

INSPECTION REPORT

STURTON LE STEEPLE CE (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Retford Nottingham

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122808

Headteacher: Mrs V Ballinger

Reporting Inspector: Chris Rhodes
16408

Dates of inspection: 30th October – 1st November 2000

Inspection number: 224442

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Street Sturton Le Steeple Retford Notts
Postcode:	DN22 9HQ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Elsy
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Chris Rhodes 16408	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education Equal opportunities Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
John Kerr 8919	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Heather Toynbee 11076	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Music Foundation stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sturton-le-Steeple Primary School is a small three class village school east of Retford in Nottinghamshire. There are 55 pupils on roll, who live in Sturton itself or in the surrounding villages. All pupils have a white United Kingdom background and none has English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals or who have special educational needs is below the national average. No pupil has a statement of educational need. Overall attainment on entry is below the county average, and few children have had any pre-school experience. Boys have achieved consistently less well than girls in national tests for a number of years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective. Overall levels of achievement in the school are in line with national expectations. The quality of teaching is good and most pupils make good progress. However, many of the current Year 2 are not reaching expected standards in English and mathematics, and most of the reception group are not achieving the early learning goals for children of their age. Other individual year groups are doing much better. Such variations are not uncommon in schools where the number of pupils in each year group is very small. Children's behaviour is good in classrooms and around the school. The quality of leadership and management is good. The school has addressed the key issues identified in the previous inspection report successfully and continues to give sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The overall quality of teaching is good. It is particularly strong in the classes containing older pupils.
- The school is well led. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the future development of the school, which is shared and actively supported by the staff and governing body.
- The standard of behaviour is good.
- The support staff make a very important and valuable contribution to children's learning.
- The school makes very effective use of its partnership with other local schools.
- Information for parents is particularly good.

What could be improved

- Most of the current groups of seven and eleven year old pupils are not reaching high enough standards in English, mathematics or science. This is particularly noticeable among the boys.
- Teachers do not always give pupils a clear understanding of the standard they expect.
- The current organisation of teaching and learning does not meet the full needs of children aged four to seven. Many children are not meeting the early learning goals at the age of five.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1996. Considerable progress has been made in addressing the key issues identified for action. The level of behaviour has improved although the attitudes of some older pupils are disappointing. The quality of teaching has improved considerably. Work is now set at the correct level and more care is taken to challenge the more able. Most pupils in the current Year 2 are not reaching the standards noted at the time of the previous inspection. The variation is not unusual in a school with very small numbers of pupils in each year group. Presentation is still not good enough. Teachers have improved the way they measure how well the children are doing, and use the results effectively to plan the next stage of work. The governing body now has a curriculum policy statement.

The headteacher and subject co-ordinators monitor the work in English and mathematics effectively. Parking problems have been reduced. The overall rate of improvement is typical of most schools.

STANDARDS

The number of eleven year olds who took the national tests in 1999 and 2000 was less than ten, and it is not appropriate to compare their results with other schools generally, or with those taking pupils from similar backgrounds. Overall levels of attainment vary considerably from year to year because the achievement of one or two pupils can alter the overall pattern disproportionately. Girls have achieved consistently better results than boys for a number of years.

The youngest children start school with below average standards. They work hard but have not reached many of the early learning goals set for their age by the time they go into Year 1. Most seven year olds are not achieving the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics. Although there was not enough written work to make a secure judgement about science, there are clear indications that the quality of work completed by most is well below the national expectation. Eleven year olds are achieving expected levels in English, mathematics and science but several, particularly the boys, could be doing better. Their progress over the past three years has been satisfactory. In contrast, pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are making good progress and have a more positive attitude to their work.

The school is developing a good system for setting year group and individual targets. They are based on a realistic understanding of each pupil's past and potential achievement. Targets are shared with parents and pupils, and are reviewed at regular intervals.

It was not possible to see many lessons in the foundation subjects, and none in art or physical education. Lesson observations, pupils' books, and discussions with pupils in Year 2 and 6 indicate that standards in information and communication technology, design and technology, history and geography are in line with nationally expected levels. Although some individual work is good, current standards in art and design, and music, are below expectations. Video evidence of work in gymnastics indicates that seven and eleven year olds' standards in physical education are in line with national expectations.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. Most pupils are interested in their work. Several older pupils, particularly boys, do not try as hard as they should and could.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall, and has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are polite and well mannered.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work well in small groups and can be trusted to work sensibly on their own when the teacher is in another part of the room. They enjoy taking responsibility.
Attendance	Very good.

Most pupils try hard and respond positively to the good teaching. However, some older pupils are lethargic and make less progress than they could, despite the best efforts of their teachers. They do not have enough pride in seeing a job well done or a high standard achieved.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. One of the 18 lessons observed [6%] was excellent, a further two [11%] were very good, seven [39%] were good and all the remaining eight [44%] were satisfactory. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when there was some unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall, and the new literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced successfully. Teachers use the materials wisely, plan lessons carefully and make sure that pupils are set work at the correct level.

Lesson planning and preparation is particularly well done in all classes. It is based on good quality annual and half-termly plans, and a detailed understanding of pupils' ability and potential. Questions are asked very skilfully in many lessons so that pupils have to think hard and give more detailed answers. Support staff are deployed very effectively, and are fully involved in the planning and evaluation of how well the lessons have gone. Teachers have a good understanding of their subjects. In the very best lessons, the teacher's own enthusiasm for the subject is infectious, children respond very positively and learn quickly. Books are marked very carefully and children know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Children with special educational needs are included in all lessons and make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress because of the extra help and encouragement they receive. Planning for the four to seven year olds is good, but the teacher does not spend enough time with the reception group on their own. Teachers in all classes do not always state the standard they expect the children to achieve clearly enough and, as a result, pupils often complete their work at an average rather than high level.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Well planned and meets requirements of the National Curriculum. Opportunities for younger children are limited, as they have no suitable external play area or equipment, and not enough time with their teacher.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress because their work is matched carefully to their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. It is particularly strong in the arrangements for pupils' moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares	Teachers know the children well and place a high priority on their support and guidance. The procedures for measuring how well the

for its pupils	children are doing, and the use of this information to set targets and plan future work, are strengths of the school.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a very clear and realistic vision for the school that is shared by the staff and governing body. She manages the overload caused by her dual teaching and headship roles efficiently. The co-ordinators are well organised and effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is very supportive and well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics are monitored closely. The development plan is reviewed on a regular basis.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Educational priorities are well supported through the school's efficient financial planning.

The headteacher's care for all staff and children, and her energy and enthusiasm, make her the mainspring of the school. The level of staff is appropriate to the overall number of pupils but not to the very wide range of age and ability in the class for pupils aged 4-7. The quality of the support staff is particularly good. The school secretary manages the office very efficiently. The accommodation is used to its full potential but has several shortcomings. The hall is too small for the delivery of a full physical education programme, especially for older pupils, and the small external courtyard does not meet the requirements for children in the Foundation Stage. Resources, apart from those for physical development in the Foundation Stage, are appropriate and are used efficiently. The headteacher and governing body are careful to apply the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The headteacher and staff are approachable Children are expected to work hard and are happy The teaching is good The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about how well the children are doing The arrangements for homework

The inspection team agree with parents' positive views but think that teachers need to be clearer about the standard of work they expect from children. The team feels that the level of homework is appropriate. It is similar in content, and sometimes better, than that found in many primary schools. The team agree with views expressed at the parents' meeting that older children are not enthusiastic enough about reading. Inspectors disagree with those parents who were critical of the information given to parents or who were dissatisfied with the quality of leadership and management.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The number of seven and eleven year olds who sat the national tests in 1999 and last term was less than ten in each case. The group is too small to make valid comparisons with other schools generally, or with those taking pupils from similar backgrounds. Patterns and levels of attainment vary considerably from year to year because the achievement of one or two pupils can alter the overall picture disproportionately. However, girls have achieved consistently better results than boys for a number of years. The school has been aware of this for some time and has tried a variety of ways in which to raise standards.
2. The youngest children start in the reception group with below average standards. They work hard but most have not reached the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy, for mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical or creative development, by the time they go into Year 1. Their personal and social development is satisfactory.
3. The inspection team looked at the books the children completed last term in all three classes, observed lessons and talked to pupils in Years 2 and 6 to judge how well they are doing now. Most seven year olds are not achieving the nationally expected levels for English and mathematics. One pupil joins the older class for her work in literacy and numeracy. This is an appropriate decision by the school as it enables her to make good progress and learn alongside pupils of similar ability. Much of the work in science is oral. Although there was not enough written evidence to make a secure judgement about standards, there are clear indications that the quality of work completed by most seven year olds is well below the expected level for children of this age. Attainment in English and mathematics is not as high now as was reported at the time of the previous inspection. Progress in Year 1 is better than in Year 2, and reflects the overall ability of the individual children concerned. Such variations between year groups are not uncommon in very small schools.
4. Eleven year olds are achieving nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science but several, particularly the boys, could be doing better. Taking English, mathematics and science together, girls have attained much higher tests scores over the past few years than boys. The progress of the boys and girls in the current Year 6, as measured against their past achievement when they sat the national tests for seven year olds, has been satisfactory. In contrast, pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are making good progress, and have a more positive attitude to their work. Current standards of attainment in Year 6 are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.
5. The school is developing a good system for setting year group and individual targets. They are based on a realistic understanding of each pupil's past and potential achievement. Targets are shared with parents and pupils, and are reviewed at regular intervals. This year's targets have not yet been given to parents or pupils. As a result, they do not know their particular goals for next summer, and half a term has gone by. Targets are written in small books that are kept at home so that parents can measure progress against them. This is a very good idea. However, pupils do not have a copy in school, at the front of their books for example, and lack a reminder to work to a higher standard. Some of Year 6 could remember their 1999 targets but did not appear to have taken them as seriously as they should.

6. Standards of speaking and listening amongst seven year olds are not as high as those found in many schools. Six and seven year old children listen carefully to their teacher and enjoy talking about their work, but find it difficult to explain their ideas in any detail. The words often rush out rather than being thought through in a connected sequence. Good teaching in Years 3 and 4 encourages pupils to use words more accurately and to think more deeply before answering. By the time they are eleven, pupils have grown in confidence and talk maturely about a wide range of subjects. Standards match national expectations.
7. Many of the current group of seven year olds find reading difficult and are not reaching expected standards. The better readers read familiar text confidently, and remember the difficult words they have met before. They find it hard to read a text they have not seen previously, even when it is at the same level of difficulty, or to express an opinion about the story or book they are reading. Pupils make good progress and most eleven year olds read fiction and non-fiction texts at the standard expected for their age. They have a basic understanding of phonics and know how to approach unfamiliar words. They include appropriate expression, especially in dialogue. They know how to find their way round reference books, but have difficulty in finding passages in stories that illustrate why one character is different from another. Most feel positive about reading but their enthusiasm is not as strong as is found in many eleven year olds.
8. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2. Many seven year olds have always had great difficulty with writing, and this is reflected in their current standards. They find it hard to develop an idea through a series of sentences and are not confident enough in the use of full stops and capital letters. Their choice of words is limited and is closely linked with their relative lack of achievement in reading. They are beginning to spell simple words correctly but their spelling is not up to the expected standard. Their handwriting is often immature. Girls are achieving better results than boys. Pupils' writing in other subjects, in history and science, for example, is limited, as they do not have the skills to put the thoughts they have in their heads down as a series of linked sentences.
9. Progress in writing is good in Years 3 and 4, and nine year olds are reaching expected standards. Attainment is even better in Year 5 where several ten year olds are achieving above average levels and their books show considerable progress over the past eighteen months. Eleven year olds are working at levels that are in line with national averages. Most of the group can write a lively text and develop their ideas in an interesting way. The writing is properly organised, and higher attaining pupils use complex sentences and set out their work correctly in paragraphs. Books contain examples of adventurous vocabulary that enliven the writing and make the reader want to find out more. Spelling is not as accurate as it should be. All pupils have regular handwriting practice. They write in a fluent, joined and legible hand in their practice books but seldom at the same standard in their everyday writing. This concern was also noted at the time of the previous inspection.
10. Most seven year olds are achieving below average standards in mathematics. They have learned to add numbers together to make 20. They are developing a clearer understanding of the value of coins up to the value of 10p and apply this knowledge to working out shopping values. They make non-standard measurements with cubes and can tell the time for the hour and half past the hour. Their classification of shapes consists of deciding whether each will roll, slide or build. Several pupils write their figures round the wrong way.

11. Eight and nine year old pupils make good mathematical progress. By Year 4 pupils have a basic awareness of place value and know how to express this in written form. They are able to work successfully to scale, converting metres to centimetres. Most have a basic understanding of some of the formal language of mathematics. For instance, they write correctly about vertices, and regular and irregular shapes.
12. Good mathematical progress is also made in Years 5 and 6. Eleven year olds are reaching levels in mathematics that are in line with the national average. Knowledge of number includes work on fractions, percentages and decimals. The pupils show a good understanding of the properties of different triangles and can identify their lines of symmetry. Most are developing effective strategies to make it easier to add several large numbers together and can round numbers up to the nearest 100. The pupils' subject specific vocabulary is developing well and they are beginning to use mathematical symbols such as 'greater than.'
13. It is difficult for the teacher to introduce work at appropriate National Curriculum levels in science due to the wide age and ability range within the class. Seven year old pupils start from a low knowledge baseline and make satisfactory progress. They identify similarities and differences when examining a collection of objects made from different materials, and group these into appropriate categories. Their experimental skills are developing and they are able to carry out simple investigation work with magnets. A few are able to make knowledgeable deductions. However, the pupils' early enthusiasm and interest wanes when it comes to recording their work on anything other than the simplest charts because they find writing difficult.
14. Older pupils make good progress in their acquisition of scientific knowledge and understanding. Years 3 and 4 have built on their understanding of sound by exploring the properties of musical instruments such as a drum and violin. The pupils demonstrate particular gains in lessons where they actually experiment for themselves, rather than watch a demonstration by the teacher. Year 6 pupils are achieving standards in line with the national average and one or two are reaching higher levels. There is evidence of good progress being made in setting up experiments to find out whether air has a weight and how reversible and irreversible changes can be made to liquids and solids. Pupils are building up and using a wide scientific vocabulary and can read off the calibrations on a measuring cylinder. Most are keen to undertake scientific activities, but are slow to record results. The overall quality of their presentation indicates a lack of pride in their work.
15. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in all lessons and reach appropriate standards. This is because the teachers are careful to set work at the correct level of difficulty, and to make sure that additional adult help is used effectively to offer quiet support and encouragement in whole class sessions, and good quality skills' teaching in small groups.
16. Pupils are encouraged to use the skills they have learned in literacy lessons in other parts of the curriculum. Older pupils skim textbooks for information and use their knowledge of note taking in preparation for writing longer accounts. Higher attaining older pupils transfer their knowledge of paragraphing and complex sentence writing to work, for example, in history. Presentation is an issue throughout the school and the high standards achieved in practice books are not transferred to other work. Pupils use their knowledge of basic numeracy,

measurement for example, in science lessons. Not enough use is made of data handling as a quick way to organise and present information.

17. It was not possible to see many lessons in the foundation subjects and none in art or physical education. Lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' books and discussions with children in Year 2 and 6 indicate that standards in information and communication technology, design and technology, history and geography are in line with nationally expected levels. Standards in music are below the national expectation. The overall quality of much of the work completed this term in art and design is not as good as that expected nationally. Some individual work is good. Video evidence from three gymnastic lessons, one per class, indicates that seven and eleven year olds are reaching expected levels of attainment, especially in Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

18. Most pupils have a positive attitude to their work. Eight and nine year olds are particularly keen to share ideas in groups and enjoy a challenge. Pupils in all classes work independently and remain on task in a good working atmosphere. However, there are a number of pupils, particularly boys, in Year 6 who have a negative attitude and are reluctant to be involved in learning, despite the good efforts of their teachers. This has a detrimental effect on the progress and attainment of other pupils in the class.
19. Behaviour is mostly good in class and about the school, and has improved since the previous inspection when it was an item of considerable concern. Pupils show respect for each other and for staff. They are polite and well mannered to midday supervisors and visitors. They play well together, and older children help the younger ones in mixed age classes and in assemblies. Pupils work well in small groups and can be trusted to be sensible on their own when the teacher is elsewhere in the room. There is no persistent oppressive behaviour or bullying. If an incident of rough treatment occurs, pupils respond well to their teacher as they are made aware of the harm they have done. They also respond well to the system of awards and sanctions. Pupils have a well-developed moral sense and exhibit sensitivity in considering the needs of others. When given the task of sharing three sweets between four, one group suggested that none should have a sweet.
20. Pupils are keen to see the school succeed. They have good ideas on how it could be improved and are in the process of formulating the procedures for a school council. They respect school property. Books, equipment and musical instruments are used sensibly. Pupils act very responsibly when placed in a position of trust. Older pupils are all given a monitoring role covering duties in the classrooms or about the school. These include responsibility for school equipment or the library. Older pupils summarise the teachers' awards and house points, and run the awards assembly themselves, handing out certificates and shaking successful colleagues by the hand.
21. Attendance at the school is very good. It is well above the average for similar schools throughout the country. Unauthorised absence hardly ever occurs. Pupils are punctual at the start of the day and for lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The overall quality of teaching is good. One of the 18 lessons observed was excellent, a further two were very good, seven were good and all the remaining eight were satisfactory. This is an important improvement since the previous inspection when some teaching was unsatisfactory. The percentage of teaching judged very good or excellent is four times as great, and the main criticisms in the previous report have been addressed successfully. The needs of all pupils, including the more able, are now met appropriately through the carefully differentiated group work that follows the main teaching sessions. No time is wasted on undemanding activities such as excessive colouring.
23. The quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage is sound overall. It is very closely linked to that of five to seven year olds as they are in the same class with the same teacher. This gives her a very wide range of ability and social maturity, as well as two very different curriculum plans. Current arrangements are far from ideal, as she has to rely heavily on the nursery nurse to work with the reception group while she teaches the older pupils. The nursery nurse's work is of a high standard, but children do not have enough opportunities to work as a group with the teacher herself. This affects the quality of their learning. Some whole class activities do meet the needs of all the children. A good example was seen when pupils returned from an assembly. The teacher joined them in a lively counting and action game that got them moving briskly round the room, used up some spare energy, and reinforced their counting skills. As a result, later learning was more successful. Other joint activities are not so appropriate, as when the reception aged children got left behind in a detailed discussion of the vocabulary in a poem about bonfire night. They became bored, stopped listening, and wasted time. The teacher and nursery nurse plan each day's work for the reception group very carefully, and discuss how well it has gone at the end of each session. This has a positive affect on children's learning and enables the teacher to monitor their progress accurately. The teaching to develop children's creative abilities is unsatisfactory because there is not enough direct skills teaching by the teacher herself or planned opportunities for a range of musical experiences.
24. The quality of teaching of five to seven year olds is also sound. Particular strengths lie in the teacher's ability to manage the pupils, some of whom can be very demanding, and in the effective use of assessment to judge how well the children are progressing. Pupil records, including those recording the progress of individual pupils in reading, are detailed and regularly updated. Relationships with the pupils are good and they learn confidently. Questions are asked skilfully so that pupils are made to think independently and give more considered answers. This deepens their understanding of the work and gives them valuable opportunities to practise their oral skills. Lessons in all subjects are planned carefully around a central theme, and contain a variety of linked but different activities so that the learning moves forward briskly. Appropriate use is made of computers to consolidate learning by, for example, using a mathematics program to check counting skills.
25. The overall quality of teaching of eight to eleven year olds is good. The teaching of eight and nine year olds is sometimes very good or even better. The teaching in these lessons is particularly strong because teachers prepare lessons very carefully and give a sharp focus to the learning, have a very good understanding of the subject material, and pass on their own enthusiasm to the children. A good example was seen in a numeracy lesson where a simple exercise in 'counting on' had the children on the edges of their chairs in their keenness to succeed. All pupils make very good progress and learn effectively. Good use is made of skilled support staff in Years 5 and 6, who work closely and effectively with children who have

special educational needs. This happens in whole class sessions, where they encourage answers and give quiet support, and in the high quality instruction that follows in small groups. The children learn more effectively because they concentrate harder, feel they can be successful and are given the detailed help they need to make progress. Books are marked meticulously in all classes and care is taken to show pupils how they can improve as well as giving them praise for work well done. Good use is made of ICT in many sessions, and children use computers as a readily accessible classroom tool. Good examples include the interactive history program used by Years 3 and 4 to further their understanding of ancient Egypt, and the confident use of the Internet in Year 6 to research a project on slipper design. Homework is used effectively in both classes, and extends work in all areas of the curriculum.

26. Teachers are careful to explain the purpose of each lesson to the children. In the best examples, the pupils are as involved as the teachers in assessing progress because they are asked to decide for themselves whether they have met the target set at the beginning of the hour. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall, and the new literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced successfully. Teachers use the materials wisely, plan lessons carefully and make sure that pupils are set work at the correct level. Good opportunities are provided to write at length and in a variety of ways. Literacy skills are put to good use when, for example, looking for historical facts in reference books, taking notes from a CD-ROM, and writing up factual accounts.
27. Teachers in all classes do not always state the standard they expect the children to achieve clearly enough. This concern was also noted during the previous inspection. Pupils know what they have to do, but have little idea how well they are expected to do it. As a result, they often complete tasks at an average rather than high level, and do not strive hard enough to produce work of quality. This is reflected in the effort they make, their levels of concentration, the quality of their vocabulary, the accuracy of their spelling and use of grammar, the amount of work they actually produce and the standard of the handwriting. In contrast, where the teacher is specific and says, as was seen in a Year 5 and 6 lesson on play writing, exactly what is required and insists on a high standard, there is a noticeable improvement in standards. Art and design skills are not taught consistently from class to class and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their musical skills.
28. The overall quality of learning is satisfactory. The youngest pupils do not have an appropriate external area or equipment to use to meet the expected standards set out as the nationally agreed early learning goals for social and physical development, and their progress is restricted. Seven year old pupils, especially boys, are learning more slowly despite their teacher's best efforts. They find it hard to concentrate for long periods and some of the work, in drawing for example, is immature. Progress is slow in Year 2, but is stronger in Year 1. The quality of learning is also satisfactory in the older classes. The overall quality of learning is not as high as the quality of teaching of ten to eleven olds for a number of reasons. Many of the oldest pupils are reluctant to shine. This was seen, for example, when they were asked to read to an inspector during the inspection. It was made clear by the teacher that this was an opportunity to use expression and show what they could do. The approach by all pupils, except one boy, was casual and while they read accurately, they did not make the best use of the opportunity. Although pupils settle to work when asked, many are content to produce work of an average standard. This is even seen in lessons when the teacher has done everything she can to produce work of quality but there is still a reluctance to make a special effort. In contrast, pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 respond positively to the high quality teaching and make much better progress. The quality of their learning is often good and many are achieving, in English in Year 5 for example, above average standards.

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

29. The overall quality and range of the planned learning opportunities for children under five is satisfactory. The teacher provides children with a caring environment and daily routines have been firmly established. An appropriate curriculum is planned to meet the recommended early learning goals for children of this age, but there are limited opportunities for children's physical and creative development. The curriculum gives suitable support to the children's intellectual and social development. However, the lack of an appropriate outside play area, and the limited hall space, does not give children enough room to extend their physical development. They have no opportunities, for example, to ride large wheeled toys. In practice, the breadth and balance of the whole foundation stage curriculum is unsatisfactory as the wide age range within the one classroom sometimes results in reception children being inappropriately involved in Year 1 and 2 work. For much of the time, the youngest children are working separately with the nursery nurse, and the implementation of the planned curriculum has to rely on her, rather than on direct teacher involvement.
30. The overall quality and range of the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, and is generally well planned. However, the time allocated to science activities is below the national average for this age range and has an effect upon overall quality of attainment in the subject. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are taught, from necessity, alongside reception age children. This makes it difficult for the teacher to constantly match work to such a wide age and ability range. There is a broad range of worthwhile, carefully planned and relevant activities for eight to eleven year old pupils. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced successfully across the school and are now securely and effectively in place.
31. The school meets all the statutory requirements relating to the National Curriculum. Curricular planning has improved since the last inspection. There is now a whole school curriculum statement, and policies for each subject have been reviewed or rewritten. Whilst much of the work in the school is taught through a topic approach, with many subjects being introduced in a cross-curricular way, there is an appropriate emphasis on pupils learning the basic skills in English and mathematics. Science is taught partly through topics and partly as a separate subject. The new national schemes of work are used effectively as the framework for medium-term planning and to underpin classroom practice. It is too soon for the implementation of the new policies and planning to have had a full impact on raising standards. This is particularly noticeable in art and music.
32. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The lesson planning in all classes makes sure that group work, in particular, is pitched at the correct level for each set of pupils. Children with special educational needs are supported very effectively in whole class sessions, especially in the older classes, by expert support staff. They encourage the children to take a full part in lessons, and work with them when they set about their own tasks. Individual education plans are appropriate to the needs of the pupils concerned.
33. Although some parents feel that the provision for extra curricular activities could be improved, the inspection team judged that is good for the size of school. There is an appropriate number of clubs, although these are mainly of a sporting nature. The school recognises the need to extend the range and plans to start recorder tuition in the near future. A positive aspect is the wide variety of school visits made by the pupils to places in the locality, such as the local church, and to others further afield such as the Perlethorpe Outdoor Environmental Centre. The journey to study aspects of ancient Egyptian and Greek life at the British Museum in

London has made a particular impression on the pupils involved. These visits do much to enrich areas of the school curriculum being covered during lesson time. The school also benefits from visitors to the school such as the 'light trailer', which was hired for a week, and the expert teaching that led to an enjoyable and informative Asian Music Day. There is appropriate involvement in competitive events, including a local annual swimming gala and a neighbourhood football league.

34. The school is committed to providing equality of access to the curriculum and does this very successfully. Teachers work hard to provide work matched to the range of ability within a class. No child is precluded from going on an educational visit or having instrumental tuition, due to an inability to pay. There are good planned and informal opportunities for personal and social education. Pupils are encouraged in classes, and as individuals, to discuss their feelings and their relationships with others. Issues relating to a healthy way of life are dealt with through the science curriculum. The school nurse leads a carefully planned sex education programme, and governors and parents are fully informed about the content prior to implementation. There is an appropriate drugs awareness programme. There are strong links with the local community, particularly the church situated beside the school. Pupils gain a sense of belonging to the village and its surrounding area.
35. The school has good links with the main secondary school to which its pupils transfer. There has been a successful exchange of ideas about the way numeracy is taught in primary schools. Information about pupils with special educational needs is shared and passed on carefully, ensuring that their support is largely uninterrupted. The headteacher, in particular, has very strong links with colleagues in the other small schools in the area and values this support immensely. More able pupils have been able to attend afternoon sessions with their counterparts, taking part in challenging extension activities together. This is a particular strength of the school.
36. The school makes good overall provision for the pupils' personal development. Suitable opportunities are provided in assemblies, religious education lessons and visits to the church, for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. Planned opportunities for pupils to develop a spiritual awareness are less frequent in other areas of the curriculum. The school recognises the need to develop the pupils' awe and wonder in the world around them and is planning accordingly.
37. Teachers frequently emphasise the importance of considerate behaviour in their lessons and in their discussions with individual and groups of pupils. They provide good role models for pupils, to whom they invariably show care, kindness and courtesy. The pupils' response, and their good behaviour around the school, shows that the great majority has a clear sense of right and wrong.
38. The provision for social development is good. Pupils generally relate well to each other and often work well in pairs and in groups. The teachers encourage their pupils to behave responsibly and the great majority responds well. The older pupils are asked to undertake specific tasks, for instance collecting the registers each morning and giving out, and collecting in, hymn books at assemblies. Most pupils work responsibly and without direct supervision in literacy and numeracy lessons when the teacher is with another group. They are aware of the needs of others and take part in raising funds for national charities and filling shoeboxes with presents for less fortunate children abroad.

39. Provision for cultural development is good. This includes the teaching in art, music, history and participation in extra-curricular activities such as the school Christmas production. Christian religious festivals are strongly emphasised, as one would expect in a church school, and there is an appropriate recognition of those celebrated by other faiths. During the inspection there was an extensive display about Judaism, well illustrated by photographs and a wide range of interesting artefacts. The pupils learn about their own rich heritage and history as well as the culture of other ancient civilisations such as the Egyptians and Greeks. Their knowledge and contacts with non-European cultures are more limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Teachers know their pupils well. The welfare and guidance of each individual pupil is their prime concern. Pupils respond with higher levels of work when behaviour is well managed. The school continues to show the level of genuine concern for the well being of children noted in the previous inspection report. The code of discipline has been introduced and training has been extended to all who are responsible for improving standards of behaviour. Parents find it easy to approach teachers with any concern they might have about their children's progress or welfare. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development are good. The routine for introducing children into the reception year is well thought out. All new parents receive a home visit and the nursery nurse gives them extra attention to make sure the children settle to school life quickly and easily. Extra attention is also given to those pupils who may be making less progress than expected. Parents of those pupils are involved immediately.
41. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are very good. Parents co-operate with the school's aims to promote regular attendance and they account for almost all absences. The Education Welfare Officer visits on a regular basis. There are no current concerns about attendance.
42. Procedures for monitoring discipline and behaviour are satisfactory. The behaviour policy, which has suitable aims, offers guidelines on what to do if there is a serious breakdown of discipline. The staff, including midday supervisors, work hard to implement the code. Extra training has been given where it has been thought necessary. There are a few challenging pupils and teachers are becoming increasingly skilled in managing their behaviour. A good example was seen when a Year 2 pupil was made to behave properly with a smile, rather than a negative confrontation. When necessary, staff will take a very firm stand and make it very clear that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated.
43. There are very few reported instances of bullying or oppressive behaviour. Procedures for monitoring such behaviour are good. Pupils are encouraged to resolve their differences themselves through the Playground Peacemaker scheme. This has been successful in developing pupils' conflict resolution skills. When pupils' play becomes too rough, teachers are quick to point out the harm that has been done, and insist on reconciliation and apologies.
44. Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well-being and safety are good. The health and safety policy is thorough and includes the risk assessment of all main areas and activities. Staff and governors carry out routine checks of the premises and equipment, and defects are dealt with correctly. All staff, including midday supervisors and those new to the school, are fully aware of child protection procedures and the need for discretion. Great care is taken on visits away from school.

45. Pupils' personal and health education is covered in a well-devised programme, which includes sex education and drugs awareness. Parents are fully informed of the programme, particularly where sensitive treatment is appropriate. Outside speakers include the police and the school nurse who provide specialist teaching and develop pupils' social skills as they discuss matters of health and safety with visiting adults. The school organises interesting visits and expeditions to increase their knowledge of the outside world.
46. There has been considerable improvement in the management and use of assessment since the previous inspection. Procedures are good and start prior to a child's entry to school, when parents are involved in filling in a useful booklet that lets the school know what the child can, or cannot, do. This is followed by baseline assessment soon after each child starts school. The curriculum for the youngest children is based on the outcomes and is carefully planned to meet their individual needs. Parents receive good, informative reports on all National Curriculum subjects at the end of each year. Clear written comments are given about each pupil's academic progress and personal development and individual targets are set for improvement. There are insufficient reminders, such as a page stuck into the beginning of a pupil's book, to remind them of their targets on a regular basis. Assessment of the needs of pupils with special educational needs is very well organised within the federation of local schools.
47. The school places a strong emphasis on the use of assessment data to look for trends of achievement over the years, so that steps can be taken to raise future overall standards. The way in which girls do better than boys has been identified as a priority for improvement. Realistic and challenging performance targets are set for national test results in English and mathematics at the age of seven and eleven. A start has been made on tracking each pupil's progress through the school, but this has not yet been fully developed. The staff have recognised the importance of reviewing samples of work together in order to establish common standards and agreement on the National Curriculum levels of achievement.
48. The introduction of the numeracy and literacy strategies has been monitored and evaluated effectively, and classroom organisation and delivery has been adjusted in the light of findings. The teachers alter their short-term planning sensibly to take account of areas where there is the need for revision or consolidation, before moving onto the next aspect in a subject.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The school works well in partnership with parents. Sturton is a close-knit community and parents are keen to see the school thrive. They are very satisfied with the teaching, feel that teachers' expectations of work are high and that their children make good progress. They also recognise that the school is well led and managed, and that it encourages children to become mature and responsible.
50. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. The school's prospectus is interesting, informative and professionally produced. The governors' annual report is brief but to the point, and contains all the required information. Letters to parents from the school and the Parents Teachers and Friends Association [PTFA] are informative and written in friendly language. The annual reports to parents on their children's progress are personal and say what pupils know and can do. Parents find them very helpful. Teachers work closely with parents in discussing their children's targets, which are reviewed at regular intervals. Parents meetings are well attended. Parents find it easy to talk with teachers and the headteacher if they have a concern. The white board outside the main entrance door is a quick and effective way of reminding parents of immediate issues.

51. The PTFA gives valuable support to the school, helping with its organisation and raising valuable funds for its use. The provision of the climbing frame in the school hall is a good example of how parents have helped the school to strengthen curriculum provision. Parents volunteer their help when they can, and the children benefit from the help of the regular volunteers who help with reading and the swimming programme. All parents receive a home visit before their children join the school, which is appreciated by new parents. Pupils' reading diaries provide a good home-school link, especially among younger children. The school takes parents' suggestions seriously. Their request for a larger notice board and a basic computer course has been actioned. The school has continued to keep parents very well informed since the last inspection. The majority of parents are interested in their children's progress and help to make a real contribution to their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The overall leadership and management of the school is good. The headteacher has a very clear vision that ensures a strong educational direction for the school. It is shared and strongly supported by staff and governors. The headteacher manages the overload caused by her dual teaching and headteacher commitments very effectively, and has addressed the concerns about this in the previous report successfully. Her care for all staff and children, and her energy and enthusiasm, make her the mainspring of the school. The co-ordinators are well organised and have taken on extra tasks responsibly since the last inspection. The governors are very supportive. They are well-informed about what is happening in the school and know its strengths and weaknesses. The local Vicar, acting as chairman during his colleague's temporary convalescence after an operation, works closely with the school and his regular visits are particularly welcomed. The school's aims with regard to establishing good relationships and an equality of opportunity are well met. However, its commitment to high expectations of attainment is not yet fully achieved. The governing body is very effective in fulfilling all its statutory duties.
53. The headteacher, the staff in their multiple subject co-ordination roles, and the governors are all very profitably involved in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in classrooms. The school has focused successfully on improving this aspect since the last inspection. Professional and frank discussions take place, together with sensitive and helpful feedback on a formal basis. Strengths are celebrated and areas for improvement worked upon very effectively as a team. The formal appraisal of teaching staff, apart from the headteacher, is presently in abeyance. A new strategy will be put in place as soon as the appropriate training for performance management has been undertaken. In the meantime, good counselling by the headteacher, both on a professional and personal footing, takes place within an atmosphere of mutual respect.
54. Governors and teachers work well together to agree and establish appropriate future priorities for development. These are extensive, but are broken down into manageable, clearly defined targets within the school development plan. They specify the lead person responsible, the cost and resources needed and the timescale for completion. The criteria set for monitoring whether or not the targets have been successfully completed are not always sufficiently focused on measurable improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. It is a good working document for the present year, and progress toward its achievement is monitored carefully. There is also a clearly written overview, predicting the on-going needs and status of the school over the next four years. It allows the staff and governors to plan strategically for the future. The school has recognised that the current arrangement, in which children in the

foundation stage and all pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught together by one teacher, creates many difficulties. The governors have made strong representations about this to the local authority. Overall, there is a strong, shared commitment to improvement and, through this, an undoubted capacity and determination to succeed as a team.

55. The management of provision by the special educational needs co-ordinator is good. The school makes best use of specific funding for special needs by working as part of the federation of local schools. Individual education plans are up to date and contain appropriate targets for improvement. Parents have regular opportunities to review and discuss their children's progress.
56. The staff are all experienced and best use has been made of their professional qualifications in order to meet the full demands of the curriculum. Arrangements for professional development are good, and full advantage is taken of opportunities to learn alongside colleagues from within the federation of local schools. The level of staffing is appropriate to the overall number of pupils, but not to the very wide range of age and ability in the class for pupils aged 4-7. The nursery nurse is responsible, under the guidance of the class teacher, for most of the work done by reception-aged children. The quality of the support staff is particularly good, and they make a very positive impact on the learning of the children with whom they work. The staff handbook is clear and well organised, and provides a helpful introduction to school routines and policies.
57. The school buildings are used to their full potential, and are clean and well maintained, but have several shortcomings. The hall is too small for the delivery of a full physical education [PE] programme, especially for older pupils. It is also used for dining, assemblies and music, and as an additional teaching and storage area. The tables and other resources that are usually stored in the hall have to be moved out when it is used for PE. The small external courtyard does not meet the requirements for the physical development of children in the Foundation Stage. It is an uninteresting area and contains terraced steps that limit its use. The school is actively looking for ways in which the courtyard can be improved but it is far too small to be developed as an area where children can ride wheeled toys. The classrooms for older pupils are appropriate for current requirements but would become unacceptably crowded if the numbers of pupils in any class rose close to the national average. The conservation area is a very useful facility and full use is made of its potential.
58. Classroom resources are appropriate and are used efficiently. There is a small library with an appropriate book stock, but pupils did not use it during the inspection. This was also noted at the time of the previous inspection. Good use is made of computers in all classrooms and in all areas of the curriculum.
59. Educational priorities are well supported through the school's financial planning. The budget is allocated very carefully, and is closely checked by the headteacher and governing body. Appropriate steps are taken to make sure that all grants and subsidies are used to the best advantage for their designated purposes. Good use is made of new technology to support the work of the school. The headteacher and governing body have good routines to make sure that the school applies the principles of best value. Governors monitor the preparation and administration of the school development plan closely. The school secretary manages the office very efficiently, and provides high quality financial and professional support. Auditors'

recommendations have been implemented. The school is effective and, despite the high unit costs inevitable in a small school, gives sound value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The headteacher, governing body and staff should continue to work closely together to:-

1. Raise standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of both key stages, particularly among boys, by:-

- Setting pupils' individual termly or half termly targets for literacy and numeracy earlier in the academic year, and devising ways through which the pupils are constantly reminded of the importance of their achievement.
[Paragraphs 7 and 73]
- Extending the opportunities for ten and eleven year old pupils to develop their reading skills and enthusiasm for reading.
[Paragraphs 5, 46, 47 and 78]
- Raising the expectation of what pupils can achieve in mathematics by the age of seven.
[Paragraphs 10, 82 and 85]
- Increasing the range and quality of scientific recording by seven year olds; matching their work more closely to the National Curriculum attainment targets; and increasing the amount of time they have for science lessons.
[Paragraphs 13, 30, 87, 88 and 91]

2. Raise levels of pupil and teacher expectation to the height of the best in all areas of work by:-

- Insisting that work is well presented, and making sure that pupils transfer the skills they demonstrate in handwriting and spelling sessions to their general work.
[Paragraphs 75 and 86]
- Stating the standard required of each pupil or group in every activity, and including a quality standard in each learning objective where possible.
[Paragraphs 27, 78 and 85]
- Including a quality standard in individual pupil targets, and making sure that they are specific, measurable, and realistic.
[Paragraphs 5 and 78]
- Increasing pupils' pride in their own achievements.
[Paragraphs 18, 28 and 79]

3. Review the way in which teaching and learning are organised for the youngest children, in further consultation with the local authority, so that:-

- There are appropriate levels of staffing and accommodation for children under five.
[Paragraphs 23, 56 and 60]
- Younger children have a more suitable and exciting outside area in which to develop their social, communication, language and physical skills.
[Paragraphs 28, 29, 57 and 67]
- Reception aged children are not included in activities planned for older pupils.
 - [Paragraphs 23, 29, 61, 64, 65 and 69]
- The role play area contains a wider range of settings for the structured development of language and social skills.
[Paragraph 63]
- The class teacher can spend more time teaching the reception aged children as a separate group.
[Paragraphs 23 and 61]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	11	39	44	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

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	55
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8

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	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	3	6	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	7	7	7
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78	78	78
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	1	0	2
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	7	6	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78	67	89
	National	82	86	87

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	1999	4	4	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	4
	Girls	4	4	3
	Total	7	7	7
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88	88	88
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	4
	Girls	4	4	3
	Total	7	7	7
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88	88	88
	National	68	69	75

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	55
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	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.7
Average class size	18.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37

Financial information

Financial year	199/2000
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	£
Total income	152709
Total expenditure	149784
Expenditure per pupil	2416
Balance brought forward from previous year	24264

Balance carried forward to next year	27189
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Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	55
Number of questionnaires returned	27

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	26	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	33	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	26	0	7	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	22	19	7	0
The teaching is good.	78	19	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	30	15	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	7	0	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	15	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	59	22	19	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	74	11	15	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	19	0	0	11
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	70	22	0	7	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

60. At the time of the inspection there were six children in the reception group, two of whom attend part-time. Few have any pre-school experience. They are taught by the same teacher and in the same classroom as all the five, six and seven year old pupils in the school. This results in a wider than normal range of ability and social maturity in one classroom.
61. Children's overall attainment on entry is below that expected for their age, and is not as high as that noted in the previous report. Achievement of the early learning goals by the age of five is below the national expectation. The work is appropriate and well-planned, and covers all the nationally specified learning goals. The presence of older pupils in the same class means that two parallel teaching programmes have to be taught at the same time. Some joint activities meet the needs of all the pupils but, on other occasions, the younger children get left behind and become bored. The children are well supported by a nursery nurse, whose work is of a high standard. Teamwork between the teacher and nursery nurse is very good. Activities are planned together carefully, but there are very limited opportunities for the children to be taught directly as a group on their own by the teacher herself. The children's progress is thoroughly assessed and alterations are made to future planning to take account of how well they are doing.
62. Children's personal and social development is satisfactory. Few have had any pre-school experience and some arrive with very under-developed social skills. The good induction procedures, whereby the teacher visits each child in their own home before they start school, encourages a confident attitude to school from the beginning. Children quickly acquire a good understanding of classroom routines and make friendly relationships with the staff and with each other. They learn to take turns and share equipment. Most can maintain attention and concentrate when appropriate activities are provided. A few find it difficult to work on their own, or opt out when not the direct focus of adult attention. The adults in the class are good role models for the children and, together with an insistence on mutual respect, promote high standards. The quality of teaching is good.
63. Children's overall communication, language and literacy development is not as advanced as is usual for their age, and they are unlikely to reach the expected goals by the time they are five. There are many opportunities for them to improve their listening and speaking skills. Progress is satisfactory, rather than the good noted in the previous report. A "sharing" time at the beginning of the day is a useful opportunity for all pupils to bring in birthday presents and talk about them. The under-five children listen carefully to their contributions and make comments of their own. They sit quietly in assembly times, and like talking about what they are doing in a range of activities such as sand play and painting. The role play corner, which is very suitable for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 to use as a ward in Florence Nightingale's Scutari hospital, does not provide right sort of opportunities for the younger children to play out their own ideas in a situation well-known to them. They rise to the opportunity to perform, as in the enactment of the "Billy Goats Gruff" story, in which they took part enthusiastically.
64. Many children start school with very poor early writing skills and develop these satisfactorily. Some are beginning to draw recognisable letters. They have appropriate opportunities to practise independent writing skills using large felt tipped pens, and to make writing patterns using chalk and paint. They enjoy stories and listen happily, and try hard to follow the work of

the older children in the joint sessions at the beginning of the literacy hour. They understand that print carries meaning, and that a text reads from top to bottom. Books are fun and they enjoy looking at them with the nursery nurse. A very good example was seen when they joined her in the story of 'Ten in a bed,' and sang and counted happily as they acted out the story with a set of toys. They lose interest and 'switch off' if they are included in shared reading activities planned for the older pupils. This wastes their time and limits their progress. The teaching in this area is, overall, satisfactory. The nursery nurse is particularly adept at asking probing questions and eliciting sensible answers and ideas. Her effective intervention is important to the children's language development.

65. Current attainment in mathematics is less than that expected of children of this age and they are unlikely to achieve national goals by the time they are five. However, they make satisfactory progress from a low start point in their development of number concepts. They are beginning to recognise a sequence when threading beads and most can name colours such as red, yellow, green and blue without help. They know their numbers up to ten and enjoy taking part in counting rhymes and listening to a taped recording. They use the computer confidently to practise counting and some are beginning to understand "adding on" and "taking away." They use the sand tray to find, sort and count objects, and one at least can identify a group of five without having to count each individual item. The children's involvement in the mental starter to the whole class numeracy hour is not so productive, as many of the number operations are too difficult for them to understand and they begin to lose interest. Otherwise, appropriate activities are well planned. The teaching in this aspect is satisfactory with good support given by the nursery nurse.
66. Children make limited progress in the development of their knowledge and understanding of the world because there are not enough opportunities for the teacher herself to work with them on their own and give them the depth of experience they need. They are unlikely to reach the expected goals by the time they are five. They use construction equipment to build models and have regular opportunities to play with sand and water. They enjoy feeling and talking about different objects, offering a variety of good descriptive words such as 'squashy', 'spiky' or 'sparkly'. Although they know about bonfire night and have heard of Guy Fawkes, they are not very clear about who he was and why people have fireworks. However, they enjoy making their own rockets out of cardboard tubes and strips of paper. Some did this with little adult support. In this way they learn about joining methods and materials. The older pupils' work on Florence Nightingale is rather beyond them and more appropriate activities, for instance based on appropriate artefacts such as toys, are not available. Overall, the teaching in this aspect is satisfactory and, again, much of the good work observed was undertaken with the expert support of the nursery nurse.
67. The children make unsatisfactory progress in the development of their physical skills and are unlikely to reach the expected goals by the time they are five. Opportunities for the children's physical development are unsatisfactory, not because of the quality of teaching, but due to the lack of appropriate accommodation. The hall is small and has to be cleared of other equipment, including tables and chairs, before a PE lesson can take place. The internal courtyard is rather dreary and under-used. It does not provide sufficient space for appropriate physical activities to take place. There is no secure, outside area for children of this age range. They cannot move out of their classroom and develop their physical skills using an appropriate range of play apparatus, including wheeled toys. The teacher makes sure that some physical development takes place when, together with all the pupils in the class, she takes the children into the playground and practises throwing and catching a range of objects such as bean bags and large balls, or in the gymnastic lessons with the older pupils in the class. Other activities in the

classroom are designed to improve the children's manual control of simple equipment such as scissors. Given the unsatisfactory circumstances, the teaching in this aspect is satisfactory.

68. The children make limited progress in the development of their creative skills and are unlikely to reach the expected goals by the time they are five. Many start school with hardly any drawing skills and do not develop these satisfactorily. Some have had little prior experience of using simple tools and several find it difficult to use scissors. They are developing a knowledge of the primary colours, although one or two are still unsure. They enjoy painting on an easel, but usually do so on their own without any intervention from an adult. Children make less progress than they could because they do not have enough direct teaching from the teacher to show them how they can improve their skills and techniques. There is a lack of stimulation and variety in the way some experiences and resources are presented.
69. Singing is used appropriately to make counting more enjoyable. However, no other music activities are included in the weekly planning. The youngest children find it difficult to participate in assemblies, as the words printed in the hymnbook are incomprehensible to them. The presence of the older pupils, intent on their work, makes it difficult for the youngest children to have free investigative access to musical instruments during the school day. There are not sufficient opportunities to listen to pieces of music and express their feelings about these. The quality of teaching of creative development is unsatisfactory overall because of the lack of direct skills teaching by the teacher and insufficient planned opportunities for music. This is affecting the levels of attainment made by older pupils throughout the school.

ENGLISH

70. Standards in English are below the expected levels for seven year olds but are in line with the national average by the age of eleven. The number of children in each year group is very small and it is not possible to make useful comparisons with results in other schools. Current standards are similar to those reported for Year 6 in the previous inspection, but are not as high as those seen in Year 2. Girls have achieved better results than boys for a number of years. The school has been monitoring this carefully and has taken several steps, buying fiction books that will appeal particularly to boys for example, in order to raise standards.
71. Standards of speaking and listening amongst seven year olds are not as high as those found in many schools. Six and seven year old children listen carefully to their teacher and enjoy talking about their work, but find it difficult to explain their ideas in any detail. The words often rush out rather than being a connected sequence. An example was seen when seven year olds talked about Florence Nightingale. It was clear that they recalled important events in her life but they had great difficulty in explaining exactly what had happened and why her work in the hospital had been so important. Good teaching in Years 3 and 4 encourages pupils to use words more accurately and to think more deeply before answering. By the time they are eleven, pupils have grown in confidence, talk maturely about a wide range of subjects and have standards that match national expectations.
72. Many of the current group of seven year olds find reading difficult and are not reaching expected standards. The better readers are hesitant, but try hard. They read familiar text more confidently, and remember the difficult words, "jealous" for example, that they have met before. Some are careless and will use an incorrect word, and keep going, even when what they are saying doesn't make sense. They find it hard to read a text they have not seen before, even when it is at the same level of difficulty. They have little understanding of the

difference between fiction and non-fiction, and find it difficult to express an opinion about the story or book they are reading. Many read at home. Their reading diaries show that parents take a keen interest in their progress and are very supportive. The teacher's own comments often say how well the pupil is doing and where further help is needed.

73. Pupils make good progress and most eleven year olds are reading fiction and non-fiction texts at the standard expected for their age. They have a basic understanding of phonics and know how to approach unfamiliar text, the word "icicle" for example. They include appropriate expression, especially in dialogue. They know how to find their way round reference books, but have difficulty in finding passages in stories that illustrate why one character is kind and helpful, or another is mean and dangerous. They write intelligently about their books in their reading journals. Most talk positively about reading but the enthusiasm and relish is not as strong as is found in many eleven year olds. None are selecting really demanding text because they are excited by the content. Only one pupil read and talked about his book with such pleasure that one sensed in a joy in reading. In contrast, they read their own plays aloud with considerable animation.
74. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2. All classes have their literacy lessons at the same time and the most able seven year old is taught alongside pupils in Years 3 and 4. This is a correct decision as it allows her to make better progress and gives the Year 2 teacher more time to concentrate on those who need more help. Many of the remaining seven year olds have always had great difficulty with writing, and this is reflected in their current standards. They find it hard to develop an idea through a series of sentences and are not confident enough in the use of full stops and capital letters. Their choice of words is limited and is closely linked with their relative lack of achievement in reading. They are beginning to spell simple words correctly but their spelling is not up to the expected standard. Their handwriting is often immature. Girls are achieving better results than boys. Pupils' writing in other subjects, in history and science for example, is very limited, as they do not have the skills to put the thoughts they have in their heads down as a series of linked sentences.
75. Progress is good in Years 3 and 4, and nine year olds are reaching expected standards. Attainment is even better in Year 5 where several ten year olds are achieving above average levels, their books showing considerable progress over the past eighteen months. Eleven year olds are working at levels that are in line with national averages. Their progress has also been good over the past year, but is sound overall as they were reaching broadly average levels when they were seven years old. Most of the group can write a lively text and develop their ideas in an interesting way. The writing is properly organised, and higher attaining pupils use complex sentences and set out their work correctly in paragraphs. Books contain examples of adventurous vocabulary that enliven the writing and make the reader want to find out more. Spelling is not as accurate as it should be. All pupils have regular handwriting practice. They write in a fluent, joined and legible hand in their practice books but seldom at the same standard in their everyday writing. This concern was also noted at the time of the previous inspection.
76. The overall standard of teaching across the school is good and has improved since the previous inspection. Lessons are consistently well planned. The staff have a very good understanding of the strengths of the national literacy strategy and use its framework effectively to give pace and variety to their lessons. They make good use of large texts as was seen in Year 2 when the children were stimulated by the richness of vocabulary in a poem

about bonfire night. Years 5 and 6 used the 'big book' format to study play writing. Their learning was good because the pupils had a clear model to follow, the teacher's instructions were explicit, and they knew exactly what they had to do to complete their tasks. Teachers in all classes use questioning effectively in order to encourage pupils to give more detailed answers and put their thoughts into words. In the best examples, teachers are patient and give each child enough time to marshal their thoughts, and the confidence to express their ideas. Learning is good because the children are challenged intellectually, and have the chance to test their ideas and conclusions with the teacher and the rest of the class. Basic skills are well taught, either to the whole class or in smaller groups. All books are marked carefully, and often contain very helpful suggestions for improvement as well as a judgement of how well the work has been done. Homework is set at appropriate levels and helps the pupils consolidate and develop what they have learned in lessons. A good example was seen in Years 5 and 6 when homework on adverbs was linked to class work describing how characters should speak in a play.

77. Very good use is made of the support staff who work with pupils who have learning difficulties. They give quiet encouragement in whole class sessions, and carefully focused instruction in the group work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in these circumstances. Their individual education plans are clear and place an appropriate emphasis on the development of spoken and written language. They are encouraged to take a full part in all lessons.
78. Teaching is less strong when there is insufficient emphasis on high quality. In one lesson the children read the 'big book' text aloud together but with little expression. The teacher did not pick this up and an important opportunity for improvement was missed. Teachers are skilled in setting group tasks at the correct level of difficulty but often do not make it clear what standard they require. As a result the pupils set their own standard. The task will be completed but usually at an average rather than higher level. On another occasion younger children were all reading with the teacher but were on different pages. Learning was not effective as she was trying to monitor several pupils at the same time, and had to concentrate on reading difficulties instead of developing the quality of the reading or extending their vocabulary through a discussion about any new words. Individual target setting is a good feature in all classes because it helps pupils to know what they need to do to improve. This term's targets have not yet been set and an important opportunity for development has been delayed.
79. The previous report included concern about behaviour in English lessons. Standards are now much higher and teachers are skilled in managing the occasional challenging behaviour should it occur. Pupils have generally good attitudes but many eleven year olds are satisfied too easily with average results. This is more evident among the boys than the girls. Boys appear to know as many of the answers to questions in lessons as the girls but are reluctant to put up their hands. Occasionally they call out, and disturb the flow of the lesson.
80. The co-ordinator works hard to support teaching and learning in English. She has attended several courses and makes sure that the ideas are discussed on her return. She is involved in several County working parties on language, and thinks deeply about her work. Management concerns from the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. There is now a clear policy for language. The headteacher and co-ordinator have monitored the work in literacy in every class and are developing an appropriate series of deeper areas of focus starting with writing.

MATHEMATICS

81. Most seven year olds are achieving standards that are below average and are not as good as those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Eleven year olds are reaching standards that are in line with the national average, and have maintained the levels seen at the time of the original report. The very small size of the groups has to be taken into consideration, as the achievement of one or two pupils can change the overall picture quite dramatically. The number of children entered in the end of key stage tests is too small to make valid comparisons either with national standards or those in similar schools. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls at the age of seven, but girls did much better than boys at the age of eleven. The school feels that these results reflect the poor attitude of some of the boys who have now left and is working hard to make future improvements.
82. Most Year 1 and Year 2 pupils make steady progress in their learning. However, with such a wide range of age and ability within one classroom, it is difficult for the teacher to meet all the pupils' individual needs in full. One more able girl works alongside pupils in Class 2. Her attainment is above the national average and progress is good. The older pupils in Class 1 learn to add numbers together to make 20. The teacher focuses on the need to reinforce quick mental recall of number effectively as part of the numeracy programme, and does this by counting on, and backwards, in 5s and 10s, with pupils around her in a half-circle. A dice is rolled and the teacher asks individual children questions based on the number shown. These are geared to the ability of each pupil. Sometimes the more able older pupils become bored. Seven year old pupils are developing a clearer understanding of the value of coins up to the value of 10p and apply this knowledge to working out shopping values. The pupils make non-standard measurements with cubes and can tell the time at the hour and half-hour. Their classification of shapes consists of deciding whether each will roll, slide or build. Several pupils write their figures round the wrong way.
83. Eight to eleven year old pupils make at least good progress. Support staff are effectively employed in supporting pupils with special educational needs, and help them to make good progress in relation to their ability. In one lesson for eight and nine year olds the fun, pace and excitement engendered by excellent teaching ensured that pupils made very good progress both in their mental recall of counting in 3s and 4s, and also in their follow up group work on multiplication facts. By Year 4 pupils have a basic awareness of place value and know how to express this in written form. They are able to work successfully to scale, converting metres to centimetres. Most have a basic understanding of some of the formal language of mathematics. For instance they write correctly about vertices, and regular and irregular shapes.
84. Good progress is made in Years 5 and 6. Numeracy lessons start with appropriate mental exercises. Number work is extended to include the introduction of fractions, percentages and decimals. The pupils show a good understanding of the properties of different triangles and can identify their lines of symmetry. Most are developing effective strategies to make it easier to add several large numbers together and can round numbers up to, say, the nearest 100. The pupils' subject specific vocabulary is developing well and they are beginning to use mathematical symbols such as 'greater than'.
85. The quality of teaching of six and seven year olds is satisfactory. The nursery nurse is employed well in supporting both classwork and the activities designed for the reception children. This allows the teacher to focus on the older pupils in the same classroom. The teacher does not always make clear to pupils what she expects them to achieve by the end of the lesson, and the pace of some work is occasionally slow. As a result, pupils waste time or

do not complete enough work in the time allowed. The quality of teaching of older pupils is always good and is sometimes better. Good strategies, such as holding up a bunch of card bananas to show their answers, keep all pupils involved and interested during mental arithmetic sessions. Eight and nine year olds were taught with a cracking pace throughout the lesson and good use was made of an interactive ICT program to strengthen pupils' confidence. All the teachers have a secure basic knowledge of the subject and make regular use of correct subject specific words. As a result, the pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematical terms is extended. The numeracy strategy has been successfully planned and implemented in both key stages. Long and medium term planning is generally good. Most of the attainment targets are well covered, but there is little evidence of the use of data handling. The links with ICT are under-developed, as is the use of numeracy across the whole curriculum.

86. Teachers speak positively to pupils about the progress that they are making and help them to gain in confidence. The quality of marking is good, with words of praise and suggestions that show how work can be improved. Marking is reinforced verbally for the youngest pupils. Presentation is not good enough in all classes. Teachers do not insist enough that younger pupils draw their numbers correctly, older pupils sometimes draw lines without a ruler and key mathematical words are spelt incorrectly. The use of assessment is good and attainable targets are set for each individual child. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully in all classes, and initial or follow up work is matched carefully to their different abilities. The nursery nurse and classroom assistant are well-briefed and play an important role in all lessons in which they are present. Higher attaining pupils in the last term's Year 6 group were able to meet their counterparts from other schools for a challenging mathematical afternoon together. The school hopes to repeat such an activity this year. The co-ordinator was allowed time to monitor teaching and learning in the other classrooms and prepare a formal feedback to each colleague on what she observed. This proved very helpful to all concerned. The subject is well managed by an experienced co-ordinator. Concerns in the previous report about a policy, and monitoring and evaluating the quality of the provision, have been addressed very successfully.

SCIENCE

87. Although there was not enough written work to make a secure judgement, there are clear indications that the quality of work completed by most seven year olds is well below the national expectation for children of this age. This is not as good as at the time of the last report when standards were reported as being in line with national expectations. Pupils' comparative immaturity is shown in their poor recording skills. It is difficult for the teacher to introduce work at an appropriate National Curriculum level due to the wide age and ability range within the class. In addition, the amount of time for lessons is much less than that allocated by most other schools. Year 6 pupils are achieving standards in line with the national average and one or two are reaching higher levels. This judgement is in line with that made in the previous report. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, there are indications that the school's performance was above the national average. Girls tend to do better than boys, partly due to their more positive attitude to work. The school recognises the need to bring the boys' performance in line with the girls and is putting appropriate strategies in place.
88. Seven year old pupils start from a low knowledge baseline and make satisfactory progress. They identify similarities and differences when examining a collection of objects made from different materials, and group these into appropriate categories. Their experimental skills are developing and they are able to carry out simple investigation work with magnets. Some pupils are beginning to make sensible predictions about what will happen and check these against the results. A few are able to make knowledgeable deductions, for instance, that not all metals are

attracted by magnets, and that they will still work through other materials. However, the pupils' early enthusiasm and interest wanes when it comes to recording their work on anything other than the simplest charts.

89. Older pupils make good progress in their acquisition of scientific knowledge and understanding. Years 3 and 4 have built on their understanding of sound by exploring the properties of musical instruments such as a drum and violin. They make good gains in their knowledge to understand how pitch can be made higher or lower by lengthening or shortening pieces of string, and the effect of tension on the notes they produce. Pupils relate this to the way that instruments are strung and make good cross-curricular links with their music lessons. They use ICT to reproduce pictures to illustrate their recording work. The pupils demonstrate particular gains in lessons where they actually experiment for themselves, rather than watch a demonstration by the teacher.
90. Year 5 and 6 pupils have undertaken a substantial amount of scientific work since June and have covered many of the National Curriculum programmes of study successfully and at an appropriate level. They have a good knowledge of the parts of a flower and how microbes quickly grow on rotting or stale material. There is evidence of good progress being made in setting up experiments to find out whether air has a weight and how reversible and irreversible changes can be made to liquids and solids. Pupils are building up and using a wide scientific vocabulary and, when the situation arises, can read off the calibrations on a measuring cylinder. They work particularly well in groups, choosing appropriate equipment from a selection provided by the teacher. Some pupils are so enthusiastic that they ask if they can borrow resources to carry on experimenting at home. Most are keen to undertake scientific activities, but are slow to record results and the quality of their presentation indicates a lack of pride in their work. Many tasks are practical and pupils with special educational needs find it possible to make good progress in relation to their abilities, especially when helped by an additional adult. This was particularly apparent in the Year 5 and 6 lesson on filtration.
91. The teaching of younger pupils is sound. Clear instructions are given and simple task sheets are provided to help children record their work. However, with such a wide age and ability range in the class it is difficult for the teacher to pitch the lessons high enough to meet the needs of the Year 2 pupils and still keep the interest of others. Some pupils across the year groups involved display low levels of concentration and do not record their results appropriately.
92. Teaching is good overall in the older classes. Teachers build on existing knowledge and use questions skilfully to check and extend pupils' understanding. There is a high level of practical work and an appropriate balance across all the attainment targets. The tasks that are selected, for instance the filtration experiment in Years 5 and 6, encourage discussion and involve pupils. This results in a real sense of enthusiasm on the part of pupils and an absence of any of the unsatisfactory attitudes seen in other lessons. The lessons are well presented and well organised, with resources always to hand. Teachers are confident and their level of subject expertise is good. They emphasise the importance of learning and using the correct scientific terminology. The teacher is well aware of health and safety matters, and the pupils' experiments involving growing microbes and yeast were kept well sealed within plastic bags.
93. The subject curriculum relates well to science in everyday life. For example, good links are made to health and sex education. The school's conservation area is well used and provides good opportunities to study wild life, including insects and birds. There are facilities for pond-dipping and the study of different habitats. Cowslips were planted as a touching reminder of

the children who died in the Dunblane tragedy. Parents, staff and children work well together to make further, on-going improvements. The subject is well managed by an experienced co-ordinator. Concerns in the previous report about a policy and co-ordination of the subject have been addressed very successfully.

ART AND DESIGN

94. The overall quality of much of the work completed this term is not as good as that expected nationally, or as reported in the last inspection. Some individual work is good. The recent emphasis on literacy and numeracy, and the effect these strategies have understandably had on the timetable, has resulted in less time for art, and for teaching artistic and design skills in enough depth. There are still areas of expertise, for instance the careful Year 5 and 6 artwork based on the Pommes Vertes painting by Paul Cezanne, and the pictures completed as homework which showed a good early understanding of perspective. These demonstrate a latent standard of achievement that is not currently being fully developed.
95. Many children enter the school with very poor, embryonic drawing skills. They are not given enough focused skills teaching to enable them to improve. However, they use computers confidently to produce their own pictures, for instance of Guy Fawkes on a bonfire, and know how to print these off for themselves. Pupils gain a good understanding of the work of well-known artists. The current, well-presented display in the entrance hall, based on the work of Monet, is a collaborative effort by all three classes. Older pupils have studied Lowry's distinctive style. The beautifully embroidered millennium banner, depicting aspects of school and village life from 1836 to the year 2000, was produced as a joint effort with adults connected with the school.
96. It was not possible to observe any art lessons during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the teaching. The planning is thorough and indicates that good use is made of opportunities for children to learn about other cultures, as when studying patterns in textiles. There is a good subject policy, a concern at the time of the previous inspection, but its intent does not yet sufficiently match practice in the school. For example, the use of sketchbooks in which pupils can record their observational ideas has not been fully developed. The school has recognised the need to give its pupils more time and experience. An art club has been run successfully for many years.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. Standards are in line with national expectation and all pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. Standards have been maintained since the time of the previous report.
98. Six and seven year olds learn about the ways in which pieces of material can be joined. They make sensible choices about what method they will employ, and use thread, glue, staples or masking tape carefully to carry out their intentions successfully. A suitable practical approach ensures that they make appropriate gains in their understanding of the skills and techniques required. All the children make good use of the available construction toys and can talk with enthusiasm about the models they are making. The teaching is sound and many tasks are closely related to the class topic about Joseph and his coat of many colours. A suitable range of equipment and materials is available and, due to the small size of the group involved, the teacher is able to give focused, individual attention to each child. This provides pupils with a good opportunity to talk about what they are doing and why.

99. No lessons were seen in other classes. However, there is evidence from work on display that pupils in Years 3 and 4 are involved in the process of design and that, eventually, purses will be made based on their ideas. A good recording sheet guides pupils through the required steps, including an evaluation of their end results. Ten and eleven year old pupils' written and illustrative work shows that they are giving suitable thought to the design of a number of commercially produced slippers, and are deciding whether these are fit for their purpose. Appropriate mock-ups are made using squared paper. This leads on to pupils drawing, and making up, their own designs. Prior to this they each practise sewing by making a finger puppet to their own plan. There is evidence around the school of appropriate work completed in earlier years, including clay models, fairground rides, and picture frames using triangular strengthening corners. It is not possible to make a judgement about teaching as no lessons were actually seen in classes 2 and 3. Nevertheless, the breadth of these experiences, and the consistent approach observed in planning and work on display, indicates that sound progress is taking place in both.
100. There is a good policy for this subject and this includes explicit guidance on the progressive introduction of skills and techniques. The provision of this whole school framework is an improvement since the last report. Teachers' planning indicates that there is full statutory coverage of the subject. Many aspects of the new national scheme of work are now being incorporated in the school's work and are having a beneficial effect upon standards.

GEOGRAPHY

101. Seven and eleven year old pupils are reaching standards that are in line with national expectations, and are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Seven year old pupils have a good knowledge of their local area, and most can describe their routes home from school using 'left' and 'right' turns, with references to major landmarks. They are also aware of localities beyond their own, and knew, for example, that parts of India, Africa and Australia were very hot and had little rain. They were beginning to use an appropriate vocabulary, talking, for example, about different types of house and roofing. 'Thatch' and 'tile' are used accurately.
102. Eleven year old pupils use maps confidently and can identify the location of Sturton on a map of the United Kingdom. A higher attaining pupil who visits Italy was able to make a detailed comparison of the two countries, comparing climate and terrain accurately. Another pupil was able to describe the features of a town centre using a large scale map, but had greater difficulty when matching an aerial photograph to a map of the same area. All pupils understand the impact that people can have on the environment in terms of pollution and waste. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 were able to explain the water cycle correctly, and had an animated discussion about where it actually started. All were able to find their own classroom on a plan of the school, and plot the location of key features relating to the domestic water supply. Past work includes appropriate links to other subjects, including detailed observation drawings of different tiling patterns on buildings and studies of different locations including a visit to Sherwood Forest.
103. The quality of teaching is sound. The work is well planned and based on the requirements of the National Curriculum. A particular strength in the lesson observed was the teacher's ability to adjust her material and keep the pupils well focused and working hard. An external lesson

had been planned but had to be altered at very short notice when it started to rain heavily. The substitute learning was effective and was treated seriously by the pupils. They walked sensibly round the inside of the school to trace the various pipes. Learning was good among the higher attaining pupils who realised that they would have to invent a key to explain all the data they were collecting on their plans.

104. The subject is soundly led. Appropriate account has been taken of the requirements of the new Curriculum 2000. The co-ordinator has a clear idea for the future development of the subject including more fieldwork and the introduction of a 'skills ladder' so that learning progresses systematically. An important management change since the previous inspection has been the inclusion of geography in every term's work. Pupils make better progress because they do not forget so easily what has gone before. The previous inspection indicated the need for a subject policy and scheme of work. The introduction of Curriculum 2000 has replaced the need for a scheme of work but more work needs to be done to strengthen the policy. Monitoring and evaluation of standards is planned for the future.

HISTORY

105. Standards are in line with national expectations, but are not as high as those reported at the time of the previous inspection. History is important to the school, as can be seen in the past work about the school itself, the lessons, and the high quality planning. However, most of the current group of seven year olds find learning in all subject areas difficult. They are very enthusiastic about history, and have done well to reach levels that match national expectations. As in many other schools, the extra time needed for the introduction of the new literacy strategy has reduced the time for history. Eleven year olds approach their work conscientiously and also achieve nationally expected levels. The school has adapted to the new Curriculum 2000 quickly, and is clearly intending to raise standards.
106. Seven year old pupils have a satisfactory recall of the main events in the life of Florence Nightingale and enjoy acting out some of her experiences in the classroom 'hospital.' They understand the passing of time, and know that a baby developing into a child, and then into an adult, is still the same person. They know that things change and are able to compare aspects of their own lives and experiences with those found in Victorian times. They know a little about other historical figures, Guy Fawkes, for example, and that some famous people are still alive while others lived well in the past and are now dead. Eleven year old pupils have a sound factual knowledge about aspects of the history of Britain and other countries. They are gaining a good understanding of life in ancient Greece, and have compared life in Greece today with former times. Higher attaining pupils have made detailed comparisons between ancient Athens and Sparta and have a basic understanding of the city state system.
107. Pupils in all classes benefit, and learn more effectively, through the use of well planned educational visits and theme days such as the Victorian school day. The recent visit to the British Museum has had a particular impact. Appropriate links are made with other subjects, especially literacy, where pupils can draw on their understanding of character, take notes, and recognise that different people have different points of view. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in lessons and make appropriate progress. A good example was seen in a lesson on the ancient Egyptians where the pupil was so keen to be successful that he worked extra hard to understand the worksheet so that he could complete the task.
108. The overall quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was good. It was particularly strong in the class containing Year 3 and 4 pupils because the teacher had a very secure knowledge of

the subject, taught clearly and directly, summarising the key points on a flip chart, and set different but related challenging tasks to each group. Pupils used a range of information books, a high quality CD-ROM and their own researches from the British Museum to write effectively about the Egyptian approach to the after-life. Learning was confident and purposeful, and many pupils reached a higher standard than that expected for their age.

109. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of the importance of the subject and for its future development. She has produced a helpful policy based on the new Curriculum 2000. It includes a strategy for monitoring standards from September 2002 and includes useful sections on the use of ICT, assessment and questioning skills. The new policy is an important improvement since the time of the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY [ICT]

110. Standards are in line with national expectations. Seven year olds use computers confidently to enter text and use spelling, art and mathematical programs effectively to make progress in other subjects. They understand how to use a mouse and the basic layout of the keyboard. Current standards are not as high as were reported at the time of the previous inspection. Higher attaining pupils use computers at home and one, for example, was able to say how she used the Internet to look up information.
111. Eleven year old pupils understand the basic features of word processing, can enter and correct text, and alter its appearance by changing the type face, font size and colour. They can use the mouse to insert and position graphics into text. They search CD-ROMs for information, knowing how important it is to ask precise questions, and can get information from the Internet by using a search program. They have made good use of various websites to extend their knowledge of the ancient Greeks and find out about slipper design. Some use has been made of e-mail. Higher attaining pupils understand that magnetic strips on shop and credit cards carry information and can explain how libraries and supermarkets use bar coding for different purposes. Pupils do not have enough knowledge of data collection and concerns noted in the previous report about the absence of work in control technology remain.
112. No direct skills teaching was observed during the inspection. However, teachers include the use of computers in many lessons. Good examples were seen in all classes, and included the appropriate use of a CD-ROM about Ancient Egypt in a history lesson. The pupil was able to find which part of the program contained the information she required and made intelligent use of the various options offered to her. Computers are located in all classrooms and are of sufficient numbers for the size of the classes.
113. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well and has written a clear and precise policy. The concerns about this in the previous report have been addressed in full. There is a good development plan that has been annotated to show progress towards its targets. The plan for 2000 is much sharper than its predecessor and indicates an encouraging rigour in the assessment of success. Targets are harder and success is easier to measure. ICT is a school priority for development.

MUSIC

114. The overall standard of music is below expected levels, and is not as good as was previously reported, when the children's singing was said to be broadly in line with national expectations. Eight and nine year old pupils make good progress, but this is not evident in other classes.

During the inspection it was only possible to observe one music lesson. Overall judgements have had to be made on the basis of this, interviews with pupils and the singing heard in assemblies. The quality of singing in the assemblies is unsatisfactory. Although most of the older pupils take part, their singing lacks joy and enthusiasm. The younger pupils find the wording in the hymnbooks difficult or impossible to read and cannot take part. Simpler, brighter tunes and lyrics are not appropriately introduced to take account of this age group.

Although music was played on entry to, and exit from, the hall, the teachers leading assemblies made little reference to it. There was no indication of the name of the piece of music or the composer. As there are no pianists on the staff, the church organist kindly plays the music for some assemblies, which gives the pupils a good opportunity to hear an instrument played well.

115. When the teaching is good, as in the one lesson observed, the standard of attainment is satisfactory. Pupils perform simple parts rhythmically using a wide range of untuned instruments. They handle these sensibly and enjoy their work. The teacher records the pupils' performance and plays it back to them. This ensures that they learn from their mistakes and raise the quality of their performance. All those involved, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress in these circumstances. It was not possible to see sufficient lessons to make an overall judgement about teaching. Year 6 pupils interviewed were not enthusiastic or knowledgeable about their musical experiences.
116. A strength of the subject is the large number of pupils who receive peripatetic music tuition and who are learning to play a wide range of instruments. The governors ensure that no pupil is debarred through their parents' inability to pay. The school recognises the need to extend these opportunities and plans a recorder club within its rolling programme of extra-curricular activities. Pupils perform in school productions and take part in events with other schools. There is a good collection of musical instruments belonging to the school. The PTFA has added to the range by purchasing two keyboards and instruments from several cultures. The school supplied video evidence of a happy and productive day spent learning about and playing Asian music.
117. There is a good subject policy, a concern at the time of the previous inspection, but its intent does not yet sufficiently match practice in the school. However, planning indicates that a wider range of experiences of a musical nature than seen during the inspection take place in classrooms. Aspects of the new national scheme of work are being incorporated, and television and radio programmes are used to support areas where teachers lack confidence and expertise.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION [PE]

118. No PE lessons took place during the actual inspection. However it was possible to watch pupils practising ball skills at lunchtime in the playground, and the school supplied a video showing the work in gymnastics in each of the three classes. This evidence indicates that seven and eleven year olds are reaching expected standards and that there is good progression through the school. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and older pupils, in particular, are challenged beyond the basic skills.
119. The video evidence indicates that pupils of all ages know the effects of physical exercise on their bodies- the younger pupils felt their hearts to see if they were beating faster- and why it was important to warm up and cool down at the beginning and end of each lesson. Seven year

olds explored the basic skills of climbing, jumping and moving round on floor and fixed apparatus in a controlled manner. They made very good use of the available space. They could discuss the differences in their work and see how it could be improved. This skill was particularly well used in by pupils in Years 5 and 6 when they designed a sequence of controlled movements, discussed them carefully and worked hard to improve the quality of their performance. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and reach similar standards to the rest of the class. Boys try as hard as girls.

120. The quality of teaching seen on the video was good overall, particularly with the oldest pupils. Staff and children were properly changed, the lessons had a clear structure with an emphasis on improvement, instructions were clear and careful attention was given to health and safety. Children were encouraged to use a technical language and lessons were very disciplined. All teachers monitored the pupils' progress carefully, encouraged them and praised high achievement. Skills were taught progressively in the older classes and had a direct impact on standards. Years 3 and 4, for example, moved from balancing using two hands to just using one, and care was taken to challenge the higher attaining pupils. The emphasis on quality and improvement was very evident in Years 5 and 6. The quality of learning was good in all three lesson extracts because the children responded purposefully to the tasks, enjoyed trying hard and made good progress through self-evaluation. They knew what they were doing and what they needed to do to improve.
121. The school makes good use of its limited facilities. The hall is very small, especially for the oldest children, but good quality teaching and a high awareness of the importance of safety ensures that lessons are demanding but secure.
122. The subject is well managed by a keen co-ordinator who has a passion for her subject. Improvement since the previous inspection includes a new policy and an appropriate scheme of work that makes sure that all aspects of the PE curriculum have sufficient attention over a two year rolling programme. A considerable emphasis is placed on swimming, strongly supported by the governing body. The weekly lesson ensures that all pupils have a regular opportunity for strenuous exercise and are taught an important life skill in an area where there are many stretches of water. The school takes a full part in competitive sports and is an active user of the Top Sport scheme that introduces pupils to a wide range of games.