the co-ordinator has, until recently, been frustrated by lack of funding. Many machines had become obsolete and were removed. Sufficient additional finance for the purchase of new hardware and software has been allocated to provide for one computer and the necessary software for each classroom. Thorough plans are in hand to develop the subject. Training to improve the staff's knowledge and understanding using the New

Opportunity Funding is planned. At the moment, little monitoring takes place of the use of ICT in classrooms.

133. The school is due to be networked to the Internet next term and the good work that is being developed with pupils in Year 6, on retrieving information for current topics and using electronic mail as a medium for language skills and communication, should be taken further. The national guidance for planning has been implemented and has improved curriculum planning and ensured that pupils now have access to all aspects of the subject required by the National Curriculum. A school website has been created by the present co-ordinator and this has helped to create awareness of how ICT is used for wider purposes in the school community. Parents already find this useful.

## **MUSIC**

134. It was possible to see only three music lessons during the period of the inspection. Further evidence was collected through discussions with pupils and staff, reading the school documentation and attending assemblies. From the evidence available it is clear that standards in music are below those seen in most schools. This is especially true in the older classes. The weaknesses identified in the previous report of too few opportunities to compose, an over-reliance on radio broadcasts and a significant proportion of pupils underachieving, have not been given enough attention. In recent years the subject has not received high priority and has had a minimal allotment on the school timetable. The long-term absence of the previous co-ordinator exacerbated this situation. However, in recent months there has been a revival of interest in the subject with the appointment of a new co-ordinator. She has already initiated events to stimulate pupils' interest. These have not yet had time to make an impact on raising standards, though parents have expressed their appreciation at what has already been achieved.
135. By Year 2, pupils clap, and play on instruments, the rhythm of various names, such as Joe, Oscar, Nichola and Henrietta. They recognise some non-percussion instruments such as bells and tambourines. Pupils identify and repeat patterns heard. Work planned is appropriate to pupils' ability levels but there was insufficient variety, in the lesson seen, to extend them all sufficiently. Opportunities to improve singing standards were missed.
136. By Year 5, pupils display limited awareness of musical terms. The teacher had to make rapid adjustments to her plans when she discovered in this early lesson in the school year that words such as 'tempo', 'dynamics' and 'pitch' were not sufficiently understood by the pupils. They needed coaching in how to use a beater to produce a full and melodic sound on a chime bar. Pupils in Year 6 sing expressively in tune. They maintain their own melody line when singing a very simple two-part song. When undertaking rhythm exercises, however, their ability levels only slightly exceeded those heard in the Year 2 lesson. In discussions with pupils, they said that most of their music education had been based on taped broadcasts. They could not recall being given opportunities to compose other than 'raps' in English lessons. The use of computers in music has also been very restricted. The only pupils familiar with musical notation were those who have received additional tuition for the guitar, violin or recorder.
137. The teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory. Pupils were interested, tried hard and made sound progress with their learning. The school recognises the need to raise teaching standards through school-based training. The new National Curriculum and scheme of work have begun to be followed. Planning is satisfactory but, because of the low starting base, the school has rightly decided to initiate the scheme at the Year 3

level in the junior classes. Adaptations will have to be planned to extend the higher skills of those receiving extra musical tuition. Resources are limited, especially in those instruments on which tunes can be composed. The use of computers in the subject is underdeveloped. The pupils are capable of achieving higher standards in this subject.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

138. Standards attained by the seven- and eleven-year-olds are above those seen in most schools. These findings are a marked improvement on those described in the previous report. There has been a concerted effort to raise standards. Physical education receives a high priority amongst the subjects on the timetable. In addition, older pupils are doubly fortunate in having a wide choice of extra-curricular clubs, encompassing a wide range of sports. As a consequence, performance levels have risen in both individual and team activities.
139. Pupils in Year 2 perform country-dances, taught in the previous lesson, before adding a new routine to their repertoire. Strong features of the lesson are the very strenuous activity levels and the good links that exist between the girls and boys. In Year 6, pupils are made to think carefully about their movements. They are asked to assess exactly which muscles they are using as they perform specific actions. The lesson has added relevance because of direct links with other work being undertaken in the classroom.
140. The comprehensive policy for the subject ensures a broad coverage and a good progression of activities, especially through Key Stage 2. There is a high commitment to the development of skills across a range of games activities. Useful checklists record individual progress through assessments made each term. In Year 6, orienteering is introduced. Strong features of a lesson observed were the high quality of planning, the involvement and encouragement of the staff, and the improvements in performance shown by pupils on only their second orienteering course.
141. Overall, the teaching is good. It is never less than satisfactory, and in Key Stage 2, it is often very good. The quality of teaching has improved, with coaching standards significantly raised since the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in learning new skills and consolidating those already learnt. In the best lessons, firm class control, good subject knowledge and enthusiastic delivery of the learning objectives lead to high levels of pupil response. A measure of the determination to succeed was seen in a lesson in Year 6 in which pupils were engaged on an orienteering exercise. Despite the rain, both teachers and pupils were determined to finish the course that had been set. The school's strong sporting ethic gives a buzz of excitement that is tangible in discussions with pupils. It ensures that they gain much personal enjoyment from the lessons. Teams successfully represent Silverhill against other local schools. Individuals perform to high levels in sports such as badminton and gymnastics. The tone is set by the headteacher's active involvement in coaching. The newly appointed co-ordinator is now extending the range of activities on offer to the younger pupils. The new National Curriculum guidelines give added structure in ensuring good progression to the teaching that is being undertaken. Silverhill School's sporting reputation continues to grow.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

142. Although a limited number of lessons were seen during the inspection, a scrutiny of previously completed work, teachers' planning and conversations with pupils show attainments at the end of both key stages to be in line with those required by the

Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education. These standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection.

143. By the end of Key Stage 1, teachers' planning has enabled children to begin to understand the significance of Christian festivals and celebrations such as marriage and baptism. They have some insight into significant events in another religion, such as Hinduism. In Year 2, pupils learn about places of worship. They have visited a Hindu Temple and a Christian Church and they participate in Christian-based worship within the school.
144. During Key Stage 2, pupils become more aware of the tenets of another religion – Islam. They have a sound understanding of some of the events in the life of Christ. Pupils understand that religions have different religious symbols and practices. For example, they know that the Bible is sacred to Christians and the Koran is sacred to Muslims. Pupils who come from families who themselves are practising some form of religion are more secure in this knowledge.
145. The teaching of religious education in the limited number of lessons seen is satisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons well in collaboration with each other, making quite sure that the purposes for every lesson are clear and that pupils are made aware of them. This helps pupils to learn satisfactorily. They listen well to the lessons and are keen to understand, although at times the pace of lessons is slow. Good use is made of photographs and artefacts. In some lessons little reference is made to religions other than Christianity. Teachers use well-developed and appropriate language, for example 'font', 'vicar' and 'godparent' in lessons about Christian christening. Teachers understand their pupils well, match their questions well to meet their needs, and take into account the previous knowledge of individual pupils. Very good use is made of an excellent visiting teacher each term. These sessions enhance pupils' knowledge of religious traditions and of stories, such as that of St Francis of Assisi. At times in Key Stage 2, lessons are sometimes 'lost' to other demands of the curriculum and this results in some limitation of knowledge at the end of the key stage. Overall, however, pupils, including those with special needs, make sound progress.
146. The co-ordinator has been in post for less than two years but has provided a good supply of religious artefacts and materials well suited to the teaching of the Agreed Syllabus. The policy for the subject is clear and forward planning is in place, including the provision of a greater range of religious music. Overall, the co-ordinator oversees the subject satisfactorily, but not enough attention is paid to monitoring what pupils have learnt.