

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **SWANNINGTON C. E. SCHOOL**

Swannington

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120162

Headteacher: Mrs M Knapton

Reporting inspector: Mr J Burnham  
5020

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224645

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

School category: Voluntary Controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Main Street  
Swannington  
Near Coalville  
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE67 8QJ

Telephone number: 01530 832655

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Brian Duncombe

Date of previous inspection: 16th September 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John Burnham (5020)	Registered inspector	Science; Information Technology; Design and Technology; Equal Opportunities	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Michael Fleming (11104)	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Christopher Corps (14937)	Team Inspector	English; Art; Music; Physical Education; English as an Additional Language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Christine Derrington (15630)	Team Inspector	Traveller Education	
Nora Walkley (23477)	Team Inspector	Mathematics; Geography; History; Religious Education; Under-fives; Special Educational Needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Swannington C. E. Primary School is a small primary school for pupils aged 4 to 11 years. The school roll of 102 is made up of 47 boys and 55 girls, taught in four classes. The school's intake represents a broad, socially mixed community. Pupils are drawn mainly from the village of Swannington, but also from other villages, and include almost thirty per cent of pupils from Traveller families, which is well above average. The proportion of pupils (nineteen per cent) who entered or left the school during the last school year is well above average. Six per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. No pupils come from homes where English is not the first language; all pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. On entry to the school, baseline assessment indicates that children's attainment is significantly below local and national averages. A substantial minority of pupils arrive with no pre-school education. At the time of inspection, six pupils in the reception class were not yet of statutory school age. The number of pupils with special educational needs is just above average, and two pupils have statements of special educational need.

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

This is an effective school. Standards for seven year olds in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average. By the age of eleven, standards are at least average in English and mathematics, and are broadly average in science. Standards are rising in line with the national picture. All of the teaching is at least satisfactory, and there are strengths in the teaching of the oldest pupils. The school is led and managed well. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money

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

- The school is led and managed well.
- All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and encourage them to work hard.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good.
- Pupils' social development is very good and their moral development is good
- Pupils make rapid progress in Years 5 and 6
- The staff work together very well as a team
- The school fosters very good relationships between pupils and adults

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

- The accommodation and curriculum for children under five does not fully meet the new requirements for the Foundation Stage
- The present allocation of time for subjects does not allow sufficient coverage of creative and cultural aspects of the curriculum

*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 September 1996. Since then, the school has made good progress in respect of the areas identified for improvement. Standards in mathematics for eleven year olds have improved significantly. The governing body monitors the work of the school more effectively, particularly in respect of special needs, mathematics and literacy, and has a clear view about value for money. Almost all subjects now have schemes of work, and further revisions are planned in line with the most recent national guidance. The procedures used to monitor pupils' progress have improved; the school is beginning to set appropriate targets to help pupils improve. Assessment information is now used more effectively to help teachers plan for the next steps in learning. The governing body monitors expenditure more thoroughly.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	C		
Mathematics	C	A		
Science	A	A		

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Overall results in reading for pupils aged seven in 2000 were above the national average, and marginally below the average for similar schools. Results in writing and mathematics were well above the national average and close to the average for similar schools. Results in English for pupils aged eleven indicated well above average performance, particularly at the higher Level 5, and were above average for similar schools. In mathematics and science, results for pupils aged eleven were above the national average and close to the average for similar schools.

Overall standards have improved steadily over the past three years. However, in 2000 fewer than ten pupils took the national tests for pupils aged eleven, making comparisons between years and with national data unreliable; grades have therefore been omitted from the above table. The school has set appropriate targets for further improvement in 2001.

Throughout the school, standards in the work seen during the inspection were in line with those expected nationally in English, mathematics and science, with the oldest pupils sometimes reaching a higher level. Standards in physical education are above average for pupils at Key Stage 2. Standards in other subjects are satisfactory. The personal and social development of children under five is good. Pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory, and it is often good for the oldest pupils.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and show enthusiasm for learning
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is consistently very good in lessons. Pupils are also very well behaved around the school and at break and lunchtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and all adults, and between the pupils themselves, are very good and this helps to promote learning. Pupils play together well and are very supportive of each other.
Attendance	The attendance of most pupils is satisfactory. There is prolonged and erratic absence by some pupils which disrupts their learning.

Pupils' very good attitudes to their learning, their personal development and the high quality of relationships in the school remain key strengths of the school.



## 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 quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and there are particular strengths in the teaching of pupils in Years 5 and 6. Teachers' questioning skills are usually good and they have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is secure. Teachers make appropriate use of assessments to help plan the next steps in learning for more able pupils and those with special educational needs. On occasions, teachers' planning does not identify what pupils should learn with sufficient clarity, and some lessons last too long. Where this occurs, the pace of learning slows and pupils do not make the progress they should. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is at least satisfactory, with very good and occasionally excellent teaching in Years 5 and 6.

Throughout the school, all lessons seen were judged to be satisfactory or better, and nineteen per cent of lessons were very good or better. Pupils listen well and concentrate on tasks set for them, but are not always given sufficient opportunities to make choices in their learning. Where teachers' marking and feedback highlights what pupils have to do to improve, they make rapid progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, meets national requirements, and is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. However, the existing allocation of time favours English and mathematics at the expense of other subjects. Planning and provision for children aged under five is insufficiently detailed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual education plans clearly identify objectives that guide teachers' planning. Pupils receive good support from classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Social and moral development are effectively supported by the clear aims and values promoted by the school and the very good relationships enjoyed within the school community. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development are less clearly identified within the curriculum and, whilst satisfactory, are less well promoted
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers know pupils well and monitor their personal and academic progress carefully.

Parents support the school well and are made to feel welcome by the staff. They play an active part in the development of their children's reading.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership. The staff work well as a team. Curriculum leaders are developing their subjects effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a generally good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are active in helping to decide the direction the school should take.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's analysis of pupil performance data is closely linked to the targets for school improvement. The systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning are beginning to guide school improvement more effectively.
The strategic use of resources	Staff are deployed effectively and learning resources are generally adequate. The accommodation for children under five restricts the provision for them, particularly in respect of their creative and physical development.

The school is led and managed well. Teachers and learning support staff combine effectively to promote high standards. The school's day to day administration is very effectively managed. The small school hall restricts physical activities, particularly for pupils aged seven to eleven. The school lacks a separate, secure outdoor area for use by pupils aged under five.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible</li> <li>• The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few parents would like to be kept more closely informed about their children's progress</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the positive comments raised by the parents. Inspection evidence shows that the school provides good information for parents, both formally and informally.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 Assessments of the small number of pupils admitted to the Reception class indicate that they were well below the average, for the local area, in their social, language and mathematical development. Children make at least sound and often good progress in their first year at the school. By the age of five, the attainment of the majority of children is in line with that expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical learning, and often exceeds expectation in respect of their personal, social and emotional development. In their knowledge and understanding of the world around them, and in their creative and physical learning, children's attainment is broadly in line with expectations for their age. However, the limited space available for physical, investigative and creative activities for these children, both within the building and outside, restricts their attainment in these areas. Children are well behaved; they are positive about their work and are eager to take part and to succeed.
- 2 In the 2000 national tests and teacher assessments for English, the performance of all pupils aged seven in reading was above the national average in comparison with all schools and marginally below the average for similar schools, with well above national average results at Level 3. Performance in writing was well above the national average and close to the average for similar schools. Results were well above the national average, and in comparison with similar schools, at the higher Level 3
- 3 In the tests for mathematics, results were above the national average and close to the average for similar schools. At the higher Level 3, results were well above the national average and close to the average for similar schools.
- 4 The performance of pupils aged seven in the teacher assessments for science, at Level 2 and above, was well below the national average, but was well above average at the higher Level 3. Prolonged periods of absence for some pupils had a significant impact upon standards achieved in this subject.
- 5 Performance in the 2000 national tests for pupils aged eleven in English was well above the national average and above average in comparison with similar schools. At the higher Level 5, results were well above the national average and when compared with similar schools.
- 6 In the tests for mathematics and science, pupils' performance was above the national average in comparison with all schools and close to the average when compared with similar schools. Pupils' performance at the higher Level 5 was above average in both subjects
- 7 Over the last four years, results for seven year olds have fluctuated, reflecting the variations in the relatively small year group sizes, although the overall trend has been upwards. There has been no significant difference between the results of girls and boys.
- 8 The overall performance of the relatively small numbers of pupils aged eleven taking the tests in English, mathematics and science has risen, with no significant variations between the results of boys and girls. However, the small numbers of pupils taking the tests makes comparisons between years and with national data unreliable.
- 9 Evidence from the inspection indicates that by the age of seven, pupils achieve

average standards overall in reading. Most pupils are reading with some fluency, books that are appropriate for their age. Standards in writing and spelling are sound: pupils write coherently although within a relatively narrow range of tasks. The quality of speaking and listening is good; pupils listen and respond well to each other. In mathematics pupils are becoming confident with mental arithmetic, detect patterns in numbers and solve simple number problems. Standards in science are satisfactory; pupils investigate successfully the effect of forces on objects and know whether some materials are magnetic or non-magnetic. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in art and design, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education.

- 10 By the age of eleven, standards are at least average and sometimes above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils have successfully consolidated previously taught skills, and advanced their knowledge and understanding in English, where standards are above average in speaking and listening, and average in reading and writing. In mathematics, standards are at least satisfactory; pupils use the correct mathematical language to describe what they are doing. They make good progress in the development of investigative skills in mathematics, and in experimental work in science where standards are also satisfactory. Standards are good in physical education and satisfactory in art and design, design and technology, history, geography and music.
- 11 Standards in information technology are satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils throughout the school achieve standards in religious education that are in line with those set out in the locally agreed syllabus for the subject.
- 12 Pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress in relation to their prior learning in English, mathematics and science. Gifted and talented pupils usually make good progress, with sensitive and well-focused support from teachers.
- 13 A feature of the national test results has been the absence of a significant number of pupils, particularly Traveller children, at the time of the tests. The school, however, makes every effort to encourage good attendance. The school has made good progress towards meeting its standards targets. Assessment information is used appropriately to analyse general trends in performance and to set targets. The school exceeded the targets set for pupils aged eleven in 2000 for English, and met the target exactly for mathematics. The school has set suitably challenging targets for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven in English and mathematics for 2001. These targets, and the draft targets set for subsequent year groups, take appropriate account of those pupils with special educational needs.

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

- 14 Throughout the school pupils are very well behaved and show good attitudes to their work. Relationships among pupils of all ages, and with adults, are very good. Pupils know, and live up to, their teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and academic progress, and emulate the good role models the adults provide. Adults and pupils share a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and of the behaviour that is both acceptable and desirable. The mutual understanding that has thus been developed supersedes the behaviour and discipline policy, and is the main force sustaining the harmonious atmosphere in the school.
- 15 Lessons are calm, with pupils fully engaged in their work. They show good levels concentration of and perseverance. There is very little disruptive or unruly behaviour. The sanction of exclusion is not required. Pupils follow teachers' instructions willingly and support one another. They work together well in lessons and play together well

during breaks and at lunchtime. When rain kept pupils inside all day during the inspection, they maintained their good spirits and were able to move smoothly between break-time and lesson activities. Visitors are treated in a polite, friendly and open manner, and there is no evidence of tension or ill-feeling between groups of pupils from different social or cultural backgrounds. Pupils respect each other. They are able to understand others' points of view and are willing to discuss their own feelings in religious education lessons, for instance.

- 16 As soon as pupils arrive in the morning they quickly enter into the routines and spirit of being at the school, even those few who are often brought to school late. This is a school that all pupils enjoy attending, so the rate of unauthorised absence is very low. Some Traveller families spend extended periods away from the area and, in compliance with guidance from the Traveller Education Service, their children are kept on the school roll. For this reason the overall rate of attendance of 82.2% in 1998/9 was very low in comparison with similar schools. However, the rate varies considerably from year to year and the most recent figures show signs of improvement.

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

- 17 The quality of teaching in the school is at least satisfactory. All of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better, and forty-one per cent was good or better. Almost a fifth (nineteen per cent) of the teaching was very good or better. No lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning across the school are satisfactory overall. There are particular strengths in the teaching in Years 5 and 6, where it is frequently good or better, and occasionally excellent; here, pupils make rapid progress in their learning. The quality of teaching for children under five is satisfactory. As a result they make sound progress in the areas of learning relevant to this age group.
- 18 Teachers throughout the school usually show satisfactory subject knowledge, particularly in the teaching of literacy and numeracy, but also in other subjects. In the areas of learning for children under five, teachers' knowledge is at least sound. In Years 5 and 6, the quality of teachers' subject knowledge is consistently very good and is occasionally excellent in mathematics.
- 19 Teachers throughout the school demonstrate at least satisfactory levels of competence in teaching basic skills, including the teaching of phonics. For example, in a numeracy lesson with Years 2 and 3, the teacher made good use of mathematical language, such as 'digit' and 'multiples' during the oral and mental activity at the start of the lesson. Pupils clearly understood these terms, and used them when explaining their thinking. This successfully reinforced and extended pupils' learning. The skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology are taught appropriately and are usually applied successfully across the curriculum.
- 20 Teachers' short-term planning, the identification within planning of learning outcomes and their expectations of what pupils should achieve are usually at least satisfactory although, on occasions, expectations of what Traveller pupils and some of the most able pupils can achieve are insufficiently challenging. Learning objectives for most lessons, particularly literacy and numeracy, are clear, but these are not always shared effectively enough with pupils. In a handwriting lesson with pupils in Years 2 and 3, the teacher wrote the objective clearly on the whiteboard, and talked with the class about what they would be expected to do. In this way, pupils were rapidly engaged in learning, starting from where they were, and clearly knew what they were going to learn in the lesson. Some lesson plans focus too much on what pupils are to do, rather than on what they should learn, during the lesson, and this does not support teachers' assessments as well as it could.

- 21 Teachers' questioning skills are of good quality; this makes a major contribution to successful learning throughout the school. In the best lessons, teachers give pupils confidence to devise and ask questions for themselves. Teachers ask a broad range of open, specific and targeted questions to individuals and groups, based on a sound knowledge of pupils' attainment, and direct appropriate questions to individuals. For example, in a science lesson in Year 5 and 6, the teacher asked very challenging questions to encourage pupils to distinguish between a strong pulse and a quick pulse, and to say what might be the cause of each.
- 22 Teaching methods are usually sound, and are good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers use a wide range of teaching methods, including an appropriate proportion of direct teaching. Good use is made of group activities, plenary sessions, demonstration and discussion. In a physical education lesson with Years 3 and 4, good use was made of demonstration by pupils to show good examples of balancing, and to inspire pupils to improve their own attempts. There are sometimes insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to contribute their own ideas, and to make an independent and creative response within practical tasks, although this feature of teaching is secure for the oldest pupils.
- 23 The management of pupils' behaviour is never less than good and is sometimes very good. This is a particularly strong feature of the teaching in the school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and these are consistently met. Very positive relationships exist between staff and pupils. This was noticeable in a literacy lesson with pupils in Years 3 and 4, where they listened with appreciation and respect to each other's contributions at the end of the lesson. The very good relationships between adults and pupils underpinned the positive work ethic secured during the lesson.
- 24 Teachers usually manage time effectively. Lessons start promptly and learning is conducted at a brisk pace. Most lessons finish promptly. However, some lessons, notably literacy lessons, involve pupils in sitting for too long. On these occasions, the teaching loses momentum and the pace of learning is not as good as it could be.
- 25 Resources are used effectively and these enhance the learning experiences of the pupils. The use of information and communications technology in support of other subjects is usually satisfactory and sometimes good, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- 26 Support assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning in many lessons. They are well briefed and aware of the learning needs of pupils. They intervene sensitively, when working with groups or individuals, to encourage and support their learning. They work very effectively with teachers to ensure consistently high standards of behaviour and discipline throughout the school.
- 27 The quality and use of teachers' ongoing assessment is satisfactory. Teachers make appropriate use of their assessments to help plan the next steps in learning. This is achieved consistently for pupils with special educational needs, and higher attaining pupils are usually catered for effectively. In a few lessons, there is insufficient clarity of purpose in the arrangements for differentiation; on these occasions, commercially-produced worksheets do not provide activities which closely match the intended learning outcomes. On balance, marking is sound. There is some effective, constructive marking in the school, with written feedback to pupils, which identifies what they have to do to make progress. However, this is not achieved consistently; more could be done, especially for younger, more able pupils. Some marking provides praise for effort, but the comments made do not always provide enough help to pupils, parents or the teachers themselves about areas for improvement.
- 28 The amount of homework set by all teachers, such as reading and small tasks, is appropriate. Overall, homework is set consistently and used effectively to reinforce

what is learned in class, thus making a valuable contribution to learning. The home-school notebooks provide a valuable channel for dialogue between teachers and parents about pupils' work.

- 29 The quality of teaching for children under five is satisfactory and, on occasions, good. All adults work well as a team to support children's learning. The ethos is caring, supportive and secure: children work in a calm and purposeful atmosphere. This is a particularly strong feature of the teaching, given that the children work in close proximity to another class in the same room. The pace of learning is satisfactory and teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour. Objectives for learning are sometimes insufficiently clear; they tend to focus more on what children should do rather than on what they should learn. There are sometimes too few opportunities for children to investigate for themselves, and adult support occasionally tends to over-direct the learning.
- 30 Overall, the teaching of English is satisfactory; in Years 5 and 6 it is very good. In the best lessons, teachers establish an ethos for learning which builds systematically on previous skills and knowledge. Pupils feel secure enough to try new ideas. In a very good Year 5 and 6 literacy lesson, for example, children were confident enough to justify their viewpoints in discussions about the texts they were analysing, such as providing evidence to show whether or not the text was set out chronologically. Very good teaching featured detailed objectives, shared with pupils and support staff, appropriate pace and clearly explained tasks. Teachers make very good use of sensitive questioning which enables all pupils to make significant contributions to whole class discussions. Teachers' expectations in the teaching of literacy are consistently high, and the best lessons move at a good pace and link effectively with pupils' prior learning.
- 31 In mathematics, teaching is always satisfactory and sometimes good, with some excellent teaching for the oldest pupils. Teachers have clear expectations of what pupils can achieve. Basic numeracy skills are taught well. Work in mental arithmetic with the whole class at the start of lessons is often good. Teaching is particularly effective when:
- learning objectives are shared with pupils;
  - teachers' secure subject knowledge is used to help pupils link what they already know to the new tasks set for them;
  - where tasks are carefully sequenced to increase the level of challenge through the lesson.
- 32 The quality of teaching in science is at least satisfactory and occasionally very good. Lessons are planned well and start promptly. Pupils are given good opportunities to investigate and experiment, with high emphasis placed on prediction, correct experimental methods and fair testing. Teachers' knowledge of the subject matter is usually good.
- 33 The teaching of information technology is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers' knowledge of the programs is good. Pupils are given clear instructions, which enable them to carry out their work confidently.
- 34 The quality of teaching in religious education is satisfactory overall. Teachers make appropriate use of sensitive questioning which enables all pupils to make significant contributions to whole class discussions.
- 35 Pupils make satisfactory gains in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and

understanding in most classes, and make steady progress in their learning. In Years 5 and 6, the pace of learning accelerates due to consistently good teaching, and pupils make rapid gains in their learning. Teachers promote pupils' learning and progress effectively. For example, in a literacy lesson, Year 5 and 6 pupils were checking the characteristics of good reports against a set of criteria provided by the teacher. Well-organised pair work promoted high quality speaking and listening and good reference skills, and pupils made very good progress in their learning. In a physical education lesson with pupils in the Reception Year and Year1, pupils made good gains in their throwing skills because the teaching built systematically on their prior work in this area.

- 36 Pupils make good links between what they have learned in different subjects. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 used their information and communication technology skills effectively to draft a piece of writing for their literacy lesson. They identified spelling and grammatical errors and amended their drafts before saving the work. Pupils make satisfactory gains in their physical, intellectual and creative learning, but there are not enough opportunities for some of the youngest pupils to develop fully their investigative and creative skills, mainly because of the lack of suitable work spaces.
- 37 Pupils usually show high levels of interest in what they are learning during lessons and make positive efforts to improve their performance. They concentrate well on tasks. Pupils have a sound knowledge of their own learning. They are usually appropriately informed about what they are going to learn in lessons, although where this is not done clearly enough, the pace of learning slows as teachers re-focus groups or individuals on the prepared activities. Pupils are increasingly involved in self-evaluation as they move through the school, particularly in Years 5 and 6. This process is considerably enhanced where good quality written feedback is provided in pupils' books.
- 38 Pupils with special educational needs make steady gains in their learning. They are integrated well into teaching groups. Teaching for Traveller pupils is at least satisfactory, and staff show sensitivity to their learning needs. Where gifted and talented pupils have been identified, they make good progress in their learning.
- 39 Since the last inspection, the overall quality of teaching has improved significantly, with a higher proportion of lessons being very good or better and no lessons judged to be unsatisfactory. There is more challenge in the teaching of the older pupils. Marking now helps inform future planning, but more could be done to guide pupils in their future learning by the more consistent use of written comments. A very high proportion of parents (ninety-four per cent) consider that their children are taught well. The school's successful introduction of literacy and numeracy strategies is helping to improve the quality of cross-curricular teaching and learning. The very good contribution of support assistants continues to enhance the quality of pupils' learning and the progress that they make.

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

- 40 The good features and strengths identified in the last inspection have been broadly maintained. Appropriate attention has been given to the main weaknesses, and good progress has been made, particularly with regard to mathematics, and the provision of schemes of work for this, and other subjects.
- 41 The school's aims are clearly stated, and all subjects of the National Curriculum, including religious education, are provided. The curriculum offered to pupils is broad,



but the current weighting of time favours the development of the basic skills of English and mathematics. Insufficient time and attention is given to those subjects such as art and design and design and technology, as well as the cultural and spiritual dimensions within subjects. The result of this is a broad curriculum, but one that is not fully balanced in terms of the way time is spent, and the means through which pupils learn and express themselves.

- 42 The school makes good provision for the personal, social and health education of pupils, including teaching pupils about the dangers of drugs misuse. This is achieved both through the subjects of the curriculum, as well as through the very good relationships fostered at all levels within the school community. The oldest pupils receive sex education, which includes aspects of personal relationships, during their last year at school.
- 43 The curricular opportunities for the youngest children broadly cover the prescribed areas of learning. However, in the light of the new curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, provision for these pupils needs to be improved. This improvement relates to the available accommodation and the provision of resources, as well as the planning for quality learning experiences.
- 44 The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been fully endorsed by the school, and their implementation is contributing effectively to improving the quality of teaching and learning opportunities for all pupils, including those with special educational need.
- 45 The wider provision for pupils with special educational need is satisfactory overall. The individual education plans of these pupils are providing an effective focus for their teaching and support. Teachers meet the needs of pupils well in all subjects of the curriculum, and good support and guidance is provided by classroom assistants. As a result, these pupils make sound, and sometimes good, progress.
- 46 There is a generally effective whole school approach to planning. Where necessary, as for the younger pupils, teachers plan collaboratively across the year groups. The longer term planning reflects the school's adoption of national strategies and guidance. This provides good continuity. Weekly planning is sometimes less effective. It does not always identify with sufficient clarity the intended learning outcomes. On these occasions, it tends to focus too much on the activities that will be provided, rather than the learning such activities will engender. Where lessons occur on a daily basis, such as English and mathematics, there is a need to strengthen the links between lessons, so that pupils engage in learning with more coherence.
- 47 The school provides a wide range of extra curricular activities. These include football, short tennis, athletics, netball, country dancing and sewing. A positive feature of this provision, is the involvement of many adults, including the headteacher, a classroom assistant who runs the after school and Saturday clubs, and a local tennis coach. Pupils benefit considerably from this additional provision which is taken up eagerly by boys and girls. Pupils learning is additionally enhanced by opportunities to join residential adventure visits, as in the recent Year 5 and 6 visit to Red Ridge in Wales. During the course of the year, visitors from the local community, including the Traveller community, work in classrooms and make an important contribution to the quality of pupils' education. Visitors, including the local Methodist minister, also lead assemblies.
- 48 There are particularly good links with the development group of primary and high schools in the area. These support each other in a variety of ways, and provide additional training opportunities for teachers in each school. This strengthens links, and works for the benefit of all pupils.

- 49 The social and moral aspects of pupils' personal development are a strength of the school, which is fostering an expectation that all pupils, whatever their ability, strive for their best. Their social development is very good. While 'praise stamps' in books signify good work to children, the intrinsic satisfaction for them of behaving courteously, taking care of others, and doing their best, is paramount. Throughout the school there exists an atmosphere of genuine mutual respect, in which everyone feels valued. All adults provide consistently good role models, so that children have a clear appreciation of how to behave. As a result, the standards of behaviour and respect in the school are high. Both in classes, and at playtimes and dinner times, social relationships are harmonious, including during wet playtimes when older pupils care for the younger ones.
- 50 Moral development is good. The provision within the curriculum supports the schools aims and values, and teachers take opportunities to explore the feelings and responses of others when opportunities arise, particularly in English and religious education lessons. The oldest pupils speak with confidence about the decisions faced in difficult situations, and drama strategies are used to help pupils understand the reactions of others. Older pupils take the initiative to prepare and perform for school assembly, and provide for everyone the opportunity to consider how famous people have provided moral leadership, such as the current presentation on the role of Mother Teresa.
- 51 Provision for spiritual and cultural development, while still satisfactory, is less distinct and less well embedded within the curriculum. Whole school assemblies enable pupils to hear about the lives of the saints, for example, and provide opportunities for pupils to come together in song and worship, but currently there are limited occasions for reflection and expression of joy and wonder. Within the wider curriculum, the strong emphasis on basic skills, while developing these skills soundly, is yet limiting the opportunities to develop those subjects through which the spiritual and cultural dimensions can be explored and extended. In this respect, art, music, dance and drama are underdeveloped.
- 52 Similarly, the cultural dimensions of the curriculum which can be enhanced through history and geography, as well as the arts, are given insufficient time and attention. The school does provide opportunities for the celebration of Christian and other festivals, and this is important. There are also occasions when visitors work in school and share their lives and experiences. For example, there have been visits to a Gurdwara as part of the study of the Sikh religion. All this helps pupils to empathise. However, the resources, in terms of books, musical instruments and artefacts, for example, are limited, giving pupils insufficient insight into different cultures. There are only limited, planned opportunities for pupils to express themselves through music, drama, art and writing.

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

- 53 The school takes good care of its pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and monitor them carefully. This knowledge enables teachers to take good care of pupils' individual needs, including careful supervision for specific pupils during physical education, and at playtime and lunchtime. The good relationships between pupils and adults encourage young pupils to feel secure, and ensure that advice and instruction are followed. Very good behaviour is promoted effectively. Pupils are confident that they will not be harassed or bullied, and have no hesitation in approaching staff if help is needed.
- 54 Pupils' progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is monitored effectively. Improvements in the school's arrangements for assessment

and monitoring have contributed significantly to raising pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics. A comprehensive picture of each pupil's academic progress is built, starting with baseline assessment when they start at school, and later supplemented by test results and marked work. This enables teachers to provide appropriate targets for pupils and to set tasks at the right level, although such differentiation is not always as effective as it could be, particularly when specific learning objectives are not clearly identified. The marking of classroom work, and reports to parents, do not always give clear directions for what individual pupils should do to improve.

- 55 Pupils with special educational needs are identified accurately and are provided with detailed individual educational plans. They receive good support in lessons, partly from classroom assistants and other adults who are well briefed and work well as a team. Although the school environment is cramped, it is clean and safe, and there are no outstanding health and safety issues. Appropriate attention is paid to health and safety in lessons, such as warming up in physical education, and learning about healthy eating in science. School security has been improved since the last inspection.
- 56 Satisfactory arrangements for child protection are in place. The registration of attendance follows local guidelines, although there are uncertainties about how to categorise absences, particularly occasional absences of pupils from Traveller families. In a few cases this leads to inappropriate authorisation of absences or late arrivals by Traveller and other pupils. The school monitors attendance appropriately overall, but should pay closer attention to the reasons given for absence and to advice from the Traveller Education Service. The school should also seek appropriate support from the Educational Welfare Service to help improve this situation.

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

- 57 Parents are very satisfied with most aspects of the school. They support the school's aims and are satisfied with the education it provides. They particularly appreciate the friendly atmosphere where all children get on well with each other and with adults, but are expected to work. Parents recognise the impact of a well-behaved community on personal development, and appreciate the beneficial effect this has on their children's education.
- 58 The school tries hard to involve all parents in their children's education, for instance by visiting the Traveller site where a significant proportion of pupils live. As the school is found to be open and welcoming, communications between home and school are good. Parents from all sections of the community are comfortable approaching the school and are confident that any problems they raise are dealt with effectively. They are involved from the earliest stages when their children are identified as having special educational needs, and are kept involved in reviews of progress.
- 59 Parents receive good annual reports that give detailed accounts of their children's academic progress, although not all reports identify personal targets or areas for improvement. Reading records and homework sheets provide effective channels for more immediate two-way communication.
- 60 Many parents support the school's work through FOSS (Friends Of Swannington School) fund-raising activities, or more directly by helping in lessons. Pupils are often heard reading by parents in school, and others help in the same way at home. Parents are happy with both the amount of homework that their children are given and its nature. In general, parents have considerable confidence in both the management and teaching at the school, so they willingly provide help as required.

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

- 61 The headteacher, in partnership with the staff and governing body, has secured commitment to a clear vision for the school within the community, and provides effective leadership. High standards are promoted through the very positive ethos for learning within the school, and there is a shared commitment to school improvement. This is underpinned by the very good teamwork of all staff, who are well motivated and committed to the school and its pupils. Working relationships between staff, pupils, governors and parents are very good. The school's aims, whilst not explicitly including the promotion of high standards, encourage a commitment to good relationships and the promotion of learning. These aims and values are reflected successfully in the work of the school and in the high standards consistently achieved by more able pupils.
- 62 The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues from the previous inspection. Standards in mathematics for eleven year olds have improved significantly, largely due to very good teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6. The governing body monitors the work of the school more effectively. The governors have a clear view about priorities and progress in respect of special educational needs, mathematics and literacy. Almost all subjects now have schemes of work: further revisions are planned in line with the most recent national guidance. The procedures used to monitor pupils' progress have improved, and the school is beginning to set appropriate targets to help pupils improve. Assessment information is now used more effectively to help teachers plan for the next steps in learning. The governing body monitors expenditure more thoroughly and has a clear view about securing best value for money.
- 63 The school has made good progress in the establishment of procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, including classroom observations and the analysis of pupils' written work. This practice is not yet fully developed, and some subject co-ordinators still do not have sufficient opportunities to gain a clear overview of the work in all classes. There have been good gains in assessment, and this helps provide a clearer analysis of pupils' performance, including, more recently, a value-added analysis. Baseline assessment is beginning to be used with greater precision to gain initial information about pupils' attainment as they join the school.
- 64 The introduction of self-evaluation procedures and a more succinct analysis of standards across the school has resulted in the headteacher, staff and governors beginning to gain a more secure view of standards across the school, particularly in the core subjects, and the performance of teachers. As a consequence, the school correctly identified the need for additional help with literacy for the lower junior classes, and initiated staff training and extra support. The need to review provision for pupils under five was also appropriately identified as a need in the current development plan, but this could have been afforded higher priority in terms of action taken. Appropriately challenging targets were set for 2000; these were exceeded in English and met in mathematics by the age of eleven. The school has set appropriate targets for 2001.
- 65 The roles of subject co-ordinators have been improved in respect of curriculum planning but, with the exception of core subjects, they have not had sufficient opportunities to monitor teaching and learning at first hand. Nevertheless, because of the strength of the teamwork within the school, much good, informal monitoring and evaluation takes place, forming a sound basis for further development.
- 66 The work with pupils with special educational needs is co-ordinated effectively, and the school's positive ethos ensures the inclusion of these pupils in the life of the school. One of the governors, who has a responsibility for special needs, works closely with the co-ordinator, providing local knowledge, support and critical friendship to the task.

- 67 The governors contribute effectively to the direction of the school. They support the school well. They regularly visit the school and governors with specific responsibilities make contact with staff to discuss emerging issues. They are gaining a clear picture of the effectiveness of their decision-making, particularly in relation to staffing appointments, accommodation and resources. They also analyse the performance of pupils in statutory tests, and use this information effectively to complement other comparative data to inform their deliberations and decisions. They are effective in fulfilling their statutory duties, and are considering ways in which the views of pupils may be taken more fully into account.
- 68 The school development plan has been revised since the last inspection; it now includes appropriate detail of timescales, and identifies responsibilities, including those of governors, for specific areas of activity. The plan provides a clear vision for the school over the next three years, with a focus on raising achievement. However, the identification of costings and success criteria is not as detailed as it could be; this limits the plan's usefulness as an instrument for school improvement.
- 69 The school is on target to establish a performance management scheme in line with the new regulations. Staff development is linked closely to priorities stated in the school development plan. Staff have undertaken substantial training to develop literacy and numeracy and to keep up to date within their own areas of responsibility. There is a suitable programme of induction for staff new to the school. The school works in partnership with institutions of higher education as a provider of teacher training.
- 70 Overall targets for pupils' performance are set in conjunction with the local education authority. The inclusion in the school's targets of Traveller pupils, many of whom move into or out of the area each year, and with a significant minority attending irregularly, makes this process significantly more challenging. Nevertheless, the school is successful in meeting, and exceeding, the targets set. There is clear evidence of added value in pupils' performance as they move through the school. Individual achievement is recognised and the progress of pupils through the school is charted successfully. On the basis of its analysis of performance across the school, the current priority is, appropriately, to raise further pupils' achievement in writing throughout the school.
- 71 The school budgets prudently for its development. There is a clear view of how a combination of potential changes in class sizes, overall budget allocations and deficiencies in the available accommodation might affect staff deployment and the curriculum offered. Financial administration is very good, ensuring that the headteacher and governors regularly receive details of expenditure and balances. The school carried forward funds from 1999 to offset additional costs for classroom and technical support, and for continuing improvements to the accommodation and resources. The principles of best value are understood and applied to the school's management decisions when comparing costs and services, justifying revised expenditure patterns and seeking competitive tenders, for example when extending storage space in the hall, and employing extra classroom support. Comparative data for national and local schools is used when establishing budgets and analysing performance. Specific funding for special needs pupils and Standards Fund Grants are used effectively for their designated purposes.
- 72 The school makes effective use of information and communications technology, for instance in financial management, and the communication of information including the use of electronic mail. The school is also establishing a website; this has the potential for further development in respect of curriculum and communication applications.

- 73 There are sufficient, suitably-qualified staff to teach the full curriculum, and levels of support staff have been carefully maintained to ensure that all pupils are taught effectively. There is a good blend of experienced and more recently-qualified teachers. The work of the experienced support staff contributes significantly to the teamwork and maintenance of high standards of behaviour and academic achievement of all pupils in the school. Good technical support is provided for information and communication technology. The day to day administration is of very good quality, ensuring the smooth operation of the school during the day. High quality teamwork ensures that pupils' and parents' requests and needs are dealt with fairly, consistently and effectively.
- 74 The accommodation is clean and well maintained but space for teaching and learning is at a premium. The school library is attractive and kept in good order; it acts as a valuable workspace for information technology, and pupils have access to the Internet from this area. Outside, the playground is attractively marked out for pupils to play games, and there is a useful wildlife area with a securely fenced pond. Accommodation for the oldest pupils in a mobile classroom is cramped, with too little space for practical activities. Both of the infant classes share the same working area, with bookcases and shelves serving as room dividers. The hall is small, and restricts progress for the oldest pupils in aspects of physical education. However, throughout the school, staff have adapted very well to the challenges presented by the building, and well-organised teaching helps minimise the disadvantages. The accommodation for children under five presents the most pressing concerns. The space for these children to undertake creative and investigative activities is inadequate, and they do not have access to a separate, secure outdoor area for their physical development. This significantly hampers the school in its efforts to implement the required curriculum for the Foundation Stage.
- 75 Resources are of adequate quality in most subjects, although some resources for music and science are in need of updating. Teachers often supplement resources for learning from their own personal collections. There is a shortage of large play equipment and large wheeled toys for children under five, a similar position to that identified in the previous report.

## **THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS FROM TRAVELLER BACKGROUNDS**

- 76 Within the catchment area of the school, there is one relatively large, private Travellers' site and a small number of private, family-owned sites, including one for Fairground Showmen. At the time of the inspection, a total of 32 Traveller pupils were registered at the school. This represents almost thirty per cent of the total number of pupils on roll and is well above average. The number of Traveller pupils attending the school fluctuates considerably, but for the majority of the Traveller pupils, Swannington is regarded as the 'base' school as their families have been settled in the area for a number of years. Some, but not all, families travel away from the area during the summer months. In accordance with statutory attendance regulations, these pupils officially remain on roll during these extended periods of absence and this accounts for the lower than average attendance figures for the school overall.
- 77 The attainment of Traveller pupils is variable. Approximately one third of the pupils experience some difficulties with their learning and have been placed on stage 1 of the Special Educational Needs register. One pupil, with significant learning needs, is currently on stage 4. Other Traveller pupils achieve standards in line with national expectations and, in some cases, achieve well despite periods of absence. Intermittent attendance hinders the progress of some children. In response, the

Leicestershire Traveller Education Service works closely with the school and provides good quality support to those pupils who experience an interrupted pattern of education. This approach helps to raise the pupils' attainment, particularly in literacy. In their planning of the curriculum, some teachers recognise the need to help the pupils to value and feel proud of their cultural inheritance. In the early years, for example, pupils have access to a play trailer and were visited by a Traveller mother who talked about her home. Elsewhere in the school, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to appreciate and value the richness and diversity of the culture. There are very few learning resources being used to challenge stereotypical attitudes and promote positive images. In view of the ethnic composition of the school population and reports of hostility in the local community, this is an important area for development and the school should take advantage of the wider support available from the Traveller Education Service, including opportunities for in-service training.

- 78 The Traveller pupils are well integrated and relationships in the school are harmonious. There is no evidence to suggest that the Traveller pupils are stigmatised or isolated as a group when they are in school. The Traveller parents are generally supportive and are pleased with the quality of education being provided by the school. The parents of Traveller pupils are made to feel welcome by teaching and support staff who make special efforts to establish and maintain a positive and trusting relationship. Attendance at parents' evenings is exceptionally good.
- 79 Respect for Traveller culture is evident from the views and actions of staff and governors. In some aspects of school policy, this is balanced with realistically high expectations of Traveller pupils. For example, high standards of behaviour are achieved by all pupils, irrespective of background. In other aspects however, the willingness and intention to respect cultural differences sometimes leads to low teacher expectations for Traveller pupils. The number of Traveller pupils that have transferred from Swannington to secondary schools in recent years is negligible, which suggests an urgent need for a more concerted approach to improve this situation. Similarly, non-attendance by Traveller pupils is not always rigorously followed-up or recorded systematically by the school.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

80 *In order to improve further the standards of achievement and quality of education provided, the headteacher, staff and governors should:*

### **1. Improve the accommodation and curriculum for children under five by:**

- ensuring that the needs of children under five are taken fully into account in the current revision of the curriculum to meet the new requirements for the Foundation Stage;  
(Paragraphs 43, 83, 92)
- improving access to both inside and outdoor play areas, including separate, secure outdoor facilities, to allow increased opportunities for children's creative and physical development;  
(Paragraphs 1, 74, 83, 90, 93)
- ensuring planning for the Foundation Stage includes clear learning objectives.  
(Paragraphs 29, 43, 83, 93)

### **2. Revise the current balance within the curriculum by:**

- giving greater consideration to the time allocated to subjects;  
(Paragraphs 41, 46, 133, 147, 163)
- reviewing the time allocated to the teaching of reading;  
(Paragraphs 108, 109)
- improving the time allocation and provision for creative and cultural aspects of the curriculum, particularly music, drama, art and writing.  
(Paragraphs 35, 41, 51, 147, 175)
- providing greater opportunities for children to experience and understand the multicultural society in which they live.  
(Paragraphs 52, 77, 140, 175, 176)

### ***Other areas for improvement which the school should consider:***

- In conjunction with the Traveller Education Service, ensure greater vigilance in respect of the recording of short-term absences by Traveller pupils;  
(Paragraphs 16, 55, 76)
- Seek to improve the number of Traveller pupils transferring to secondary education at the age of eleven, in conjunction with the Traveller Education Service and local secondary schools;  
(Paragraph 79)
- Ensure greater consistency in the use made by teachers of marking which indicates what pupils need to do to improve;  
(Paragraphs 27, 39, 54, 112, 122, 132)
- Ensure that the objectives for lessons are clearly stated in planning and shared more consistently with pupils.  
(Paragraphs 20, 27, 36, 147, 163)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	16	22	59	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		102
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		26

#### 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	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	82.2
National comparative data	94.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	7	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	15	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (67)	79 (58)	84 (67)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	10
	Girls	5	4	2
	Total	15	15	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (67)	77 (72)	66 (78)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	5	4	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	3	4
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	7	6	7
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (67)	66 (72)	77 (78)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	3	3
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	5	6	6
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (67)	66 (61)	66 (66)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	91
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.18
Average class size	25.5

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	120

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

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

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	213098
Total expenditure	205306
Expenditure per pupil	2162
Balance brought forward from previous year	11536
Balance carried forward to next year	19328

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	102
Number of questionnaires returned	32

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	28	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	31	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	59	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	53	0	6	6
The teaching is good.	63	31	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	44	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	34	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	31	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	59	34	3	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	63	31	6	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	44	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	47	3	0	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**

- 81 The school admits children in September and January, in line with the stated admissions policy. At the time of the inspection there were six children in the Reception class working alongside Year 1 pupils. These children, who have been in school for less than one term, have settled well, are secure in the classroom and have a good understanding of school routines. They are making satisfactory progress in all areas of learning, with good progress against the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development.
- 82 The school uses the Local Education Authority scheme for assessing children when they start school. The assessment of the six children in the Reception class during the first weeks of the Autumn term indicates that they were well below average, both locally and nationally, in their social, language and mathematical development. There is an effective induction programme for new children. Before they start school, there are opportunities for children to visit school for several morning sessions. There are also meetings between parents and staff that help to share information and build good relationships when children start school.
- 83 The provision for children under five is restricted by the space and resources available and the lack of a secure outside play area. There is an appropriate emphasis given to literacy and the mathematical area of learning. Whilst the curriculum for the under fives within the class is satisfactory, teachers' planning does not consistently reflect the requirements of the Foundation Stage.

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

- 84 Personal and social development is good. The younger and older children work well together, showing consideration and an ability to share equipment when working in the sand tray and preparing for a party. They show concern for each other both in the classroom and the playground. They have positive attitudes to work, and relationships between the children and all adults are particularly good. Children are confident in getting undressed and dressed for PE, and are kind and considerate to each other. They are careful with resources and tidy up effectively when asked. The high expectations of all staff are reflected in the consistently high standard of behaviour from children who are eager to take part and do well.

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

- 85 Children show they can listen carefully, whether in small groups watching the television, in the classroom situation or to visitors leading assemblies. They are eager and confident in sharing their news and re-telling a favourite story about Elmer the Elephant. They express their ideas when making links between music and their own feelings, and are starting to take turns to contribute orally. Their confidence and ability to express themselves is often evident in more formal discussion and questioning than in the range of informal play situations provided.
- 86 An understanding of phonics is being developed within the literacy framework. Most children can link letters with sounds and use them in their writing; some are sounding

out words confidently when reading. They enjoy making party invitations, but are not always clear on the purpose of the tasks. There is a strong emphasis given to reading.

- 87 As a result, children see themselves as readers and writers; they write their own names and, in most cases, form letters correctly. They have made satisfactory progress in the relatively short time they have been in school.

### **Mathematical development**

- 88 Children enjoy mathematics and working with numbers; they are able to match and use numbers to 10 with increasing confidence. They are working towards the early learning goals in mathematical development. They create simple repeating patterns. Some children understand and use terms such as 'one more than', 'one less than' in calculating answers when playing a game with dice. They extract data from a simple graph recording colours of sweets. Within the numeracy strategy, children are becoming confident in counting forwards and backwards and their progress is satisfactory.

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

- 89 Children carry out simple investigations successfully, for example in deciding whether they can match colour to taste by sampling sweets, and making decisions based on their senses. Children know about things that have happened in the past. They talk about the past, and compare and distinguish between artefacts used now and those used in the past, for example, when they compared methods of communication. The children are confident in using the computer and enjoy using a graphics package to draw and colour shapes. They know and can name body parts, and can discuss and compare animals when talking about books they choose. The progress of the children is satisfactory. They enjoy activities to distinguish the colours that make up brown, and identified the different colours as they emerged during an investigation to separate out colours from felt pen ink.

### **Physical development**

- 90 The physical development of children is satisfactory. Physical development is restricted by the lack of an outside play area where children can climb, build and use wheeled toys. Children use scissors accurately when cutting templates of clowns. They have good control of their body and have good co-ordination skills during physical education lessons. They follow instructions, show good control of their movements and are aware of the needs of others in the space around them. During playtimes, children run and use space effectively, and show good levels of co-operation.

### **Creative development**

- 91 The children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals for creative development. They use the limited opportunities for role-play well. Following the activity to make invitations, they enjoy an opportunity to arrange a party. In assembly they join in with songs that involve actions. They draw, colour and paint carefully and are interested in how colours are made from other colours. They listen carefully to music and talk about how it makes them feel.

### **Teaching**

- 92 The quality of teaching of children under five is satisfactory and, on occasions, good.

Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and standards of work. Targets have been set for the children who entered school in September. Assessment of these pupils is continual, and is used well by teachers to inform initial groupings and identify needs for support. Staff work well as a team; support staff are well briefed and aware of the needs of the children. Support staff intervene sensitively in their work with groups and children with special educational needs to encourage and support their learning. The high number of adults working within the classroom results in some activities being over-directed. On these occasions, opportunities for children to express themselves creatively and make choices are insufficiently developed. The most successful lessons are those where clearly identified learning objectives are shared with the children, and planning takes account of the expectations for the Foundation Stage. There are very good relationships with children, who in turn are positive about school and eager to do well. There is some over-reliance on worksheets which results in too much of the work being prescriptive. This restricts opportunities for children to take initiative or to investigate for themselves on a regular basis.

### **Accommodation and resources for learning**

- 93 The school lacks a secure outside play area, and there is very limited space and appropriate resources within the classroom. This limits the opportunities for children to work together, and restricts opportunities for them to investigate and explore the range of experiences expected within the Foundation Stage. This is particularly the case in exploring the creative and cultural aspects of the curriculum through imaginative play. The lack of large climbing apparatus and wheeled toys restricts opportunities for children to extend their physical development, such as controlling movement and gaining an awareness of space. Whilst children are making satisfactory progress, the school needs to give a higher priority to creating an appropriate environment for the Foundation Stage, and to continue to improve the quality of planning and the clarity of learning objectives.

### **ENGLISH**

- 94 The results of the 2000 national tests and tasks for pupils aged seven in reading is above the national average and marginally below the average for similar schools. In writing, pupils' performance was well above the national average and close to the national average for similar schools. At the age of eleven, results for 2000 in English were well above the national average and above the average for similar schools.
- 95 Over the four years since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in standards in English. Test results for both seven and eleven year olds show improvement not just at the expected levels of Level 2 for seven year olds and Level 4 for eleven year olds, but at the higher levels too. This indicates success in challenging and meeting the needs of the most able pupils, while at the same time supporting all pupils to make progress. A comparison with national test results as well as with schools that are similar to Swannington, is less productive, as the numbers of pupils taking the tests are quite variable from year to year. Sometimes they are fewer than ten in number. Nevertheless, the proportions of pupils who achieved Level 3 or Level 5, the higher levels, in the year 2000, were significantly better than those achieved nationally.
- 96 The improvement in standards comes about through the well focussed teaching of literacy skills and the clear scheme of work which enables pupils to experience effective links between one stage of learning and the next. These are a direct result of the school's commitment to, and implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.

The rate of progress that pupils make in both reading and writing throughout the school is sound. There is an acceleration to this progress during Year 5 and 6 as a result of high challenge and particularly effective teaching. In all classes pupils are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills; consequently, standards in this aspect are sound and often good. There is no evidence of any significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.

- 97 The school has set appropriate targets for further improvement in 2001 by taking account of pupils' current attainment, and seeking the best ways to support and challenge each pupil during the next steps in learning.
- 98 By the age of seven, most pupils are reading with some fluency, books that are appropriate for their age. Whatever their current level of attainment, all pupils show a real interest in books and literature, and understand the importance of reading with expression. They have received good models for this through the teaching. Pupils also understand from an early age, that reading is to do with making meaning. To do this they are able to employ several strategies, including the use of context and the support of illustrations. However, when faced with word difficulties, pupils tend always to use a strategy of 'breaking it up' into syllables, or by individual phonemes. This is effective for regular words, but causes difficulties for some pupils who are not yet secure with all the consonant and vowel blends and digraphs. Pupils often need encouragement to re-read a sentence, or to read-on beyond the difficulty, in order to 'decode' the word. The most able pupils in Key Stage 1 are fluent readers, who are already reading at the level expected by the age of seven. These pupils can talk with confidence and understanding about a range of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- 99 There are good features in the quality of writing by the time pupils are seven. Handwriting is taught well, and most pupils learn a neat, cursive form early. This helps to develop flow to their writing, and enables them to concentrate on other aspects such as content and sentence construction, without having to move from a printed to a joined script at a later date. While handwriting is very neat for most pupils while they are concentrating on this activity, it is far more variable when they are writing in other contexts.
- 100 By the age of seven, most pupils write coherently, and can produce a range of simple sentences which are accurately punctuated with capitals and full stops. Higher attaining pupils are developing compound sentences through a good use of connectives and increasingly well-chosen vocabulary. However, the range of written tasks is more frequently limited to stories, occasionally poems, and answers to simple comprehension questions. Although pupils do have opportunities to write in non-fiction styles – invitations, for example in Year 1, or within other subjects, for example religious education in Year 2 – the range of writing for information is often limited by the use of worksheets. While these sometimes provide a useful framework, they can place limitations upon pupils' capacity to develop their own written expression.
- 101 Spelling for most pupils is usually accurate. They make strong use of their own personal wordbooks. However, they are less secure in having strategies to work out spellings, and tend to rely upon lists, or available adults, for correction. Linking work on phonics to writing, and teaching spelling strategies to pupils, will be important developments in building pupils' confidence further.
- 102 Pupils make sound progress in reading and writing as they move through Key Stage 2, and this progress develops rapidly in Years 5 and 6. Key Stage 2 pupils continue to be very positive about their reading. All teachers place a high priority upon reading and through opportunities to discuss, share and examine texts, pupils of all levels of attainment read with expression and interest. When faced with difficulties, these older pupils employ similar strategies as younger pupils, and are able to correct



themselves by reading on and gathering the sense of a passage. As pupils move through the key stage they improve in their ability to read non-fiction texts, though this aspect is noticeably weaker than the reading of fiction, partly as a result of the teaching emphasis. However, by the age of eleven, most pupils can use simple contents and index pages to locate information swiftly, and many are able to skim and scan a passage to find specific information in response to questions. The most able pupils are reading with a degree of sophistication. They can talk confidently about authors and their own reading preferences, including J.K. Rowling and Dick King-Smith. They respond to a wide range of fiction and poetry, and can cross-reference information quickly, both in books and on screen. All pupils keep up-to-date reading logs. These are used diligently and, where completed by parents as well, form a useful link between home and school.

- 103 The good features of writing begun in the earlier years, are generally maintained during Key Stage 2. The range of writing extends during Years 3 and 4 to include more reports, book reviews and letter writing, but during the key stage, the range is still limited. There are few examples of extended narrative writing, and little to suggest that the full range of non-fiction genres are consistently taught and developed in line with the school's scheme of work. Writing in history and religious education has provided pupils with opportunities to use their skills in other contexts; these contexts are important if pupils are to utilise their growing knowledge of the way language works, using paragraphs to both separate and link ideas, for example.
- 104 The writing of poems is a strong feature. Many pupils produce poetry which is sensitive to the language form, and shows an ability to use features of style such as metaphor and simile to good effect. For example, when describing the night, a group of Year 6 pupils refer to the coming of 'dark' as 'a black panther leaping across the world.' There are examples of pupils writing successfully in the style of famous poets, for example in the style of Tennyson's 'The Lady of Shalott'.
- 105 Spelling continues to be generally sound for most pupils; and many tackle polysyllabic regular words accurately. Effective use is made of dictionaries and the thesaurus to check spellings and meanings and find alternative words. Where there are spelling weaknesses, these are more frequently with medial vowels – the 'ou' in ground for example – as well as with consonant choices where pronunciation affects spelling – 'wive' for 'with'. Pupils of all levels of attainment have some difficulties with irregular words such as 'business' and 'gargoyles' which are misspelt 'bisnis' and 'gargoiles'. This is often related to an over-dependence on 'look, cover, write, check' at the expense of a wider range of spelling strategies. Handwriting is frequently good, though overall presentation fluctuates within books of different subjects.
- 106 Throughout the school the quality of speaking and listening is good. Pupils are very attentive to their teachers, and they listen and respond well to each other. Where pupils are encouraged to work together, they do so effectively, and the work produced by pairs of pupils is frequently swifter in coming. They enjoy each other's contributions, and show real appreciation of different viewpoints. Where, as in Years 5 and 6, rapid pair decision making and drama techniques such as 'hot seating' are incorporated into learning patterns, pupil involvement and the pace of learning increase rapidly.
- 107 The teaching of English is never less than satisfactory, and occasionally it is good or very good. The best lessons are characterised by high expectations, both of behaviour and work to be done, as well as a clear focus on what it is pupils are expected to learn.
- 108 The pace of teaching is usually appropriate, and when it is matched by a range of different strategies, pupils respond enthusiastically. An example of this was seen in Year 5 and 6, when pupils learnt in a variety of ways by working as a whole class, following the teacher reading, searching dictionaries, researching a text with a

partner, and entering imaginatively into role play. At the same time, pupils were responding to questions which encouraged both personal viewpoint and justification. When pace drops in lessons, this occurs sometimes because too much is planned or too many examples are used to illustrate a point, or when the lesson itself is too long. This occurs in the lessons between morning break and lunch, when seventy-five minutes becomes too long for a 'literacy hour, and pupils work more slowly through a task than is necessary for success.

- 109 All teachers have a sound subject knowledge, and English lessons are planned well. The National Literacy Strategy Framework provides a firm basis for the scheme of work, but shorter term planning could be improved by planning more sequences of lessons, so that individual lessons give pupils a sense of greater coherence. At Key Stage 1 it is particularly important to provide daily phonics teaching in order to secure early reading and writing skills, while at Key Stage 2 greater prominence needs to be given to the teaching of non-fiction writing and reading. Overall reading is taught well. Teachers use a range of strategies, including shared and guided reading. Guided reading is working effectively at both key stages. However because the school maintains a high level of individual teaching of reading, in addition to shared and guided work, time allocated to reading is high. The school might consider an evaluation of the impact of the various methods currently employed.
- 110 Computers are used effectively for composing on screen. Pupils of all ages were observed working well together. An especially useful example was in the class with Year 2 and 3 pupils, where children with special educational need were supported by the teacher in moving from writing on whiteboards to composing on screen. These pupils were developing a real insight into the drafting process.
- 111 Classroom assistants contribute very well to pupils' learning, and teachers provide good written guidance to direct their work. Assistants are providing good support to both groups of pupils, as well as those with special educational needs who, as a result, are making sound progress.
- 112 While assessment procedures are sound, and recording of progress is detailed, the day to day marking of pupil's work, is less well done. There are examples of good practice in written comments which direct children towards why they have been successful, and how they can improve, but these are infrequent and inconsistent across the school. Marking is an area for development.
- 113 Resources for English are satisfactory, and the library provides a good base for independent learning. The co-ordinator has a clear view of the priorities, including the sharing of best practice, upon which the school now needs to focus in order to raise standards still further.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 114 On the basis of the national tests in the pupils' overall performance in mathematics at the age of seven was above the national average and close to the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above at the age of seven was slightly below the national average and the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was above the national average. In the tests for eleven year olds results were above the national average and close to the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was slightly lower than the national average. However the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was

significantly above the national average. Standards are comparable with similar schools, although small year group sizes make detailed comparisons between years unreliable.

- 115 These results reflect the satisfactory achievement at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and the accelerated progress within the class of oldest pupils during the inspection. The school has met its targets set for 2000, and trends in test results in mathematics have improved steadily since the last inspection. Pupils with special education needs are supported well and make satisfactory progress.
- 116 The National Numeracy strategy has been successfully implemented and has contributed to pupils taking a more active part in maths lessons and increased confidence amongst staff. The three-part lesson pattern is soundly established and planning is satisfactory. By the age of seven pupils are becoming confident with mental arithmetic. This is supported by the importance given to practising addition, subtraction and multiplication facts and the opportunities given for talking about number patterns and relationships. Younger pupils can name and order the days of the week and use money efficiently by adding in 5s and 10s when using coins.
- 117 Older pupils can identify odd and even numbers and understand the differences between them. They see patterns in numbers and solve simple number problems. They are able to recognise, sort and name two-dimensional shapes and measure with some accuracy using a ruler. There is a growing understanding of place value, with some children knowing what each digit in a number such as 271 stands for.
- 118 Within Key Stage 2 pupils work confidently with larger numbers. Work is generally accurate as many pupils have good recall of basic number facts. Lower attaining pupils are less confident with division and multiplication, but this is being developed effectively when multiplying the numbers of two dice together in an investigation to find prime numbers. In Years 5 and 6 pupils show an increased understanding and make good progress applying their knowledge and skills when undertaking investigations and problem solving activities. They are confident in working with decimals and can accurately calculate the area and perimeter of shapes. They make very good use of correct mathematical language when describing properties of two-dimensional shapes such as scalene and equilateral triangles and obtuse and acute angles, knowing that internal angles add to make 360 degrees. Pupils are confident in providing the thinking behind their answers, explaining their methods and offering hypotheses.
- 119 Throughout the school pupils show interest and involvement in their work. All staff provide good role models for pupils, expecting good behaviour and encouraging them to share their ideas and ways of working. Pupils work enthusiastically and complete homework that is set. When given the opportunity they are able to work collaboratively and co-operate well. Throughout school there is clear evidence of good development of mathematical language.
- 120 Overall, teaching is satisfactory: sometimes it is good; with the oldest pupils there are examples of excellent teaching. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject, clear expectations of what pupils can achieve and there is good pace. Basic numeracy skills are taught well and whole class mental arithmetic work at the start of each lesson is good in many lessons. For example, in a lesson with pupils in Years 2 and 3, the teacher's good use of questioning ensured that the lesson progressed at a brisk pace and that all pupils were involved in the oral and mental activity at the start. On several occasions during this activity, pupils who had made small errors in their mental calculations were asked to 'talk through' their reasoning. The teacher used questions such as: "how did you get this?", and "so how many more will you need to make one hundred?" This successfully encouraged pupils to reconsider, in a supportive context, what they had done, and to reconstruct their answer correctly.

Classes are generally managed well and teachers have a good rapport with pupils.

- 121 In an excellent lesson with Years 5 and 6, pupils made very good gains in their learning about perimeters and how to calculate the areas of rectangles and compound shapes. The learning objectives for the lesson were shared with, and understood by the pupils. New work related closely to existing knowledge, allowing pupils to see themselves as mathematicians and rise to new challenges. In this situation questioning was very skilful, with a high emphasis on ensuring that the pupils used the correct mathematical terminology. Very good relationships between teacher and pupils ensured that pupils felt secure enough to demonstrate how well they had organised their thinking. They knew, for example, that the sum of the internal angles of a quadrilateral was 360 degrees, and were confident enough to provide good explanations for this. The teacher dealt very effectively with misconceptions while inspiring pupils to challenge their own thinking.
- 122 The quality of marking is inconsistent. Comments, where they appear, are often brief and do not show sufficiently how work might be improved. There are, however, some good examples of marking which indicate to pupils what they need to do to improve.
- 123 The work of the subject co-ordinator is a strength of the school. Her excellent subject knowledge and enthusiasm have provided a secure foundation for the support and guidance of other teachers within the school. Her commitment to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and providing training for other staff ensures a positive approach to mathematics from staff and pupils. She is effectively involved in the monitoring of children's work, plans and teaching, in identifying strengths and weaknesses in the subject and meeting the needs of the school. There is a satisfactory range of recently updated resources that are easily accessible and used well.

## SCIENCE

- 124 Standards in science are broadly average by the age of seven, and at least average and sometimes above by the age of eleven.
- 125 Statutory teacher assessment in 2000 showed that attainment was well below the national average and very low in comparison with pupils from similar backgrounds at Level 2, the level expected at age seven. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above the national average and above average in comparison with similar schools. Trends in results over the past three years have varied considerably, and there have been significant variations in the overall performance of the relatively small year groups. A significant factor has been the prolonged absence of some Traveller pupils. This has resulted in them missing important aspects of the science curriculum, much of which is taught as separate units. Standards in science were below those in reading, writing and mathematics. There have been some relative strengths in test results for more able pupils in respect of physical processes.
- 126 Results for the very small number of pupils aged eleven taking the tests in 2000 were above the national average, and close to the national average for similar schools. At the higher Level 5, results were above the national average, a feature of results in this subject that has been consistent over recent years. Overall, girls have generally performed better in the tests than boys. The trend in results has been steadily upwards over the last four years, although small year group sizes make detailed comparisons between years unreliable.
- 127 Inspection evidence of the current performance of the pupils in Year 2 indicates that they are achieving generally average standards towards the end of the key stage.

- The rate of progress in learning is satisfactory and sometimes good, with the more able pupils making good progress, particularly in experimental and investigative science. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop their observational and practical skills through investigative work, and to record what they find in their own words.
- 128 The youngest pupils correctly identify the main external parts of the human body. They investigate the use of the senses through simple observations and recordings, for example the different flavours they can detect in sweets. There is a steadily increasing emphasis as pupils move through the school on experimental and investigative methods. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is extended appropriately by practical work, for example, on different types of push and pull forces. By Year 2, pupils understand what makes things move faster or slower. They devise fair tests, using toy cars, to investigate the effects of increasing the force applied in different ways to make the cars move along a flat surface or down a ramp. Pupils in Year 2 also investigate simple electrical circuits and know that a lamp will not light if the circuit is not complete. They know the effect of magnets on different materials and are able to conclude that only some metallic substances are attracted to magnets.
- 129 Achievement in Year 6 is at least average and sometimes above, and pupils make good progress in their learning. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of investigative skills and standards in experimental work, with a clear expectation that pupils should describe what they are doing in their own words, incorporating the specific vocabulary that they have been taught. Pupils make good evaluations of the outcome of experiments, and make good gains in their understanding, for example of why the human body needs to sweat, and why breathing increases when taking exercise.
- 130 Throughout the school, pupils show very positive attitudes to their work in science. They listen carefully to instructions, concentrate well on their tasks and the behaviour of all is consistently very good. Pupils show a pride in their work and are keen to share it with other pupils and adults. At both key stages, pupils are usually given opportunities to work independently of the teacher. Good support for all pupils is provided by classroom assistants. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons and, as a result, they make steady and sometimes good progress with respect to their prior learning.
- 131 The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and occasionally very good. Resources are readily available and time is mainly used well, with lessons conducted at a suitably brisk pace. Teachers' knowledge of the subject matter is usually good. The management of pupils is uniformly very good throughout the school and the range of teaching strategies used to develop pupils' learning is broad. For example, in a lesson with pupils in Year 5 and 6, good direct teaching was used very successfully to revise key features of the work of the blood before embarking on a practical task. The teacher drew systematically on their prior learning and the experimental method used. Their knowledge and understanding of the function of the blood and circulation within the body was then enhanced through a simple role-play activity. This consolidated their knowledge of the flow of oxygenated and deoxygenated blood around the body, and the work of the lungs in this process. As a result, pupils made very good gains in their knowledge and understanding. When posing questions, teachers take care to ensure that a wide range of pupils is allowed to respond. Good emphasis is given to fair testing. The quality of questioning skills is usually high.

- 132 The marking of pupils' work is carried out frequently but written comments made on written work are often cursory. An increasing amount of helpful feedback is provided as pupils pass through the school, with questions posed to the pupils which provide good challenges to their thinking. Assessment information is generally used well for the benefit of all pupils. This results in the planned work being appropriately matched to the specific needs of individuals or groups. In most classes independence is fostered effectively and this contributes significantly to the development of pupils' investigative and practical skills.
- 133 The subject co-ordinator is a very experienced teacher who is keen to raise standards in science. The subject is led and managed well. The time available for science is overshadowed by the demands of literacy and numeracy, which is where the school has directed its efforts within the curriculum over the past two years. Some monitoring of teaching and learning, and of written work, has taken place. As a result, the school is gaining a clearer overview of standards upon which to base further improvements, but the subject would benefit from an extension of this emerging good practice in monitoring. There are some good links between teaching in science, English, mathematics, information technology and design and technology, but there is scope for further development.
- 134 Procedures for assessment are satisfactory; the statutory requirements for a core subject are met in full. Resources are broadly adequate, although there are shortages of some consumable items for work on electricity, magnetism and light. Pupils benefit from a very good environmental area in the school grounds.
- 135 Overall standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Lower teacher assessment results for average and below average ability pupils at Key Stage 1 in recent years have resulted from the cumulative effects of poor attendance by some pupils. The progress of the more able pupils has improved as a result of better assessment and greater intellectual challenges provided by teachers.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

- 136 One art lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 and no lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. The judgements regarding art and design are therefore based principally upon work on display, discussions with the subject co-ordinator and pupils, and a scrutiny of planning and timetabling.
- 137 Overall, at both key stages, the subject is just satisfactory. At Key Stage 1, pupils are introduced to the principles of primary colours and colour mixing, and most work is pursued carefully and with success. Pupils are able to make choices, and they are keen to improve their work. Displayed paintings, as well as the work carried out during inspection, show vibrancy and a sense of pattern and form. Most, but not all pupils, are able to use and control scissors when cutting details.
- 138 There is some pleasing work on display in the Key Stage 2 areas, such as the portraits inspired by the artist Jean Miro, but the overall development of pupils' skills is inconsistent.
- 139 Where work is of a higher standard, it is often associated with other subjects. The Tudor display in Year 5 and 6, and the 'Greek Pot Shop' in Year 3 and 4 are examples. This is an important aspect of the way art enhances learning. In addition, older pupils are able, with genuine interest, to refer to artists whose work they have studied, such as Van Gogh, Kandinsky and Bridget Riley.
- 140 Although there are some current examples of work in three dimensions across the school, including some clay work, there is limited evidence that pupils are receiving sufficient opportunities in this aspect. The resources for art and design are just satisfactory in terms of materials, but they are poor in terms of art books and artefacts from a range of cultures. This places limitations upon the kind of experiences teachers can offer their pupils, and reduces the opportunities that can be planned into the curriculum, for extending children's spiritual and cultural understanding.
- 141 The school has a good policy and scheme of work, and this, if implemented well, should enable improved progression in skills for pupils, as well as engagement in a wider range of learning through art and design. The photographic record of pupils' work is a good development, which will help to ensure that assessment and record keeping for the subject receive greater importance. Improving access to the full range of skills, techniques and ideas identified in the policy, should be a priority for the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 142 No design and technology lessons were seen. On the basis of information from discussions with teachers and pupils, examples of retained artefacts, displays of pupils' work and photographs, standards at ages seven and eleven are judged to be in line with what is expected. This is a similar position to the one identified in the previous inspection findings.
- 143 Pupils in both key stages are making steady progress in their learning. They are developing generally sufficient levels of skill to enable them to design realistically and to make increasingly complex products with enthusiasm and pride. At each key stage higher attaining pupils show above average progress. Pupils with special needs undertake the same demanding tasks as other pupils but with good support. Their progress is very similar to that of the majority of pupils.
- 144 In their learning, pupils are successfully encouraged to make good links with other

subjects, notably art and science. In the Reception class children learn to build appropriately using construction kits. By Year 2, pupils have developed sufficient skills to create simple plans for a house, which they label clearly, sometimes showing good levels of detail. They also learn to measure, mark, cut and fold paper and card, and to make simple judgements about what they have made. They make jointed teddy bears using paper fasteners, measuring and cutting arms and legs to pre-determined lengths.

- 145 In Years 3 and 4, pupils develop these skills further. They begin to use more resistant materials and to understand how structures can be strengthened. They create structures that incorporate electrical circuits, making good links with work in science. They design and make Greek masks that they can wear when performing short play scenes. By Year 6, pupils design and make a wattle panel using appropriate tools and willow sticks. These weaving skills are further developed using fabric. Their designing and making skills are further developed through the production of fabric relief pictures, such as a fish or a lizard. Finished items are attractive, showing good levels of skill in quilting and stitching. There is a small amount of written work; this shows a generally sound grasp of the principles used.
- 146 Most planning usually shows clear detail of learning intentions, but this is not consistent across the school. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of practical skills such as accuracy in measuring, marking, joining and folding or cutting.
- 147 The subject co-ordinator has devised a good development plan for the subject, and this is being implemented. This incorporates an appropriate emphasis on recording pupils' work and evaluating the two-year programme for the subject. It correctly identifies the need for an agreed format for lesson planning. This currently lacks consistency and makes the task of monitoring the development of pupils' skills more difficult. The scheme of work is helpful to teachers, and supports their planning. Resources are broadly adequate, although there is a shortage of tools and a narrow range of resistant materials. Good attention is paid to health and safety issues in practical activities and in the storage of tools and materials. Adult helpers provide good support for food technology activities. All the required aspects of the subject are covered, but this is uneven, particularly in respect of designing. Overall, too little time is allocated to design and technology as a discrete discipline.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 148 No teaching of geography was observed during the inspection. The evidence available from teachers' plans, discussions with pupils and examples of work indicates that the progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Pupils are developing geographical understanding of the local area and use this to make valid comparisons with more distant places.
- 149 By the age of seven make their own maps of real and imaginary places, and devise symbols to represent features on these maps. As pupils move through school they have opportunities to compare areas of Leicestershire with Delhi and a village in India. They are able to identify similarities and differences and describe the effects of weather and climate on the people. They study climate and rainfall, producing tables from which they can extract information and discuss the effects. When they study areas such as St Lucia in Year 5 and 6 there are more opportunities for independent research rather than relying on worksheets as a focus for activities.
- 150 Pupils have positive attitudes to the work in geography and enjoy the subject. They are enthusiastic about the practical activities which are incorporated into the



curriculum for them. The school uses visits to areas of geographical interest such as Rutland Water and Cropston to support the subject and have planned a project to create a weather station in the grounds to be funded by Friends of Swannington School.

- 151 Since the last inspection the school has developed a policy document and scheme of work which has been updated recently to link with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work for geography.
- 152 The co-ordinator receives planning from other staff and checks these for coverage against the scheme of work. However the role of the co-ordinator in monitoring the delivery of the subject is still under-developed. Resources are adequate and now include a range of maps and CD-ROM images of aerial photographs of the surrounding local area.

## **HISTORY**

- 153 Only one lesson was observed during the inspection but the evidence from pupils' written work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils shows that all pupils including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
- 154 By age seven pupils can describe the achievements of famous people such as Florence Nightingale. When studying the life of Grace Darling they were able to comment on the story from the point of view of the other characters involved. Pupils use their historical knowledge to describe events in the past and can discuss for example, school life in Victorian times. They are able to recall a visit to Belgrave Hall and talk about their feelings when using a quill pen and ink to write. They identify changes in technology when comparing telephones from the past with those used today.
- 155 By the age of eleven pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory understanding of the periods of history they have studied. They are able to use time lines to plot events and compare two accounts of the same incident to identify differences, and give an opinion of which is more likely to be true. Pupils can describe and explain some of the changes in relationships between the Greeks and Persians. They are able to talk about life in ancient Greece and describe how they used the decorations on Greek pots as a source of information.
- 156 Teaching is satisfactory. It builds effectively on prior learning, and provides tasks which are suitably matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils respond well in a variety of settings, and show interest in the work set for them. Behaviour is managed well.
- 157 The subject is effectively managed by the co-ordinator with good supportive documentation in place which provides help for teachers. Good use is made of the local community as a learning resource and pupils benefit from visits to other places of interest. Visitors to school are used well to support the curriculum.
- 158 Since the last inspection a scheme of work that plans the curriculum on a two year cycle has been introduced. Resources are adequate. Opportunities for monitoring, however, are insufficiently well developed

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 159 By the ages of seven and eleven, attainment is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, pupils quickly learn to interact positively with computers. They become confident in finding their way around the keyboard and in using a pointing device. By the end of the key stage they use word processing programs, enter information into a simple database to construct graphs, and use graphics applications to create increasingly complex designs. By the end of Year 6, pupils are secure in using the characteristics of word processors and graphics software to develop their work. They are making steady gains in their understanding of the processes necessary to send electronic mail and to access websites.
- 160 At Key Stage 1 pupils use word-processing with increasing confidence. In Reception and Year 1, they manipulate graphics with care and good precision to create images. By the end of the key stage, most of them can open files and save their work. They know how to change the size of letter fonts. They choose the desired effects for graphics work from an increasingly wide range. Word processing tasks are also undertaken to develop skills, for example when collaborating to produce a poem. They use number programs with confidence and these contribute successfully to their progress in numeracy.
- 161 At Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use simple control programs appropriately to create instructions for drawing regular shapes, and know how to use a repeated operations function to save time. They know how to use the Internet to find information, for instance about the Greek Olympic Games, and to use a CD-ROM to research the dangers of electricity when producing a poster. They interrogate databases and create graphs. Some of the pupils know how to use a digital camera and merge images and text. They can edit text on screen using different word processing applications, and confidently create and rename files.
- 162 In all cases, pupils made steady progress in acquiring knowledge and developing understanding and skills, both in the subject area and in their information technology capability. Computer software is used in classrooms and also in the library in support of English, mathematics, science and art. In Reception and Year 1, children use a graphics program successfully to develop their co-ordination using a mouse.
- 163 There is no clear indication on timetables of specific time allocated for information and communication technology for all classes. Pupils receive some direct teaching during the week, but this is not easily identifiable in teachers' planning. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge, skills and understanding have improved since the last inspection, and some of the teaching at both key stages is good. Teachers' knowledge of the programs is secure. The management of behaviour is very good. Pupils are given clear instructions which enable them to carry out their work confidently. Lesson planning, which incorporates computer use usually identifies learning objectives, but this is not consistently achieved throughout the school. Pupils were usually aware of the progress they had made during the lessons. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology in the preparation of teaching materials, labels and notices, and thus model good practice for pupils.
- 164 Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They work with sustained concentration, for example when working on spellings programs, and carry out good, collaborative work. They are able to explain what they are doing and many are confident in independently exploring the possibilities of the programs.
- 165 The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively, providing a good level of support

which includes technical knowledge of both software and hardware, assistance in curriculum planning and worksheets which support teachers in the use of software. Currently, assessment tends to focus on the completion of tasks rather than progress in learning. The policy and scheme of work provide appropriate levels of detail to help planning. Information and communications technology features in the current school development plan and further training is planned. This is being achieved mainly through national funding schemes, and through the good support work of the co-ordinator. The scheme of work ensures that all strands are covered sufficiently, and opportunities for links with other subjects are identified.

- 166 Recent developments have included electronic mail facility, which is beginning to be used to enhance the presentation of work across subjects. The school is developing a website, and there are plans for pupils to contribute to this in a variety of ways.
- 167 The school has a favourable ratio of approximately one computer to twelve pupils. These computers are located in classrooms and in the library. The range and capacity of the computers available varies considerably, but pupils adapt quickly to the different range of software available. They make useful comparisons between the characteristics of what is available, and are usually aware of limitations and benefits in each case. The school upgrades computers as funds permit. The number of computers in the school has increased since the last inspection; there are, however, still some difficulties in providing enough access to enable teachers and pupils to develop fully their capability and reinforce it through planned, frequent use of computers. The school benefits significantly from technical support from a technician, whose time is funded jointly by the local cluster of schools.
- 168 Since the last inspection, the school has continued to develop information and communication technology expertise and to obtain appropriate resources. Teachers have a greater understanding of the potential of information and communication technology, and greater confidence in the use of hardware and software. The range and quantity of new resources is satisfactory. Plans for future acquisitions and staff development indicate continued improvement in this subject .

## **MUSIC**

- 169 Standards in music are satisfactory. The work of class teachers is extended through the work of visiting staff who teach recorders and class singing. Tuition in recorders is open to any pupil who expresses an interest.
- 170 Two lessons were observed during the inspection. Further evidence was collected through discussions with the subject co-ordinator, during assemblies, and through an analysis of policy and planning.
- 171 Pupils enjoy their music lessons, attending and responding well to both their teachers and to each other. They develop, at Key Stage 1, a sound sense of rhythm, both duration and tempo, and this is extended effectively at Key Stage 2. Pupils co-operate well, and are eager to improve the accuracy of their counting, clapping, and interpretation. They show interest and respect for each other's work, and enjoy performing, either for the class, or, when the opportunity arises, for parents.
- 172 At Key Stage 2, pupils can concentrate on rhythmic rounds, and enjoy the challenge of creating a group sequence. They have good listening skills.
- 173 The teaching of music in the lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to good. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour, and the pupils respond accordingly. Their subject knowledge is good, and this enables the older pupils to

move from 'sound creation' to musical notation with understanding. Some pupils, often those who are learning musical instruments, have a firm appreciation of notation and can use it to record their compositions. However, all pupils, including those with special educational need, are developing this understanding, and will be increasingly able to use it to good effect.

- 174 Visiting teachers make an important contribution to overall standards. Singing in assembly is tuneful, and most children participate well. However, the lack of a pianist, or other accompanist, reduces somewhat the levels of engagement.
- 175 While there is a policy for music, and an outline scheme of work, this has yet to be updated in the light of current guidance. During this process, it will be important that the role of music in the wider, cultural life of the school is considered, as well the place of music from other cultures.
- 176 Resources for music, including a range of tuned and untuned instruments, are adequate. The present stock of instruments, however, could be usefully supplemented in a way that it is more representative of music from other countries. Consideration might also be given to the range and quality of library books and posters.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 177 Standards in physical education are satisfactory: in some lessons they are often good. This is a direct result of good teaching, characterised by high expectations of both behaviour and of the work to be achieved in each session.
- 178 Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons, and demonstrate good behaviour and increasing levels of skill. During the inspection, only the gymnastics and dance aspects of the curriculum were directly observed. Other evidence to support judgements comes from discussions with the subject co-ordinator, scrutiny of planning and policy documents, as well as informal observations of extra-curricular activities.
- 179 The younger pupils in the school show good spatial awareness in dance sessions, and respond to instructions swiftly. They are developing sound throwing, catching, and balancing skills, and co-operate very well. When given the opportunity to work in pairs, they do so eagerly. As they move through Key Stage 1, they show the ability to identify aspects for improvement in their work, and can refine a sequence of movement which they perform with confidence to the rest of the class.
- 180 At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively upon these early skills. This is achieved through the sound planning systems, and the way in which teachers identify the next steps in learning, sharing these with the children. Pupils work hard in lessons, and teachers encourage them to think about the physical processes their bodies are undergoing as they perform specific balancing movements, as in Year 3 and 4. When pupils are further encouraged to solve movement problems, as in Year 5 and 6, they rise to the challenge, and work with determination.

- 181 The teaching of physical education is mainly good, and sometimes very good. Every teacher has good knowledge of the subject, and the high expectations of lessons are marked by the way each teacher and classroom assistant is dressed accordingly for the lesson. This sense of physical education as an important activity has a direct impact upon the pupils' response. They also dress appropriately, and are conscious of the health and safety issues to which they themselves, as well as their teachers, draw attention as and when it is necessary. Lessons are planned well, and resources are used effectively. The expectations that work should be refined and developed are characteristic of each lesson. One outcome of this is that pupils return to a sequence of activity, or a single movement, and seek ways of improvement, as in a Year 2 and 3 lesson when pupils were developing a travelling sequence in response to a music and movement programme. Teachers make appropriate use of demonstration – by themselves or by other pupils – to help in this process.
- 182 Relationships are very good, and pupils are encouraged to develop very good speaking and listening skills during their physical education lessons. They support each other well, and help each other to improve.
- 183 Football, athletics, netball, cricket and tennis feature as curricular and extra-curricular activities. These make a significant contribution to the overall provision, and are equally accessible to both boys and girls. Pupils make sound progress in their physical education, while good progress is made by pupils with special educational need in each class. Very good support is given by classroom assistants, and most especially by one assistant who runs the after school and Saturday football club. The school competes in teams against other local schools in summer and winter sports activities.
- 184 Although accommodation for physical education is limited by a hall which is too small, especially for the oldest pupils, and by outdoors areas which are sloping, the very best use is made of that which is available. The full range of the subject is taught, including swimming and outdoor and adventurous activities. Many of the oldest pupils had been on a residential visit in Wales, the week prior to the inspection. There is an effective policy and scheme of work, and the subject enjoys clear subject leadership.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 185 During the inspection there were few opportunities to observe religious education being taught. Judgements are based on these lessons, a scrutiny of pupils work, talking with pupils and discussions with staff. From this evidence, standards are in line with expectations set out in the local agreed syllabus for religious education for pupils' ages by the end of both key stages.
- 186 By the age of seven pupils can explain simply the purpose of the Church as a special place and those of the font and pulpit. Pupils are aware of stories from the Bible and can talk about the story of the plagues in Egypt. They are developing an awareness of beliefs and values expressed through friendship, care, trust and respect. Pupils wrote their own promises after talking about the importance of keeping promises following the story of Noah's Ark. This allowed them to make links with their own lives.
- 187 Older pupils continue to study Bible stories and have some understanding of the importance of worship in other faiths in addition to Christianity. They are able to make comparisons and recognise similarities between religions and can recall a visit to a temple and their impressions of it.
- 188 Pupils' attitude to their learning is good. Most pupils are attentive, eager to answer questions. They are keen to work together, listen to each other and respect other points of view. Pupils respond well to the opportunity to act out the story of Esau and

Jacob and try to explain how each character in the story felt.

- 189 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' questioning skills are good, encouraging discussion and reflection on stories from the Bible, and relating stories to pupils' own experiences, such as the flood conditions prevalent at the time of the inspection to the story of Noah. Behaviour is managed effectively. Teachers create suitable opportunities for pupils to express their own views and to consider feelings, which they usually do with confidence. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 were successfully encouraged to think of how the animals in the Ark might have felt in the rain, eliciting the words 'frightened', 'noisy' and 'cramped' from them in discussion. Teachers provide good support for group work, particularly where pupils use role play to retell stories, such as the story of Esau and Jacob which pupils in Years 3 and 4 were studying. This approach successfully reinforced the message in the story for the pupils, and the teacher used questioning well to develop their understanding and help clarify their thinking.
- 190 The co-ordinator leads the subject effectively with good subject knowledge and relevant, up- to-date training. Good use is made of resources from other religions which are shared with other local schools, and are supplemented by a range of artefacts from the co-ordinator's own personal collection. Visits are made to places of worship and visitors are welcomed regularly into school. Monitoring of teaching and learning and assessment arrangements are under-developed. A scheme of work is in place and is due for review. Since the last inspection standards have been sustained.