

INSPECTION REPORT

RIDDINGS JUNIOR SCHOOL

Alfreton

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112497

Headteacher: Mr S Booth

Reporting inspector: Dr C Lee
21854

Dates of inspection: 20th–23rd November 2000

Inspection number: 224066

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Street Riddings Alfreton Derbyshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr I Bamford
Date of previous inspection:	3rd June 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Dr C Lee 21854	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education Equal opportunities English as an additional language	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school Key issues for action Teaching and learning Leadership and management
Mr G Ellis 19338	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Ms J Pinney 22790	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology	
Ms A Hopwood 4180	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education Special educational needs	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Riddings Junior School is about the same size as the average primary school. Pupils are from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds that are average overall. There are 216 pupils on roll, a rise of 20 since the last inspection, who are taught in seven classes. There are four pupils from ethnic minority groups but all pupils in the school have English as their first language. The percentage of pupils on the register of special educational needs is 23.1 per cent and this is above the national average. Seven pupils (3.2 per cent) have statements of special educational need and this is also above average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, currently 20.4 per cent, is about average. Pupils' attainment on entry, as shown by their results in the national tests at age seven, is now average overall but has been below average in the past.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Riddings Junior is a good school where pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities. Standards of eleven-year-olds are rising and, although below national averages in English, they are average in mathematics and science. Pupils make good progress overall and pupils with special educational needs often make very good progress. Pupils' good achievements and progress are the result of good teaching and very good leadership and management. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achievements are good in relation to their ability, especially those in Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well and make very good progress.
- Good teaching enables pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has created a strong sense of team spirit among all staff that is moving the school forward very effectively.
- Good evaluation of pupils' academic performance is leading to well-planned action for improving standards.
- Pupils' very good attitudes to school and learning are the result of very good provision for pupils' welfare and attention to their all-round development.

What could be improved

- More able pupils could achieve higher standards in English and science.
- The organisation of the curriculum does not enable pupils to build on their learning in geography and history.
- The extensive range of responsibilities of the deputy headteacher is in need of review.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has achieved satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in June 1996. That inspection found Riddings to be a good school where pupils achieved above average standards in many curriculum areas. Since then standards have fallen consistently until 2000 when the first improvement for six years occurred in national test results for eleven-year-olds. The improvement is continuing as a result of good teaching and the headteacher's thorough monitoring of teaching and pupils' standards. Of the three action points from the last inspection, two have been tackled satisfactorily. Registration is now carried out efficiently at

the start of each session. Pupils' work is monitored thoroughly. The third issue concerned the additional workload of senior staff. As one of those staff, the present deputy headteacher, has had to take over various areas of responsibility formerly held by other senior staff who have since left, resulting in an excessive workload, this therefore represents unsatisfactory improvement in this issue. Other aspects of the school's work show good improvement. The improvement in the information and communication technology curriculum and facilities has raised the quality of provision and pupils' learning. Teachers use assessment more effectively as a tool for planning work. The improved provision for pupils with special educational needs has raised these pupils' standards, progress and self-esteem. Management of the school shows good improvement in several areas, particularly in the monitoring of teaching and of pupils' achievements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	E	D	C
mathematics	D	E	D	C
science	C	E	D	C

Key

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

From 1996 to 1999, results in all subjects showed a steady decline and this trend was in marked contrast to the national, upward trend. A good improvement occurred in all subjects in 2000 and there was a greater improvement than was achieved nationally. There were particularly significant improvements in the percentages of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in the English and science tests. The results overall were still below national averages but were average in comparison with similar schools. The standards that have been set for the school in 2001 are quite low, being based on the current Year 6 pupils' results in the national tests when they were aged seven. The school itself has set more challenging targets. The standards of work seen indicate that Year 6 pupils are in line to achieve the school's own English target and exceed the mathematics target. Their work is below average in English, average in mathematics and science and they are generally doing better than they would normally be expected to do.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good, pupils enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, with complete absence of any oppressive behaviour

Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships exist between pupils and between pupils and staff, contributing to the very good overall personal development
Attendance	Satisfactory, in line with national figures for authorised and unauthorised absence

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	n/a	n/a	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.

In lessons, 17 per cent of teaching was very good, 48 per cent good, 35 per cent satisfactory and no teaching was unsatisfactory. All teachers have high expectations of pupils, they know their pupils well and they have good levels of subject knowledge across the whole curriculum. English and mathematics are taught well overall and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are consolidated satisfactorily across the whole curriculum. Teaching is generally well matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities although there is insufficient challenge in the work set for more able pupils in some English and science lessons. The very good use of support staff and the high quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs by these support staff contributes very significantly to the very good progress of these pupils in all aspects of their learning. All pupils show good concentration and interest and have a good awareness of the learning that they are achieving in lessons and over time.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum meets statutory requirements and provides a broad range of learning opportunities but the timing of history and geography topics is not spread evenly. The curriculum is well enhanced by a very good programme of environmental education and good extra-curricular clubs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision throughout the school ensures that needs are met well and pupils make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall with very good provision for pupils' social development.

How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a very caring community with very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and good monitoring of their academic progress.
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Parents have good views of the school and the school works very hard to maintain a good partnership.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's very good leadership stimulates very good school management, in which all key staff carry out their responsibilities very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The provision of constructive, critical guidance and a sound vision of the school's strengths and weaknesses ensure satisfactory fulfilment of responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good self-evaluation procedures enable the school to identify priorities, set itself targets and pursue very effective courses of action for future improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory use of physical and human resources and prudent management of finances.

Staffing levels are good, learning resources are satisfactory but internal accommodation has several weaknesses. Under the headteacher's very skilled leadership, the deputy headteacher and all co-ordinators have very good levels of expertise in their management roles. Collectively and individually they respond very effectively to the challenge of improvement. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily overall, challenging itself and securing good value for money in the services and resources that it acquires.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • Children's good progress • The good behaviour • How the school deals with their questions or problems • The school has high expectations of its pupils • Good leadership and management • How pupils are helped to become mature and responsible • The range of activities outside lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework set for pupils • The way that the school works with parents • The information provided about how their children are getting on

Inspectors endorse all the aspects that please parents. They also support the concern expressed by parents about the arrangements for homework. The school's brief homework policy fails to inform either teachers or parents about the amount and type of homework being set for each year group. There are inconsistencies in provision as a result of this lack of guidance. In respect of parents' view that the school could work more closely with them, inspectors do not agree and are impressed by the school's attempts to forge a strong partnership. The only improvement possible is the addition of curriculum information to the range of communications that the school already provides. The information provided by the school about pupils' progress, and the opportunities that parents have to discuss this, are, in the inspectors' view, good and parents' concerns are not upheld.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school's results in National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds have shown a steady decline in recent years. This has reflected the gradual fall in standards being achieved by pupils at age seven and the increasing numbers of pupils with special educational needs. In 2000 the trend was reversed when improvements were achieved in all the tests, most especially in mathematics and science. Compared with the results achieved nationally, the school has moved from being well below average in English, mathematics and science in 1999 to below average in all three subjects in 2000. The percentages of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in the tests also improved in 2000. In English and science, these percentages matched the national averages while mathematics was slightly below average.
2. The 2000 results compare more favourably with the results achieved in schools similar to Riddings in terms of the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. This comparison shows the school to be achieving the average results overall in all three subjects, above average at Level 5 in English and average at this level in mathematics and science.
3. Annual targets are set by the local education authority that establish the percentages of pupils who should achieve the expected Level 4 or above in the tests. In 2000 the English target was not achieved but that for mathematics was exceeded. Targets are lower for 2001 due to the very low standards shown by the Year 6 pupils when they were seven. These targets are 56 per cent for English and 50 per cent for mathematics. However, the school aims to do better and is setting its own targets ten per cent and 20 per cent higher respectively. Although this is very challenging, the inspection evidence indicates that Year 6 pupils are in line to achieve this in English and to do even better in mathematics. They are currently achieving below average standards in English and average standards in both mathematics and science. The improvement shown in the 2000 tests is continuing as a result of a combination of good teaching, thorough monitoring of pupils' standards with appropriate action to improve them and the very good progress being achieved by pupils with special educational needs.
4. By the age of eleven, standards in English are below average overall due to below average achievement in reading and writing. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are average and their good attention when listening to teachers results in the use of a wide, spoken vocabulary. Reading standards show wide variation and less able pupils are often unaware that they have read a word incorrectly which indicates weaknesses in their understanding of what they are reading. Writing shows weaknesses in spelling and punctuation in all but the most able pupils and this lowers the standard of their work. However, pupils' use of descriptive language is good and this is evident in the imaginative poetry that they write. Mathematics standards match national averages by the age of eleven. Pupils' basic numeracy skills are satisfactory. They work accurately on written calculations involving numbers up to one thousand. Most pupils are confident and accurate at mental calculation and they explain clearly how they perform calculations and arrive at their answers. Science standards are average overall but pupils at age eleven have a particularly good understanding of the important principles to be followed when they carry out scientific investigations.

5. While standards at age eleven in English, mathematics and science are slightly lower than those at the time of the last inspection, current Year 6 pupils' attainment is good in relation to what they have achieved in the past. Similarly, pupils of all ages are showing good levels of achievement. In English, for example, younger pupils' standards are matching expectations for their ages. Good achievement also applies to pupils with special educational needs who achieve particularly well in relation to their abilities. They approach their work with confidence due to the very good levels of support they receive within the school and the standard of work they achieve in science, for example, matches the level of most pupils of average ability. Their work in English is of below-average standard but they progress well towards achieving the targets for learning in their individual education plans. These targets are clear, appropriate and reviewed regularly. However, most are English-related targets and very few mathematics targets are set. This is a weakness in the process of identifying pupils' specific learning difficulties that is recognised within the school and by external support staff. The plans that are in place to rectify this weakness have the specific aim of improving special educational needs pupils' standards in mathematics.
6. In the other subjects of the curriculum, pupils are maintaining good levels of achievement and standards are generally in line with expectations in each subject. Throughout the school, pupils show two particular strengths and these are the above-average quality of their observational drawings in art and their use and understanding of computers for sending and receiving e-mail communications. One area of weakness is evident in physical education where poor indoor facilities are preventing pupils from developing fully their potential in gymnastics. What they are able to perform is of a satisfactory standard but the range of skills acquired is narrow.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is good. They are very well motivated towards their work. Their personal development and their relationships are both very good. Parents consider that the school is successful in achieving good standards of behaviour. Attendance is satisfactory.
8. Pupils enjoy school and their lessons. They are enthusiastic and have very good attitudes to learning with most of them making good progress. Pupils' attitudes are enhanced by teachers' good class management skills, the clear expectations they make for pupils' work and behaviour, the enthusiastic teaching in most lessons and by the creation of an industrious learning environment. The overwhelming majority of pupils are well motivated towards their learning. They are enthusiastic, showing very good interest, often engrossed and involved in their activities with high levels of sustained concentration and commitment. Taken as a whole, interest and attention is good. Very few instances of inattention were observed and these usually occurred when pupils became distracted when they failed to see the relevance or importance of individual lessons.
9. Pupils enter school with average levels of social skills and independence. These are developed considerably during their school lives and most of them display good confidence and self-esteem. The majority of pupils undertake tasks independently when required, are confident in offering and recording ideas and work purposefully when engaged on challenging tasks or to exacting time limits. They are open, talking freely and readily about their work. During lessons, most of them join in activities and discussions enthusiastically. The majority of pupils display good standards of self-discipline and work very well when unsupervised.

10. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work, sustain concentration and make very good progress. There is a positive ethos to their learning and they are keen to work in a calm, reflective atmosphere. There is enthusiasm for taking part in activities, listening attentively and enjoying challenging tasks. They are well integrated and work well with other pupils.
11. The previous inspection report stated that the school was an orderly community with generally good behaviour and very good relationships. Reflecting the development and maintenance of the school's relaxed, but challenging environment, all of these positive indications have been maintained.
12. The school is an ordered community. The staff's reinforcement of a positive learning environment enhances the school's approach to behaviour and is effective in achieving a good overall standard in class and around the school. The code of conduct is well understood and accepted. Pupils are therefore fully aware of the high standards expected of them and respond well. They are smart, friendly, courteous and considerate of each other, showing care and respect. Their movements around the school are orderly and sensible with lessons starting promptly. They display a mature and caring approach in all their activities. They keenly enjoy lessons and show a willingness to work. Boys and girls work well together. There have been no exclusions.
13. Pupils are proud of their school and are careful with equipment and resources. For example, in science they handle equipment carefully. They collaborate well in group work, share equipment, discuss work quietly among themselves and learn effectively from each other. For example, in mathematics they willingly explained their methods to partners and readily accepted where mistakes were made. They are trustworthy, thoughtful and considerate, respecting the feelings, values and beliefs of others.
14. The very high standards of relationships are major strengths of the school. Relationships between pupils themselves and with all adults are very good. This is exemplified by a strong ethos and practical application of mutual trust and respect. Pupils feel valued by teachers and reciprocate accordingly. They consider the staff approachable and supportive with a school atmosphere that lacks tension. They relate very well to each other, working together harmoniously and assisting each other in a mutually supportive environment.
15. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to exercise responsibility and independence. They willingly undertake duties, showing good initiative and personal responsibility. They are mature when framing questions and display good social skills in discussions. Pupils are actively involved in fundraising activities, sometimes taking the initiative with detailed arrangements.
16. Attendance and levels of unauthorised absence are both around the national average. The previous inspection report indicated an unsatisfactory situation whereby registers were not always being taken at the beginning of each session. This has now been rectified and registers are completed promptly and well in accordance with regulations. There are no significant problems with pupils' punctuality and therefore lessons are able to start on time.
17. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils are strengths which contribute to a positive and industrious learning environment, progress and the quality of life in the school. Comments from parents, both in the questionnaires and at the meeting prior to the inspection, support this view.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The overall quality of teaching is good and ranges from very good to satisfactory. Seventeen per cent of teaching is very good, 48 per cent is good and 35 per cent is satisfactory. Standards in teaching have broadly matched those of the last inspection but, whereas seven per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory at that time there is now none that is less than satisfactory. A good standard is also achieved by learning support staff throughout the school. Teachers and support staff are enabling all pupils to achieve good progress in their learning.
19. All teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well to them, working conscientiously and co-operatively. The relationships between teachers and other adults in the classroom with pupils are very good. This has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, making them keen to get started on their work and work hard throughout lessons. In the best lessons, teachers manage their pupils very well and this creates a good working atmosphere in classrooms. These lessons are carefully prepared and resources are used very well to aid pupils' learning. Teachers question their pupils in a purposeful manner to consolidate pupils' understanding and extend their learning. There is a brisk pace to very good lessons and work is well matched to pupils' individual needs and abilities. All these characteristics were evident in a science lesson on magnetism with Years 3 and 4 pupils in which the teacher provided activities that were carefully matched to different levels of prior attainment. Pupils made good use of the very good resources provided, their learning was firmly established and then developed further by the provision of a range of additional activities designed to extend and consolidate both knowledge and understanding. Pupils recorded their results from the investigation of the relative strengths of magnets in different ways. More able pupils worked independently and produced bar charts while others used a simple table which was discussed with the teacher as she guided them, by skilful questioning, through interpretation of the results towards learning the main points. All pupils were challenged well by their work and made good progress.
20. Teachers have good levels of subject knowledge that are evident in the thoroughness of their planning and in the good quality of explanations in lessons. They also take good advantage of one another's expertise by planning and evaluating each week's lessons in year group teams. Planning pays particular attention to the specific learning to be achieved by pupils and this is emphasised in all classrooms by the display of these learning objectives on the walls and the frequent references and reminders that occur during the lessons themselves. Teachers' knowledge of information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection. This is due to the training and guidance provided by the headteacher as co-ordinator of the subject and also by the sharing of ideas and expertise among the staff as a whole. Teachers and support staff form a very strong team in which there is a high level of mutual support and the new computer suite has become a popular meeting place for staff outside lesson times. This promotes the sharing of ideas and leads to the increased confidence and competence of teachers and good learning by pupils.
21. The teaching of basic literacy skills is satisfactory. In each year group pupils are organised by ability into two groups, called sets. The National Literacy Strategy is implemented satisfactorily and there are appropriate differences in the work planned for the sets so that it matches pupils' ability levels. However, while less able pupils and those with specific learning difficulties are challenged well by work that is at just the right level for them, more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged due to inconsistency between teachers in the extent to which they plan work to extend the

pupils' learning. A similar inconsistency arises in science, where more able pupils are capable of more demanding work in some classes.

22. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well. Number work is strongly promoted and mental calculation is a prominent feature of all mathematics lessons. Teachers have good strategies for promoting quick, accurate mental work and pupils of all abilities make good gains in learning in individual lessons and achieve good progress over time. This is having a good impact on standards.
23. The use of assessment to inform planning of the next stages in individual pupils' learning is good in all subjects. Within lessons, teachers make good use of observation, questioning, testing and marking to establish what individuals or groups of different attainment levels have learned. This is shared in year group teams when lessons and pupils' learning are evaluated and there is periodic comparison of samples of work. The information from ongoing assessment by both teachers and support staff is used well to plan the next stage in pupils' learning. Teachers' marking is consistently good and helps pupils to improve by indicating weaknesses as well as confirming good work. At its best, marking is used very well as a form of communication and dialogue with pupils and suggests ways of developing their work further or questioning them about particular aspects of what they have done.
24. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in lessons due to the careful planning of work that is well matched to their ability levels. They receive good quality support from both teachers and support staff who work closely together to plan tasks which the pupils can undertake with a degree of independence. Class teachers have set language targets within individual education plans and these are consistently worked towards and reviewed. The use of appropriate strategies and resources further enhances their learning opportunities. Images from overhead projectors are used effectively by teachers to help pupils understand clearly the concepts under discussion. Teachers set clear expectations for pupils in terms of effort and behaviour and the pupils respond very positively to this. Because of the careful preparation and good levels of challenge pupils work well in lessons, show a great deal of interest in their work and make very good progress in their learning.
25. The use of homework throughout the school is satisfactory insofar as it consolidates pupils' learning in English and mathematics. However, parents' concerns about inconsistencies between teachers are justified as there is no evidence that the type and amount of homework is planned carefully enough within year groups. In addition, some teachers set a homework task seemingly on the spur of the moment in a lesson and when this is followed up in a subsequent lesson it is done so very casually. Pupils are left uncertain about the importance of these tasks or whether they are compulsory or not due to the casualness with which they are asked if they have completed the homework.

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

26. Overall the school provides a satisfactory, broad range of activities for its pupils both within and outside the school day. The exception to this is in the study of history and geography where the timetabling in both subjects means that there are long gaps between teaching units of work in these subjects. This does lead to some lack of continuity in the development of pupils' historical and geographical skills and knowledge. However, the curriculum offered to pupils promotes maximum achievement and strong opportunities for the personal development of its pupils. The long-term

planning of the curriculum pays due regard to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and is based on the schemes of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority that provide clear guidelines for each stage in pupils' learning. These guidelines have been adapted well to take account of the school's facilities and resources.

27. Planning for the medium term covers half-term periods. This identifies very clearly how learning will build on what has been learned before and notes the resources required and the ways in which pupils' learning will be assessed. More detailed planning is then written for each week and this provides a good foundation for the teaching and support staff's work.
28. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs. This is due, in the main, to the good levels of support offered to these pupils by teachers and support staff. The learning needs of more able pupils are not always met so consistently.
29. Strategies employed by the school for the teaching of basic skills are effective with both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies being well established and, in turn, improving the quality of teaching. The teaching and learning experiences for pupils with special educational needs are planned well in literacy where targets within individual education plans are carefully selected to address pupils' specific learning difficulties. However, this process does not yet target the development of numeracy skills in the same detail.
30. There is satisfactory provision of extra-curricular activities and these activities enhance pupils' learning experiences well. Several visits are made by pupils to enrich topics of study, particularly in history and religious education. There are well-attended after-school clubs for choir and a range of sports. The 'Earth Explorers' club is particularly popular with younger pupils and those older pupils who help the teacher-in-charge. The scope of environmental work covered in these sessions is extensive and pupils enjoy a wide range of activities covering science, art, geography, outdoor and adventurous activities and citizenship.
31. The curriculum is richly enhanced by the prominence given to environmental education and education about sustainability. The school's work towards recognition through an ECO School award is co-ordinated by a committee of 25 pupils, representing all year groups, three governors and a teacher. The committee's work aims to heighten whole-school awareness of relevant issues. Initiatives such as the walking school buses organised on the last Walk to School Day received good parental and pupil support. Pupils understand well the purpose of tree planting for improvement of the atmosphere and eagerly anticipate the planting being funded by a local water company. Feedback from pupils indicates that this is an important aspect of school life for them and they are highly motivated by the enthusiasm and expertise of the teacher who is the driving force behind the initiative.
32. Provision for pupils' overall personal development is good. The school provides good personal and social education which includes health education, sex education and education about drug abuse. Topics are handled sensitively during designated lessons and in circle time where emphasis is placed on showing high levels of respect for one another's views and opinions when discussing issues.
33. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies are held daily and a programme of topics to be addressed is carefully followed. In assemblies and

religious education lessons, pupils have the opportunity to develop a good understanding of Christian values and traditions. Through well-chosen stories often linked to themes illustrated in the Bible, pupils are encouraged to discuss and consider personal experiences and explore feelings, emotions and relationships with others. An assembly taken by Year 6 pupils focused on the people less fortunate than themselves and provoked thoughtful reflection from all pupils and engaged them throughout. In a Year 5 religious education lesson on 'Questions to God', pupils showed thoughtful reflection. The contribution made to pupils' appreciation of the environment through the activities of the 'Earth Explorers' and their fascination with the mini-beasts they have collected contributes to their sense of wonder of the world around them. In art, pupils begin to appreciate the use of techniques and colour to create mood and atmosphere in paintings.

34. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Through all aspects of school life and routines the principles of right and wrong are constantly reinforced. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on current events and express opinions and feelings which contribute to the development of their own moral code. Great care is taken to promote positive relationships within the school and the wider community and pupils are constantly encouraged to consider the effects of their actions on others.
35. Provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Adults around the school present good role models in terms of care, consideration, trust, reliability and good manners. They encourage pupils to work together co-operatively and to use their own ideas and initiative. The high levels of co-operation that pupils see in the staff provide an excellent example that pupils strive to achieve. Staff involve pupils in charity work and encourage them to think of others who may be less fortunate. The quality of relationships, both between adults and pupils and pupils with one another is very good and a major strength of the school. This has a direct bearing on the good behaviour and enthusiastic approach which pupils display. The selected duty monitors undertake a range of day-to-day tasks successfully.
36. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are given insight into their own culture and heritage through lessons in history, art and music and into other cultures through the study of other faiths in religious education. The school uses its immediate locality effectively to develop pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils visit museums and other local places of interest in order to enhance their cultural development across the curriculum. Many pupils talk about their love of poetry as being a favourite part of their studies in literacy.
37. The school has established good links with the community which enhance learning. Several links with local churches give access to people who participate in assemblies and the involvement with Nottingham Forest Football Club and Valley Borough Council TOP Sports programme bring additional personnel into school to work with pupils. These arrangements provide good additional learning opportunities for pupils.
38. The school works satisfactorily in partnership with other educational institutions. Relationships with the feeder infant school and with the local secondary schools are developing well and there are well-established arrangements for the mentorship of student teachers who are offered placements at the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school provides a caring working environment which is very well supervised and results in very good welfare provision. The staff have good knowledge of pupils and give

them good support. The use of educational and personal support and guidance is good. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour with good levels of advice and guidance.

40. The previous inspection report stated that the school lacked a written child protection policy of its own. The school conforms to the local authority policies and has adopted its guidance including defined local responsibilities and practical procedures. There is a designated staff co-ordinator who is well experienced and has received the appropriate training. All staff have been briefed in the policy and are fully aware of the relevant procedures to be followed. Current arrangements for child protection are very good.
41. The school has adopted an appropriate health and safety policy with defined internal responsibilities. Good procedures are in place for the systematic monitoring of health and safety requirements including inspections by members of the governing body.
42. Arrangements for the care and support of pupils who are taken ill at school are good. These include first aid and appropriately maintained accident records. Good supervision of pupils at break times and lunch periods ensures that pupils play in safe and secure surroundings.
43. The good procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are implemented by all teaching and non-teaching staff. This consistent and conscientious reinforcement creates a positive learning environment. The overwhelming majority of pupils are therefore successfully motivated to act responsibly and instances of inappropriate behaviour are rare. To a considerable extent this is based upon the staff providing good role models and by their encouragement of pupils taking responsibility for acceptable behaviour and standards. There are good procedures for dealing with bullying and for resolving incidents that arise. No oppressive behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection and its rarity was confirmed in discussions with pupils.
44. Very good procedures ensure that attendance is very well monitored on a systematic basis. There is good liaison with the education welfare service and the school constantly emphasises the importance of good attendance by pupils in its communications with parents. Unexplained absences are followed up effectively and expeditiously. The school's good pastoral arrangements are based on thorough and sensitive knowledge of all pupils as individuals, well matched to their particular needs and this is acknowledged and valued by parents. High priority is placed on welfare and support as vital elements in pupils' learning. The gains and advances made to their maturity and personal development prepare them well for their next stage of education.
45. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to exercise responsibility. A number of regular duties are undertaken in each class while older pupils carry out additional duties, such as assisting with assemblies. Year 6 pupils have a rota of membership of the 'Duty Squad' which involves helping younger pupils at lunchtimes and monitoring pupils' movement into school at the end of recreation periods. This involvement in the day-to-day organisation of the school contributes well to the personal development of the older pupils. Many pupils are involved with tasks as part of the Ecological Project including the promotion of energy efficiency in classrooms.
46. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are supported well and integrated in all areas of the school. External agencies are used well and regularly to the benefit of pupils. The school provides good support and guidance which assist pupils' progress and their confidence. Individual behaviour management programmes are effective in modifying the behaviour of a small number of pupils with

behavioural difficulties. Progress towards targets within individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs is assessed regularly by both teachers and support staff. Support staff keep diaries which usefully keep teachers informed of pupils' response, behaviour and learning which in turn informs further planning.

47. The school's arrangements for the welfare and support of pupils provides a good caring and developmental environment.
48. Assessment procedures and academic monitoring are good and are used well to inform planning. They are having a positive impact on raising standards throughout the school. Clear records are kept of pupils' progress and regularly updated. The school has undertaken effective analysis of the national test results and used the information to identify areas for development to improve pupils' progress in lessons. In addition, non-statutory tests in English and mathematics are taken in Years 3, 4 and 5, which the school uses well to track individual progress against prior achievement and to influence curriculum planning. For example, assessment data is used to allocate pupils to sets for English and mathematics and to target individual pupils who are perceived to be underachieving. In lessons, pupils' performance is monitored closely and assessed regularly in all subjects.
49. The school is firmly committed to raising standards of attainment and it is a positive feature of assessment procedures that all staff are fully involved in the review process as pupils move through the school. There is a policy for assessment and recording which sets out clearly the principles and purpose of assessment. The assessment co-ordinator works very well to ensure colleagues are knowledgeable about the school's systems for assessing pupils' performance and compile detailed records on pupils' progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The school's overall links with parents are good. Parents hold good views on what it provides and achieves. The school places value on its partnership with parents and has generally good relationships with them. Taken as a whole, the quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. There is good involvement of parents in the school and their contribution to their children's learning is satisfactory.
51. The school works continuously to maintain good relationships with parents and to encourage parental involvement in their children's education. The school communicates frequently with parents and on the whole, the quality of information is satisfactory. There is an informative governing body's annual report to parents and a well produced and detailed parents' information booklet. There are regular general newsletters, but there is no regular provision of curriculum-related information. However, the school has held curriculum workshop meetings, for example on the national literacy and numeracy initiatives, but these, like the governing body's annual meeting, have not been well supported by parents. There are three formal consultation opportunities for parents during the year. Two of these receive very strong parental support though less so with the meeting in the Summer term. Parents have been consulted on the Home-School Agreement and given an opportunity to comment and contribute to the final document.
52. Some parents, both at the pre-inspection meeting and in the questionnaires, expressed concerns with information on progress. The inspection team does not agree with this view. The annual reports to parents are good. They provide clear descriptions of pupils' attainment and information on what they know, understand and can do. They also

include useful assessments of National Curriculum levels in English and mathematics. Areas for further development are frequently mentioned and a separate sheet is provided for pupils' own reviews including their targets for the future. Additionally, much information to parents about their children is enhanced and broadened by their discussions with staff throughout the year.

53. Parents make satisfactory contributions to their children's learning. Some parents were concerned with information on homework. While there is a homework policy, there is no clear guidance provided to parents on homework arrangements, expectations and the best ways parents can assist their children.
54. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed and involved with annual reviews. They are invited to make comments and fully participate in meetings with school staff and outside agencies. These meetings are well supported.
55. Parents hold good views of the school and are appreciative of the educational direction and support for pupils. Most of them feel that the school is accessible, that they are welcomed and that staff are approachable. The school's 'open door' policy successfully encourages regular and broad parental contact. Overall, parents' involvement in the work of the school is good. A number of parents are directly involved in school and provide good quality assistance in classes. Parents give good support to school activities and there is an active parent/teacher association which provides valuable financial support to the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. Leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher successfully leads by example, arranging his teaching commitment to make best use of his particular expertise in information and communication technology and physical education. This arrangement serves to release members of the senior management team so that they can carry out their specific responsibilities. Two of the headteacher's particular strengths are his excellent knowledge of all pupils in the school and the success with which he has created a very strong and cohesive staff team that shares his commitment to raising standards. The deputy headteacher provides excellent support and carries out her very many responsibilities with considerable efficiency and expertise. However, her workload is excessive and shows little reduction since the time of the last inspection when, as a senior teacher, the breadth of her responsibilities was judged in need of review.
57. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher share a clear sense of educational direction for the school's progress. The headteacher's awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses has led to clear priorities for the school's development and thorough planning of the initiatives necessary for school improvement. Particular emphasis has been given to the development of corporate objectives and decision making which has led to a whole-school commitment to raising standards through improved teaching. The impact of this commitment is evident in the improved results in the last national tests and the standards now being achieved by all age groups.
58. The effectiveness of subject co-ordinators has increased since the last inspection. Prior to any periods when they are released from classroom duties to carry out their subject responsibilities, the specific focus of monitoring is agreed with the curriculum director and this is efficient use of time. Through scrutiny of teachers' planning, co-ordinators have good awareness of what is being taught throughout the school in their subjects and of the way in which policies are being implemented. Since the last

inspection, co-ordinators have improved their methods of evaluating pupils' standards by carrying out regular scrutiny of samples of pupils' work.

59. The co-ordination of special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator has established very good systems to guide the provision for pupils on the special needs register. She is very well informed about the needs of the full range of pupils at the school and reviews provision thoroughly and regularly. She supports and advises teachers effectively and works closely with support staff with whom she has a very positive working relationship. This results in them being well informed, efficiently deployed and very effective in their work. Diaries kept by support staff help to inform both class teachers and the co-ordinator about the progress of individual pupils and this information is used to plan further work. The co-ordinator has drawn up a development plan for provision in this area which is clearly focused on refining and improving teaching strategies in order to meet learning needs of individual pupils even more effectively.
60. The school's aims and values are inherent in all its work and, following the example set by the headteacher and his deputy, all staff show high levels of concern for pupils' welfare. There is thus a very positive ethos that reflects the school's commitment to creating a caring environment for all pupils in which they are helped to achieve improving standards in their academic and personal development. The school's equal opportunities policy operates successfully in all aspects of its work. Withdrawal of pupils for small group work, for example for additional literacy support or special educational needs provision, occurs when the same subjects are being taught in classrooms. All pupils therefore have equal experience of the full curriculum. The involvement of pupils with special educational needs in the whole life of the school is commendable and illustrates the school's strong commitment to educational inclusion. Both in lessons, where they receive good levels of support, and as members of the school community, they are valued and their needs are addressed well.
61. The headteacher has successfully introduced a range of procedures for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, the quality of teaching and the standards of pupils' work. In order to achieve constant improvement in the quality of teaching, his monitoring of teaching is systematic and rigorous and leads to teachers being set clear targets for their professional development. His very thorough analysis of pupils' performance in the tests undertaken by each year group enables individual pupils' progress to be monitored and strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning to be identified. Subsequent discussion of this data with teachers in their roles as either class teachers or subject co-ordinators leads to direct action in order to achieve improvement in pupils' performance. The governing body has recently established a committee for regular review of this test data and the action being taken in order that governors can be fully informed of the trends in standards.
62. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily and has a sound awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It provides good support for the work of the school and individual members visit the school to assist in a variety of ways. Through their visits and liaison with school staff, governors are familiar with the school's working methods. There is systematic monitoring of the school's developments by the governing body through direct observation and the reports received from teaching staff. The school development plan provides a sound framework for school improvement and combines an overview for four-year periods, a review of what has been achieved in the previous year and appropriate detail of prioritised targets for the current academic year. The financial and resource implications, including the demands on personnel, are identified and detailed costings and success criteria are included. Action plans are

included for all school personnel. The governing body has carefully monitored the action plan that followed the last inspection and parents have been regularly informed of progress with that action plan.

63. The efficiency and financial planning of the school are satisfactory. The school secretary closely monitors all items of the budget. Daily administration is efficient and effective and makes an important contribution to the smooth running of the school. As a result, the headteacher and governors have easy access to all the information necessary to ensure that finances are kept in good order. The budget is managed efficiently and resources and services are carefully evaluated in terms of value for money before purchase. The governing body makes sure all monies available are spent well to fund the school's educational priorities and for the benefit of pupils. All the grants the school receives are spent appropriately. The finance committee of the governing body scrutinises the school's finances carefully and spends the school's money wisely. The last audit of the school's finances made a number of minor recommendations, which have been fully implemented. The school effectively applies the principles of best value.
64. The school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall. However, staffing levels are good and this reflects the governing body's commitment to raising the quality of education by allocating good levels of funding to staffing. This is evident in the employment of an additional teacher since the last inspection and a part-time teacher to enable Year 3 and 4 pupils to be taught literacy and numeracy in single age groups. This has a good impact on organisation and is also, as a result of the good quality of the staff concerned, having a positive impact on pupils' standards. The qualifications of the teachers, the range of their experience and the breadth of their specialist expertise provides a good match to the demands of the curriculum. The number and quality of education care officers is very good. In their learning support role, these staff make a major contribution to the school through their teaching of pupils with special educational needs. There are good induction procedures for new teachers and students in training benefit from the very good support arrangements in the school. The good in-service training provision ensures that staff keep abreast of current developments in teaching.
65. The school's accommodation is adequate but has many limitations. Most classrooms are cramped and movement within them is restricted. Access to some first floor classrooms has to be through another classroom, causing inevitable disruption to lessons. Internal decoration is tired and it is only teachers' imaginative use of display that improves the attractiveness of an otherwise drab interior. The school's own efforts to improve the internal learning environment have been the creation of a very good computer suite and a covered entrance to the school that serves as a library and area for teaching small groups outside classrooms. This area also functions as a ground floor corridor and this limits the amount of furniture that can be accommodated with a consequent limitation on its function as a library.
66. The school hall is small and imposes severe restrictions on the aspects of physical education that can be taught. The use of the hall for literacy and numeracy lessons is necessitated by lack of classroom space but the location of lessons with less able pupils in the hall is not suited to their need for a learning environment that is free from distractions. The external facilities are a sharp contrast. Although tarmaced areas are small there is an extensive area of grass and woodland that is a well-used resource for learning opportunities in geography, science and physical education.
67. Learning resources are generally adequate. These have been improved since the

previous inspection through increases in the book stock, resources to support the literacy hour and in the hardware for information and communication technology. There are insufficient resources for design and technology and the games aspect of physical education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. In order to improve the standards of work and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- 1) raise levels of achievement of more able pupils in English and science by planning additional learning activities that will extend their knowledge and understanding; (paras 21, 76, 90, 91)
 - 2) review the long-term plans for history and geography with the aim of improving pupils' standards by:
 - considering the timing and length of the topics to be taught; and
 - ensuring a balance and even distribution across the year groups; (paras 26, 98)
 - 3) improve the management structure by re-allocating appropriate areas of responsibility currently held by the deputy headteacher. (para 56)
69. In addition, the following less important weaknesses should be considered by the school:
- 1) Revise the homework policy in order to indicate clear expectations to teachers and parents about the type, amount and timing of homework for each year group. (paras 25, 53)
 - 2) Improve information for parents by providing termly guides to the topics being covered in each subject. (para 51)
 - 3) When finances permit, improve the range of resources for design and technology and the games aspect of physical education. (paras 67, 97, 113)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	17	48	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	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	216
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	50

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	22	27	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	16	17
	Girls	20	18	22
	Total	32	34	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65(60)	69(44)	80(64)
	National	75(70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	18
	Girls	20	18	22
	Total	35	34	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71(55)	69(42)	82(64)
	National	70(66)	72(69)	79(75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	212
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.4
Average class size	30.9

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	96

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	349,454
Total expenditure	345,680
Expenditure per pupil	1,586
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,832
Balance carried forward to next year	11,606

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	216
Number of questionnaires returned	40

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	48	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	28	65	3	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	65	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	43	20	10	5
The teaching is good.	43	43	3	0	13
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	40	23	5	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	35	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	55	3	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	28	45	20	3	5
The school is well led and managed.	35	58	0	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	60	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	50	3	0	3

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

70. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds, standards in English were below average. In comparison with schools who take their pupils from similar backgrounds, the performance of pupils was average. Inspection findings indicate that the performance of pupils currently in Year 6 remains below average. Standards remain low because of the high numbers of pupils in this particular cohort with special educational needs. However, due largely to the high quality of teaching they receive, these pupils have made significant progress on their very low levels of attainment on entry to the school. In the rest of the school, scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of lessons indicate steadily rising standards.
71. By the time they are eleven, pupils' standards in speaking and listening are typical for their age. Pupils develop good listening habits and acquire a wide vocabulary. They respond to questions with increasing detail and fluency and read aloud with confidence and awareness of audience. By the end of the key stage, more able pupils show sound understanding of the conventions associated with standard English and are aware of when it is appropriate to use them. This was well illustrated when pupils in Year 6 conducted an assembly for the school about the features and conditions that are prevalent in El Salvador. In discussions, pupils offer considered opinions and are ready to listen to others, raising pertinent questions and developing their own thinking further. The good development of pupils' speaking and listening skills owes much to the value teachers consistently place on pupils' oral contributions and listening skills and for the frequent planned opportunities that are provided for the development of these skills throughout the curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils effectively acquired primary evidence for their historical research by interviewing a number of visitors on their experiences of the fifties and sixties. The pupils had carefully prepared their questions and listened very thoughtfully to the answers that were given. The literacy hour provides many opportunities for pupils to listen carefully and older pupils are keenly interested in discussions about texts and the use of different words.
72. Although reading standards for pupils at the age of eleven are currently below average, throughout the rest of the school standards are in line with expectations. The school gives high priority to the teaching and practise of reading and pupils achieve well. The provision of daily periods of quiet reading, where pupils read a wide variety of texts, including newspapers, effectively enhances learning. Most average and more able pupils read competently, with fluency and understanding. They have developed a range of strategies to enable them to decipher unfamiliar words, although less able pupils are not always aware when they incorrectly read a word. For a minority of pupils, their lack of general knowledge and limited vocabulary limits their understanding of the text. Most pupils enjoy talking about books. Older pupils show an understanding of the themes and the nature of characters in fiction and are able to explain their preferences for particular authors. In literacy lessons, with informed guidance, older pupils recognise the way language and style are used to influence the reader, for instance, in the creation of newspaper headlines. Pupils are encouraged to take books home to practise their reading skills. By the end of the key stage, most pupils use books efficiently to access information, as they confidently refer to glossaries and index and

contents pages. However, the school library is insufficiently used, which limits the opportunities for pupils to practise using a classification system.

73. Attainment in writing is below average. More able pupils have well-developed writing skills but, for the majority of pupils, spelling and punctuation are weak throughout the school. A significant number of older pupils use capital letters and full stops inconsistently to demarcate sentences and familiar words are spelt incorrectly. However, records show that these pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. Throughout the key stage, grammar and punctuation are taught systematically and pupils extend their range of formal and informal writing. Pupils use well a wide and imaginative vocabulary to add excitement and interest to their writing and the high quality of poetry is a feature of the school. For example, a group of more able pupils in Year 5 use simile and metaphor most effectively to describe an oak tree as 'A tower block for thousands, my soil is as sweet as chocolate'. By the end of the key stage, pupils plan and draft their work to improve content, punctuation and style, although they use dictionaries infrequently to improve their spelling. In some books, the teachers' marking is cursory and pupils are not consistently encouraged to improve their punctuation and spelling. Through direct teaching, pupils become increasingly aware of how writers use words to hold the readers' attention.
74. The school has clearly identified the need to improve standards in writing and strategies for this have been effectively implemented. Effective assessment of pupils' individual strengths and weakness is having a positive effect on standards. Most pupils write fluently and legibly and the development of handwriting is sound throughout the school. Information and communication technology is used appropriately for drafting and producing final copies of writing and poetry.
75. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to targets identified in their individual education plans. Provision for these pupils is very good and their progress is considerably enhanced by the effective work of support staff.
76. In the main, the pupils' achievements parallel the quality of the teaching in English, which is good overall and varies from very good to satisfactory. It is good or better in over half the lessons observed. All staff have a secure knowledge of the National Curriculum and the literacy hour. This enables teachers to make good use of questioning to develop pupils' understanding and extend their learning. Good attention is paid to subject specific vocabulary such as metaphors, similes, connectives, adjectives and verbs. There is clearly evident enthusiasm for the subject, which has a positive effect on pupil confidence and interest. As a result, pupils frequently demonstrate their own enthusiasm for the subject, as when two pupils asked to be allowed to draft their finished poems on the computer during the lunch hour. Other characteristics of the good teaching are lively, well-organised lessons and a brisk pace. Learning intentions for the lesson are made clear to the pupils and progress is enhanced because pupils know what they are expected to achieve and can judge for themselves whether they have achieved the objective by the end of the lesson. Teachers manage pupils well and very effective relationships are established between pupils and adults. The pupils are treated with great respect and their opinions are valued. As a result, self-esteem is high and pupils are not afraid to make mistakes. Teachers have high expectations and use praise well to encourage pupils to work hard. This good teaching has a positive impact upon learning and progress as pupils clearly think of themselves as writers. Throughout the school, pupils are generally making good progress in their learning. They work with concentration and take great pride in their finished work. It is a measure of the effective teaching that during the inspection many pupils stated poetry as the thing they liked most about school. However, a

general weakness in the English lessons seen is the provision of the same tasks for pupils of all abilities. While staff do allow for differing abilities in the level of support provided, they rarely plan different tasks. On occasion this limits the progress possible for more able pupils within each set and their progress is only satisfactory. The support of learning assistants makes a significant impact on learning, particularly for the pupils with special educational needs.

77. The management of the subject is good. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator provides effective leadership. She has been central in the development of planning, assessment and provision of resources for English. The subject policy is detailed and well constructed and long- and medium-term plans are detailed and appropriate, as are the procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress. The analysis of periodic, standard and national tests is used well to inform planning to meet the needs of the pupils.

MATHEMATICS

78. National tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 showed that standards were below the national average but were average when compared to those of similar schools. Standards currently being achieved by Year 6 pupils are a satisfactory improvement on the standards of the last three years and are now in line with the national expectation. This improvement is largely due to the successful establishment of the National Numeracy Strategy and the impact this has had on the quality of teaching.
79. By the age of eleven pupils work out mental calculations quickly and accurately, they understand fractions, including decimals, well and they have a secure knowledge of the features of all basic two- and three-dimensional shapes. Mathematical investigations carried out by more able pupils confirm their good understanding of number. They say and write large numbers correctly and have good understanding of the processes of multiplication and division. Less able pupils have satisfactory understanding of the value of each number in a three-digit number but are unsure when larger numbers are involved.
80. The school has a significant number of pupils with special educational needs whose levels of achievement are very good due to the carefully planned work they are given and to the very good support they receive from support staff.
81. The quality of teaching is good. The clear identification of the main learning in each lesson and the sharing of these objectives with pupils gives them clear expectations and a means of assessing their own learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and as a result they are able to challenge pupils well, using questioning effectively to assess pupils' progress. Oral and mental starter sessions are brisk in pace and provide pupils with the opportunity to use their numerical skills and language with growing confidence. These sessions engage pupils well and pupils respond to this with keenness and enthusiasm. They are fully engaged and thinking mathematically, which prepares them well for the various tasks they are to undertake in the lesson.
82. The tasks given to pupils are usually matched carefully to the needs of different groups and challenge pupils at all levels of ability. This enables pupils to make good progress. In several lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to discuss their work in groups and this provides practise in using the terminology and methodology they have been taught, making them more secure in their approach to their work. Good, imaginative mathematics displays support pupils' independence when undertaking these group activities. Overhead projectors are used very effectively in some lessons to guide

pupils through the various teaching and learning points which the teacher wishes to make.

83. Plenary sessions, when the whole class comes together at the end of a lesson, are used effectively to recap on work undertaken in the lesson and as a means of assessing pupils' understanding. This ongoing assessment is used to inform planning for the subsequent lessons, enabling topics to be revisited with some pupils whose understanding is not yet secure. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to explain and demonstrate the methods they have used which enhance their speaking and listening skills. They are able to ask for help as teachers regularly check that all understand what they have to do.
84. The high incidence of special needs is suitably addressed at all levels of planning. Support for pupils with special educational needs is of good quality from teachers but especially from support staff who work in a well-informed way with identified groups of pupils. As a result of this support, pupils are enthusiastic and talk about their work with confidence and understanding.
85. This good teaching results in pupils being keen to learn, interested and very well behaved. The strong relationship between teachers, support staff and pupils ensures that pupils are encouraged and achieve to the best of their ability. Pupils want to please their teachers.
86. The regular planning meetings held by teachers ensure that the pupils' learning is always closely linked to the National Numeracy Strategy framework and also that the individual learning needs of the pupils are addressed. Chalk boards and wipe-clean slates are used effectively at the start of lessons to enable teachers to identify any pupils who may be having problems with particular aspects of the programme. These are either addressed immediately or during the lesson. Using this quick check at the beginning of lessons focuses the pupils well for the tasks which will follow. In several lessons pupils are given a choice of how they will work and which resources they will use, giving them a good degree of independence in their approach to learning. This is particularly evident in Year 6 where work on reflective symmetry provides an exciting challenge for pupils who complete their tasks using a good range of different approaches.
87. The school has begun to use a range of data to inform planning and target setting. Good monitoring of pupils' performance in tests, together with ongoing assessment of pupils' progress in lessons and over time, is having a positive effect on standards.

SCIENCE

88. The national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 showed standards to be below the national average but matching the average for similar schools. The percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was in line with both national and similar schools averages. These results were a significant improvement on the previous two years but not as high as those at the time of the previous inspection.
89. Improvement is continuing and the standards of pupils now in Year 6 are in line with the standards expected of their age. Pupils' achievements are good in relation to their ability. A strength in pupils' work is the good standard of their investigative work where they demonstrate good understanding of the importance of investigations being fair and accurate and of the ways to ensure this. Pupils plan work carefully, often in small groups, and they understand the principle of establishing a hypothesis then designing a

procedure for testing the hypothesis. When investigating the effect of water temperature on the dissolving of sugar, pupils' measurements of water volume and temperature were very accurate and they used terms such as 'saturation' correctly. Results were accurately recorded on a line graph which could be interpreted correctly when drawing conclusions. A particular strength in these pupils' work is their use of correct vocabulary.

90. At both key stages, pupils' very positive attitudes have a beneficial effect on their learning. Very good behaviour and careful attention to teachers' instructions result in no time being wasted in lessons and good levels of concentration. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to work in groups and the excellent relationships that exist between all pupils promote mature levels of co-operation and collaboration. Pupils with special educational needs work well with support staff and achieve good levels of learning that match those of the majority of the class. More able pupils retain good levels of interest although they have insufficient opportunities to extend their learning to a more advanced level.
91. The quality of teaching is good and all teachers have secure knowledge of the subject. They have successfully built on the good support from the co-ordinator to ensure that lessons incorporate practical activities wherever possible and this results in good rates of progress by many pupils. The best teaching has a foundation of very thorough planning of different learning activities for pupils of different abilities but this was only evident in one lesson. In the co-ordinator's lesson with Years 3 and 4 pupils, the different ways in which different groups of pupils were required to record the results of an investigation meant that all pupils were challenged by what was expected of them and all made real gains in their learning. This, however, is not evident in all classes and there are other occasions when pupils of different ages and abilities are all given the same learning activity with no planning of further activities to challenge the more able.
92. The frequent use of correct scientific vocabulary by teachers, and their insistence on pupils' use of this in written and spoken reports, has a good impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding. Written work is thus used very effectively for the development of literacy skills, with pupils learning well about the forms of writing and the type of vocabulary that should be used for communicating in a scientific context. All teachers use marking as a constructive form of feedback to pupils about their work and there are frequent written questions in pupils' books that encourage further thought about what they have learned. Teachers use resources well, ensuring they are well prepared and have good potential to help pupils' learning, as in the worksheets for recording investigative work. These encourage pupils throughout the school to think about how investigations are planned and how results can most meaningfully be recorded. Year 3 pupils use and explain simple bar charts correctly and, by the time they are in Year 6, pupils understand when line graphs are appropriate for particular types of data. In addition to helping scientific knowledge to develop, such learning opportunities also extend mathematical skills well.

ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. Lessons in art and design and technology are alternated each half term. During the inspection, the focus was on design and technology. Judgements in art are based on scrutiny of displays around the school and of individual pupils' work and teachers planning. In both subjects pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their age and are maintaining the standards at the time of the last inspection. In some areas of art, notably observational drawing, standards exceed expectations. Pupils' progress in art

is satisfactory overall.

94. In design and technology, pupils in Years 3 and 4 demonstrate satisfactory manipulative and making skills as they design and make photograph frames. Pupils develop sound design skills as they move through the school. For example, pupils in Year 5 who are designing musical instruments examine how a variety of instruments function, before producing detailed, labelled designs for their own instruments. Having evaluated their original instruments for their effectiveness and suitability, all pupils produce final, improved instruments, using a variety of materials and techniques to make the finished products. Year 6 pupils successfully develop strengthening techniques and test materials for suitability as they use tools and a variety of materials to construct shelters.
95. The teaching of design and technology ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. This is resulting in pupils making good overall progress in their learning. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers have good subject knowledge, and lessons are well planned to provide pupils with challenging activities. As a result, pupils are very enthusiastic and concentrate well on the task in hand. They work well collaboratively, as when Year 5 pupils worked effectively in pairs to design their musical instruments. In conversation, pupils take obvious enjoyment in explaining and recounting what they are making or have made. In most lessons, good opportunity is provided for the development of both making and design skills. Where teaching is less good, pupils are provided with less opportunity to make their own choices of materials and designs. The school's involvement in the Eco-schools project enhances learning in design and technology as, for example, pupils design and make hedgehog hides and birds' nesting boxes.
96. In art, by the end of the key stage pupils show good techniques in mixing and blending colours and in the composition of their drawings and paintings. Pupils have the opportunity to use a range of techniques and media to express their feelings through observational drawings, painting, printing, collage and clay work. They successfully explore the work of well-known artists, for example they produce fruit faces in the style of Guiseppe Arumboldi. There are good displays around the school, which celebrate pupils' efforts. These include observational drawings of fruit where standards exceed expectations as pupils have used well the techniques of shading to give more dimension to their studies and to depict movement. Examples of animals silhouetted against an African sunset demonstrate pupils' effective use of colour tone to demonstrate light and dark. The use of sketchbooks throughout the school enhances pupils' progress as they practise their skills and evaluate their work.
97. Both art and design and technology are well managed by enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinators, who monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work. The school has recently adopted the Quality and Curriculum Authority schemes of work for the subjects, which is in the process of being adapted to meet the particular needs of the school. Although resources for art are satisfactory, the resources for design and technology are not adequate for the effective delivery of the subject.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

98. Opportunities to observe the teaching of history during the inspection were limited to two lessons and no geography was being taught at this time. The blocking of curriculum time means that geography is not taught continuously and this does have implications for the development of geographical skills.

99. The standards achieved by pupils in history are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. Pupils in the upper school are able to make comparisons of everyday life in Ancient Greece with life today using food as a focus. They use primary sources effectively to inform themselves of everyday life in the nineteenth century. Pupils' work across the school shows adequate coverage of a range of topics.
100. All pupils talk about their studies in history in a knowledgeable and confident way. This ability is due, in the main, to the good teaching and the enthusiasm and interest which teachers develop in their pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are consequently making good progress in their learning. Lessons are well planned, have clear learning objectives and very good use is made of resources to support learning. The careful preparation undertaken by pupils in Year 6 before they interview a range of visitors about life in the 50s, 60s and 70s results in a most worthwhile learning experience. The range of Greek foodstuffs made available to Year 5 pupils ensures that their interest is held throughout the lesson.
101. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to discuss their ideas in groups thus reinforcing their use of historical language. Pupils respond well to this independence and express their ideas and opinions with confidence. Because of their secure subject knowledge, teachers make learning interesting and engaging for the pupils who respond with enthusiasm and good behaviour. The artefacts and books used to support study are appropriate and hold pupils' interest well.
102. The tasks they are given challenge pupils well. The pace of lessons is good. The creation of good, active learning experiences such as interviewing visitors, ensures that pupils are fully engaged and enjoying lessons.
103. The scrutiny of pupils' work does show some lack of consistency in standards of presentation and marking and does not indicate that tasks have been sufficiently matched to the pupils' abilities. In lessons observed, however, all pupils are fully involved and learning is good. The good standards achieved and interest noted in the last inspection have been maintained.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

104. By the age of eleven, pupils' standards are in line with expectations. Current Year 6 work is concerned with the creation of spreadsheets for the application of mathematical formulae and pupils have a good understanding of the processes and functions involved. When entering information into the computer, pupils provide clear explanations that demonstrate good understanding of what they are doing and why. Skill levels at computing are generally sound and pupils use a mouse and other peripherals quickly and confidently although under-developed keyboard skills slow down the input of information.
105. The quality of teaching is good and teachers' clear explanations of the activities and their purpose indicate secure subject expertise. Teachers' own skill levels have been audited by the co-ordinator. Gaps in knowledge or skills have been rectified by the co-ordinator's guidance and the mutual support that teachers provide for one another. The three Years 3 and 4 classes are all working on the sending and receipt of e-mails. Teachers' co-operation in planning and evaluating these lessons is enabling teaching to be refined and pupils' learning to be improved. The topic provides good opportunities for pupils to learn basic computing skills, practise simple word processing and gain a good, practical understanding of the place of the technology in everyday life.

106. The organisation of pupils and planning of work is good and the space and arrangement of the computer suite are beneficial to pupils' learning. Teachers' planning identifies very clearly the precise learning to be achieved in each lesson and pupils are constantly referred back to the learning intention. This approach enables pupils to have a good understanding of their own learning and they show obvious pride in their achievements. In order that teachers can provide instruction to individuals whenever needed, they produce good quality worksheets that guide pupils through the lesson's activities and enable those not needing support to work independently. This good use of resources and time ensures that pupils work at a good pace and achieve maximum gains in learning in relation to their abilities. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from staff who are briefed well by teachers. The high quality of this support enables these pupils to achieve the same progress as other pupils.
107. The co-ordinator, in addition to being an invaluable source of support and advice for colleagues, has developed the subject well and achieved good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection when various weaknesses were present. The curriculum now operating has completely changed the focus from the previous unsystematic use of computers whereby pupils worked on programs that were linked to other subjects of the curriculum. The new guidelines provide a well-planned progression in the skills to be learned by pupils at each stage of their learning. The curriculum provides good opportunities for the development of literacy and numeracy skills through computing. However, the use of non-computing technology such as listening centres, videos and photocopiers by pupils is currently unplanned and this, together with the lack of equipment such as sensors, reduces the range of learning opportunities that pupils have in the subject as a whole.

MUSIC

108. Standards were judged above expectations by the previous inspection and the evidence of pupils' singing in assemblies and their constructive appraisal of music that they listen to confirms that standards have been maintained. Good quality performance in hymn singing has the qualities of very good control of pitch and dynamics. Pupils sing confidently and enthusiastically with good diction and phrasing. By the age of eleven, pupils listen critically to music and express opinions confidently. Year 6 pupils compared and contrasted three songs as part of a unit of work leading to their own compositions. Their good appraisal of links between melody and lyrics showed good appreciation of the power of music for communicating feelings, moods and messages. They showed good understanding of composers' strategies for achieving this communication, such as the use of tempo or the repetition of lyrics. The foundation for these good listening skills is established in Years 3 and 4, as was evident when pupils identified the variations in rhythm, pitch and instruments being used in 'Carnival of the Animals'.
109. Teaching is good overall. There is a strong emphasis on developing performing and listening skills in all lessons and teachers make good use of resources to promote this skill development. Recorded music, instruments and well-designed worksheets are used well to enable all pupils to achieve good progress in their learning. Pupils' concentration and interest are good as a result of the well-planned, stimulating learning activities that are planned for them. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace but there are well-timed interventions by teachers to either reinforce their key teaching points or use pupils' responses as examples of good work. The expectation of high standards is a characteristic of the best teaching and is seen, for example, in the interruption of singing to repeat aspects where performance can be improved. This was evident in a Year 3/4 lesson where standards of singing showed good improvement as, when

experimenting with different timbres, pupils were encouraged to repeat their performances in order to achieve the desired effects. This helped pupils to gain a good understanding of the main learning point of the lesson. Teachers make good use of support staff to assist pupils with special educational needs when written work is involved. The overall quality of teaching reflects the good impact of school-based training, organised by the co-ordinator, from visiting specialists who have led workshops and provided support and ideas for teachers. Lessons show the benefit of this training, particularly that received on improving pupils' singing techniques.

110. There is good management of the subject by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who, although a part-time teacher, has a very strong commitment to improving provision and standards and carries out thorough monitoring of the subject's progress. Each period of monitoring commences with completion of a questionnaire by a sample of pupils so that their reaction to their learning opportunities can be assessed. New curriculum guidelines have been developed around the resources and expertise available in the school and these guidelines provide good support to the teachers, the majority of whom are non-specialists. Musical life in the school is enriched by opportunities for small groups of pupils to receive instrumental tuition in brass, woodwind and violin. The co-ordinator provides recorder lessons for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Resources for the subject are adequate but the range of basic percussion instruments is narrow.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils' standards by the age of eleven are in line with expectations. Gymnastics was the only area of activity taught during this inspection and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress in their learning. A better rate of progress is not possible with the present indoor facilities. The small, narrow hall restricts the range of gymnastic activities that can be provided and class sizes are such that only floorwork can be performed within required levels of safety. Pupils, therefore, cannot extend their gymnastic skills by using apparatus other than mats. Within these constraints, pupils work with admirable restraint and pay careful attention to the movement of others while still managing to maintain satisfactory levels of activity. By the age of eleven, pupils have to perform fairly static activities. Pupils show satisfactory control in their performance of a range of balances that they link satisfactorily into sequences that use rolls, twists and over-balance to move between elements in their sequences.
112. The quality of teaching is good and all teachers plan lessons very thoroughly. They generally pay good attention to the need for body preparation before exercise and, through their questioning, teachers establish pupils' sound understanding of health-related factors such as the need for warming-up and cooling-down. Safety principles are constantly reinforced throughout all lessons. Where lessons involve a transition from individual work, when isolated actions are practised, to group work in which small groups perform sequences on mats, there is more variation in the quality of teaching. A feature of very good teaching is the encouragement of pupils who are waiting their turn to either carry out a mental practise of what they intend to perform or evaluate one another's performance and suggest ways of improvement. This approach makes good use of periods of inactivity and aids pupils' wider learning well about gymnastics. Lessons with Years 3 and 4 pupils showed good preparation beforehand by the display of cards with action words that served as a good reminder to pupils of the elements of their sequences. This visual aid helped the learning of pupils whether they were performing or observing. Good teaching also includes frequent use of pupils demonstrating good work that reinforce the main teaching points. Good use has been made of videos of experienced gymnasts to illustrate the features of good performance

that pupils can incorporate in their own work.

113. The subject is managed well by a very enthusiastic, knowledgeable co-ordinator. Long-term planning is based on guidelines that have had to be adapted in order to account for the school's facilities. This approach has been successful and has helped to ensure that the low time allocation to the subject is used efficiently. The co-ordinator has good plans to monitor standards and develop systems of assessment that are based on video recording of pupils' performances at the end of a unit of work. Over time, pupils experience all areas of activity in the National Curriculum Programme of Study and their learning opportunities in games benefit from the extensive playing fields available. Playground areas are small and lack stimulus for physical play such as that provided by a variety of playground markings. Opportunities for pupils to have additional practise at games and other skills at play-times are lost as a result of the school stopping the provision of equipment that was a feature of recreation periods at the time of the last inspection. The quantity and quality of games equipment is unsatisfactory. There are good opportunities for extra-curricular activity in a variety of sports and, similarly, for involvement in inter-school competitions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

114. The standards achieved by pupils in religious education are in line with those expected for pupils of their age. They display a satisfactory knowledge of both the Christian religion and aspects of Hinduism and Moslem faiths. They deal with the concept of 'giving' in a thoughtful and mature way and express their ideas and thoughts sensitively.
115. The good quality of teaching and the good relationships between teachers and pupils enhance pupils' learning, enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress. Lessons are well planned and provide pupils with the opportunity to discuss their ideas in groups. Pupils listen attentively to the ideas of others and show respect for their views. This is well supported by teachers who listen carefully to pupils and encourage them successfully to have confidence in expressing opinions. The tasks given to them are challenging and well explained which result in high levels of concentration from pupils when completing them. A display of work on 'Questions to God' shows the high level of sensitivity with which pupils are working.
116. Pupils with special needs are well supported in lessons by support staff who have a clear idea of the role they are expected to play. They provide key words to support the pupils' written work and help them to express their ideas clearly.
117. Learning is enhanced where not only is information being given by teachers but they focus on how people might be feeling or be affected, which in turn demands higher levels of personal reflection by pupils.

118. The subject is well led by an informed and experienced co-ordinator who supports staff well through detailed discussion of planning and provision of ideas, resources and general background information. Teachers' planning is monitored and samples of work are collected to ensure continuity and progression. A range of visits is made by pupils to centres of other faiths which increases their knowledge and understanding. The support of the co-ordinator enhances teaching and learning throughout the school.