

INSPECTION REPORT

RIDGEWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Market Harborough

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119983

Headteacher: Mrs A Fox

Reporting inspector: John Woodcock
1624

Dates of inspection: 20-23 November 2000

Inspection number: 224778

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ridgeway Primary School The Ridgeway Market Harborough Leicestershire
Postcode:	LE16 7HQ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Surkitt-Parr
Date of previous inspection:	25-28 November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr J Woodcock 1624	Registered inspector	English Music Physical education	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve? The school's results and pupils' standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs B Attaway 19320	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 the parents? Finance and efficiency
Mr J Collins 27541	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology History Geography	Equal opportunities Pupils under five
Mr R Bowers 30506	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is above average size and is growing in popularity. It serves the Market Harborough, North Ward of Leicestershire. The school was built in 1972 and extended in size this year. It serves an area of mainly owner-occupied housing. At the beginning of the autumn term there were 272 full-time pupils aged between four and 11 years. They are taught in 10 classes, four of which contain pupils in mixed age groups. At the time of the inspection, there were eleven children under five on roll. Just over 12 per cent of pupils have special educational needs; this is below the national average. Six pupils have statements of special educational needs; this is well above the national average. No pupils have been identified as learning to speak English as an additional language. About five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is below the national average. Currently, very few pupils are from ethnic minority groups. Pupils' attainment on entry to school is above the expected level as measured by baseline assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. However, pupil mobility is high at 20 per cent in some year groups; this changes the nature of the assessments made about progress over time, particularly when comparing performance at the end of the juniors with performance at the end of the infants.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school; it has many strengths and is very effective. By the age of eleven, pupils make very good progress, achieve well and standards are consistently above average and often well above because the teaching is stimulating and challenging. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection report. The headteacher, staff and governors work well together, are not complacent and aspire to higher standards. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Raising standards significantly in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection.
- Pupils make very good progress and by the age of eleven, test results show that standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science.
- Teaching is very good or excellent in one in three lessons.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their personal development are very good.
- The provision and progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The headteacher's leadership and management of the school are excellent. She is very well supported by the staff and governors in seeking to raise pupils' levels of achievement in all subjects

What could be improved

- Teachers having clearer learning objectives in lessons, particularly in art and design and in religious education.
- The monitoring and evaluating of the better use of basic learning skills, particularly in using and applying literacy, numeracy and information technology skills in non-core subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved significantly since the last inspection in November 1996. The leadership and management of the school and the quality of teaching have improved and are significant factors in helping pupils achieve high levels of performance. The key issues have been addressed well. The quality of teaching and the planned provision for children under five is good. Good progress has been made in improving the provision for, and raising standards in, information technology and religious education and statutory requirements are now fully met. Child protection arrangements now comply with the relevant legislation. Very good progress has been made in establishing systematic monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school's work. The roles and responsibilities of members of the senior management team and curriculum managers are clearly defined and the coordination between the infants and juniors is very good. Curriculum planning and assessment procedures have improved. The school is appropriately adapting the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's guidance for the planning of subjects. However, more work is needed to improve the specific focus of the teaching of knowledge, skills and understanding in lessons and units of work in non-core subjects.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	C	A	A
mathematics	B	B	A	A
science	C	C	B	C

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Overall, test results are well above the national average; they are well above average when compared with schools that have a similar intake. Standards in writing have been improved and are now above average. The proportion of pupils attaining high standards is well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Trends over time show that the school is improving at a rate broadly in line with the national picture. Overall, boys achieve slightly higher standards than girls do. Educational value added over the four junior years is well above average in English and mathematics and average in science. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils enter the reception year with skills in reading, writing and mathematics that are above the expected level. Pupils in the current Year 2 are making very good progress in improving their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills and are achieving well above average standards. They achieve standards that are above the national average in mathematics and science. The school expects these pupils to achieve even higher standards by the end of the year. Standards in the current Year 6 are above average in all three subjects. Pupils are making good progress and are expected to achieve well above average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science. Girls are now achieving similar standards to boys, particularly in science. The school is on course to exceed the statutory targets for 2001 and 2002. Overall, attainment in art and design, design and technology, history, information and communication technology and religious education is satisfactory with many good features. Attainment in geography, music and physical education is good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and take a pride in their work. Pupils of all ages are highly motivated and have a strong desire to improve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. No bullying, racist or sexist behaviour was seen and none reported by pupils. The oldest pupils conduct themselves with good levels of self-discipline and set a good example to others.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships with others are very good. Many pupils are able to work independently. The older pupils take responsibility for helping others, particularly younger pupils. Pupils are keen to be involved in all activities offered by the school.
Attendance	Excellent.

Pupils' attitudes make a significant contribution to the ethos of the school and to the high standards achieved. Good concentration and a productive work rate are regular features of lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching is good. In over seven out of ten of lessons, teaching is good; it is very good or excellent in a third of lessons; only one lesson was unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. In every year group, there are examples of very good and excellent teaching. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The key skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school. The teaching of English and music is very good. The teaching of mathematics, science and children under five is consistently good and pupils make good progress. Throughout the school, lessons are well prepared and planned with interesting and stimulating activities that add to the enjoyment of pupils' learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge, manage pupils well and expect pupils to work hard and achieve high standards. Pupils are told what they are expected to learn at the start of the lesson and, when appropriate, are reminded of their individual targets for improvement. At the end of lessons, pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they have learnt and how they have improved. A particular strength of the teaching is the quality of questioning that challenges pupils to think more deeply about what they are doing and extends the quality and range of their vocabulary. The enthusiasm of staff is obvious in all the tasks they undertake. The excellent teaching is inspirational in quality and extends all pupils to the limit. The very good teaching is rigorously planned and taught, highly motivating, and stretches all attainment groups. Very good teaching in English and good teaching in mathematics follows closely the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and implements the methods very effectively. Good teaching in other subjects uses methods that help pupils quickly acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding. Satisfactory teaching embraces the educational needs of the majority of the pupils but is not always specific about learning objectives for each lesson or groups of lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and caters well for the differing interests and needs of the pupils. A very good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the statutory curriculum. An interesting variety of visitors and visits extend the scope of learning opportunities. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision and support enables pupils to make very good progress. A team of well-briefed learning support assistants is used effectively to support learning. The recommendations of the code of practice are fully met. Targets set for pupils are realistic and achievable.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for moral and social development is good; spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring pupils' achievements and for staff to be aware of pupils' social and emotional needs.

The school's links with parents are very good. Individual target setting helps parents to be part of their children's learning. Annual reports are informative, clearly identifying pupils' progress and indicating areas for improvement. The school provides a stimulating curriculum that promotes above average levels of achievement in most subjects. Very good emphasis is placed on teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. However, greater emphasis could be made on the better use of basic learning skills, particularly in using and applying literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The excellent lead provided by the headteacher sets high expectations for the school community. She is very well supported by key members of staff and others with management responsibilities. The staff are hard working and operate effectively as a team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors work effectively through committees to meet their statutory responsibilities. They are well-informed and effective as critical friends, particularly in monitoring the school's achievements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring arrangements are very good. Test results are analysed and used well to help determine priorities. Effective action is taken when weaknesses are identified.
The strategic use of resources	The budget is managed well. The school seeks to gain very good value for money in all its expenditure.

The self-evaluation of the school's performance is very good and identifies accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The budget is managed judiciously and the planned use of the current surplus meets the school's priorities well. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is very good. Resources for learning are good and the accommodation is sufficient.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children are taught well and are making good progress. • Teachers are approachable. • Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • The majority of parents believe that the school works closely with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An analysis of the pre-inspection questionnaires shows that 20 per cent of parents responding have concerns about children being set the right amount of homework. • 19 per cent have concerns about the range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team endorses parents' views about the strengths of the school. Parents believe that Ridgeway is a very good school. Inspection evidence shows that the school has a clear, published homework policy that gives good advice to parents on the frequency of homework and how to help their children. The consistent setting of homework has been improved by the regular use of homework diaries, particularly in the juniors. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Overall, test results are well above the national average; they are also well above average when compared with schools that have a similar intake. Standards in writing have been improved and are now above average. The proportion of pupils achieving high standards is well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Trends over time show that the school is improving at a rate broadly in line with the national picture. Overall, boys achieve slightly higher standards than girls. Educational value added over the four junior years is well above average in English and mathematics and average in science. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy has had a major impact on standards in the school.

2. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils enter the nursery with skills in reading, writing and mathematics that are above the expected level. Pupils in the current Year 2 are making very good progress in improving their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills and are achieving well above average standards. They achieve standards that are above the national average in mathematics and science. The school expects these pupils to achieve even higher standards by the end of the year. Standards in the current Year 6 are above average in all three core subjects. Pupils are making good progress and are expected to achieve well above average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science by the end of the year. Girls are now achieving similar standards to boys, particularly in science. The school is on course to exceed its targets for 2001 and 2002. Overall, by the age of eleven, attainment in art and design, design and technology, history, information and communication technology and religious education is satisfactory with many good features. Attainment in geography, music and physical education is good.

3. The 2000 National Curriculum test results in English for eleven-year-olds were well above average. Ninety five per cent of pupils achieved the expected level and 59 per cent achieved the more demanding level 5. When the performance of these pupils is compared with their achievements at the age of seven, the educational value added is well above average when compared with all schools and also with similar schools. Since 1996, boys have made good progress and girls very good progress; they are now achieving similar standards. These results show a considerable improvement in standards in reading and writing since the last inspection report. Inspection evidence shows that attainment is above average or better and that before the tests are taken 2001, attainment is likely to rise significantly after the targeting of additional resources and at least two more terms of effective teaching. In the light of these results, the target of 80 per cent of pupils to reach the expected level at the end of the juniors in 2001 lacks challenge. The school is considering modifying this target.

4. The test results in mathematics show that since 1999 standards have significantly improved and are now well above the national averages and well above average when compared with similar schools for eleven-year-old pupils. The numbers of pupils reaching the more demanding level 5 have risen from three out of ten and now accounts for half of the pupils. This is well above average when compared with national averages and with similar schools. There is no significant difference between the standards of the boys or girls. The achievements of the pupils with special educational needs are very good. In the light of these results, the target of 85 per cent of pupils to reach the expected level at the end of the juniors in 2001 lacks challenge. The school is considering modifying this target. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above average. It is likely, however, that before the tests are taken in 2001, standards will have been raised significantly due to the targeting of additional resources. Standards are above average in all aspects of mathematics, but the school needs to ensure that the pupils' ability to use and apply their skills in number work are developed in line with other areas of mathematics in both the infants and the juniors.

5. Test results in science show that since 1999 standards have improved and are now above the national averages but average when compared to similar schools for eleven-year-old pupils. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels has been increased substantially and was well above the national average. Results from previous years show a widening gap between the attainment of boys and girls with boys achieving higher standards. The school has made changes to the teaching and learning in the subject with the adoption of a new scheme of work and has given more emphasis to experimental and investigative science. These are already beginning to have a positive effect on attainment. Early indications are that the gap in performance between girls and boys is being reduced. Inspection evidence indicates that this rising trend in attainment has been maintained, and that by the end of the juniors, the attainment of the majority of pupils will be above average. This is an overall improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

6. The 2000 National Curriculum test results in English for seven-year-olds were very high. All pupils achieved the

expected level in reading and 95 per cent in writing. Sixty eight per cent achieved the more demanding level 3 in reading; this is very high. Twenty eight per cent achieved level 3 in writing; this is well above the national average. Since 1996, boys and girls have made very good progress in reading. In writing, girls have made very good progress and boys good progress. Overall, girls are achieving slightly higher standards than boys.

7. In mathematics test results show that since 1999, standards have risen and are now very high when compared with all schools and well above average when compared with seven-year-old pupils in similar schools. The numbers of pupils who attain the higher level 3 has risen from four out of ten to six out of ten, which is very high even when compared with similar schools. There is no significant difference between the standards of the boys or girls. The achievements of the pupils with special educational needs are very good. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards are above average. It is likely, however, that before the tests are taken in 2001, standards will have risen significantly due to the targeting of additional resources.

8. Teacher assessments in science showed an improvement since 1999 and standards have risen from being well above average to very high for seven-year-old pupils. The number of pupils achieving the more demanding level 3 standards has increased from 20 per cent to 60 per cent, which is very high. Current inspection evidence indicates that this rising trend in attainment has been maintained, and that by the end of the infants, attainment of the majority of pupils will be well above average. This is an overall improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

9. In most years, children enter school with average skills in speaking and listening as measured by baseline assessments. In the reception year, they rapidly improve their speaking and listening skills. In the infants and juniors, speaking and listening skills are very good. In Year 2, pupils talk and listen with assurance. They are developing and using a wide range of vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are very well spoken. They talk and listen confidently. Pupils vary expression and vocabulary to engage the listeners' attention. All pupils speak well in assemblies. Pupils with special educational needs show a growing confidence and participate fully in these activities.

10. In most years, children enter school with average skills in reading. In the reception year, they make good progress in learning to read. In the infants and juniors, standards in reading are well above average with pupils continuously building on their prior attainment. The substantial majority of pupils are working at least one year ahead of time. Pupils in Year 2 express ideas about stories, poems and non-fiction and read their own writing with expression. Higher attaining pupils read a range of text independently with increasing fluency and accuracy. Nearly all of the pupils in Year 6 are independent readers. They respond imaginatively to text and can recognise figurative language. Pupils are able to distinguish between facts and fiction. Silent reading skills are well developed. Lower attaining pupils have made considerable progress since the age of seven because of effective teaching and very good support from skilled learning support assistants. The higher attaining pupils are self-motivating and confident readers, capable of tackling text at an adult level of difficulty. They use information books effectively for research purposes.

11. Standards in writing are well above average throughout the school with pupils continuously building on their prior attainment. The substantial majority of pupils are working at least two terms ahead of time by the age of seven. This has increased to at least one year ahead of time by the age of eleven; this represents good progress. In Year 2, about nine out of ten pupils can write interesting sentences and imaginative stories. Spelling is usually correct and handwriting is developing well. Higher attaining pupils are sequencing sentences well choosing words for variety and interest. They make good use of thesauruses to assist this process. Spelling and punctuation is usually accurate. Handwriting is legibly formed and joined.

12. In Year 6, nine out of ten pupils are able to write stories, articles and poems that are organised appropriately to suit the purpose. They use grammatically correct sentences with accurate punctuation and spelling. Four out of ten in this group have more advanced skills. They write longer, complex sentences, with commas separating clauses, and well-developed use of adjectives and adverbs. These higher attaining pupils consciously vary the beginning of sentences and paragraphs and incorporate standard English constructions into their sentences. They continue to improve their writing as part of homework assignments. The books of lower attaining pupils show that they have made good progress since the beginning of the school year in writing sequences of sentences using more varied and interesting vocabulary. In most year groups, when opportunities occur in subjects other than English, not enough is done to use and apply pupils' literacy skills. Good opportunities are missed to extend pupils' awareness of the choices of organisation, vocabulary and style that they can use to suit the purpose of writing and improve their work, for example in science, history and religious education.

13. Standards in mathematics are very high in the infants and above average in the juniors. In Year 2, most pupils can recognise multiples of 2s, 5s, and 10s, and some know the differences between odd and even numbers. They know how to add, subtract, multiply and divide using single and two digit numbers and use this knowledge to solve simple problems. Nearly all of the pupils can name and describe the features of two and three-dimensional shapes. An

appropriate and balanced range of mathematical topics is covered, but there is little evidence of information and communication technology skills being used to extend mathematical skills. By the end of the juniors, nine out of ten pupils can multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 or 100. They can mentally recall number facts and use all four number operations to solve word problems involving numbers from every day life. Pupils can calculate the perimeter and area of shapes, and have good knowledge of fractions and can apply this knowledge to money problems successfully. They can measure angles accurately and have a developing knowledge of symmetry. Higher attaining pupils extend their understanding by investigating the surface areas of three-dimensional objects. All pupils can handle data in an appropriate, clear and organised manner. In the infants and juniors, pupils have limited opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to other subjects, and this limits the range and scope of their learning experiences.

14. In science, pupils make a good start in the reception class. In Year 2, the majority of pupils are able to identify different habitats for different creatures and can classify living and non-living things. They know that the shape of a boat affects how well it floats or sinks. Pupils can describe the uses of electricity in the home. Higher attaining pupils have tested how far sound carries and average and lower attaining pupils can identify loud and soft sounds. In Year 6, pupils are using their new knowledge of living things to identify why particular creatures are suited to particular habitats. Knowledge of the life cycle of plants and seed germination has been used in experiments about growing conditions. Pupils test soil samples for their ability to absorb water. In work on materials, higher attaining pupils understand that some changes are reversible and some are not. All groups of pupils are developing and understanding about light and the movement of the sun and earth in space and how this effects the seasons and day and night. Average and lower attaining pupils have a good knowledge of fair testing. While investigative skills are developed well by the majority of pupils, higher attaining pupils are not set sufficiently demanding or challenging tasks. These pupils are seldom given opportunities to set up their own experiments rather than follow ones directed by the teacher. This remains an area of improvement for the school.

15. Nearly all children under five-years of age are making good progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals for the foundation stage of education. Their personal, social and emotional development is good. Communication, language and literacy skills are developing well. Many children are making good progress in ordering and sequencing numbers and mentally calculating simple number problems. They show good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children's physical and creative development is good.

16. In the infants, pupils continue to build on their prior attainments and the progress made is good. By the age of seven, pupils' achievements in design and technology, history, information and communication technology and religious education are satisfactory. Pupils' achievements in art and design, geography, music and physical education are good. In art and design, pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress in improving their drawing and painting skills. They have a good knowledge of some artists, their pictures and the techniques they used. In design and technology, they are acquiring appropriate making skills and experiment with material when constructing vehicles and houses. Pupils make good progress in geography achieving better than expected knowledge of the locality and are skilful in using maps to locate places of interest. In history, pupils are acquiring a satisfactory knowledge of past and present times and of the lives of some famous people. Since the last inspection, pupils' skills in information and communication technology have improved. Most pupils show increasing confidence in using keyboard skills to write text and to program floor robots. Musical skills are very well developed, particularly composing and playing musical compositions. Pupils' achievements in physical education are above average, particularly in planning, performing and evaluating activities in dance and gymnastics and they make good progress. In religious education, pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge of bible stories and Christian festivals and some of the ceremonies of other faith groups.

17. In the juniors, pupils' rate of progress continues to be good. By the age of eleven, pupils' achievements in art and design, design and technology, history, information and communication technology and religious education are satisfactory when compared with their achievements at the age of seven. Pupils' achievements in geography, music and physical education are good. In art and design, pupils are improving their observational drawing and use successfully a range of media to express their ideas. They show a growing appreciation of art from other cultures. In design and technology, they show satisfactory gains in their understanding of the design and making process. Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of places and the factors that influence the changing climate in geography. Their historical knowledge is satisfactory. They use resources well for helping to improve their understanding of the impact of events on peoples' lives. Since the last inspection, pupils' skills in information and communication technology have improved. They are making appropriate progress in using a range of programs and show increasing skill in using art packages to design bookmarks. Pupils are developing a good understanding of the use of information technology to communicate with other people such as video conferencing and using the Internet. They make good progress in improving their musical skills, particularly in composing and appraising. Listening skills are developing well and pupils' perform successfully their own compositions using a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They have very good knowledge of lyrics, the impact of music on people's emotions and can recognise popular tunes by their

rhythmic patterns. Pupils' achievements in physical education are above average, particularly in athletics, dance, games and gymnastics. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in improving their throwing skills. In religious education, pupils show gains in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and world religions and progress is satisfactory.

18. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their prior achievements, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The detail on their individual education plans means that their targets are clear and are understood by the teachers and the learning support assistants. Consequently, the work undertaken is highly focused and assistants are able to give very good support. There are clear procedures for monitoring progress of the pupils as they move between stages of the special needs register. This represents very good provision, contributes well to the improving rate of pupils' progress and shows a significant improvement since the last report.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

19. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good; this is similar to the last inspection report. Behaviour is good and in some classes, it is very good; there have been no exclusions. Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Attendance is excellent and well above the national average.

20. Pupils have a very good attitude to school; this is confirmed by 98 per cent of parents. They arrive promptly at the beginning of the day and settle quickly into a routine with which they are familiar such as practising their handwriting or reading a book. Pupils are welcoming to visitors and on second meeting will readily be the first to speak. They are courteous and practise their good manners on all adults. Pupils take a pride in their school and its achievements as demonstrated by their willingness to give visitors an informative conducted tour of the school. They enjoy sharing and discussing their work, answering questions with confidence; for example in an English lesson about selecting appropriately dramatic words for opening sentences to a story in the mixed age group class in Years 3 and 4. In a Year 3 class, following a discussion on the parts of a plant and the need for water, pupils were eager to demonstrate their new knowledge by producing a poster showing a healthy and unhealthy plant. Pupils with special educational needs are developing positive attitudes to learning and are growing in confidence. They enjoy coming to school and feel valued and supported by the teachers, the learning support assistants and other pupils.

21. Behaviour is good; it is very good in some classes. The headteacher and class teachers regularly reinforce the importance of good behaviour; any unacceptable behaviour is dealt with swiftly. In each class, pupils have participated in drawing up the class rules. Teachers use these rules skilfully by asking pupils to identify those rules that were being broken when lessons did not run smoothly with immediately effective results. No bullying, racist or sexist behaviour was seen or reported by pupils. The behaviour of pupils with special educational needs is good. When pupils have concerns about the impact of other pupils' behaviour on themselves, they speak to teachers with confidence and are at ease. The very good relationship pupils have with each other and with members of staff, makes a significant impact on their behaviour, their learning and the standards achieved.

22. Pupils' personal development and their social and health education and experience of citizenship are strengths of the school; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Personal development is very good throughout the school and pupils show increasing confidence as they move through the school. Many opportunities are offered and readily accepted with enthusiasm. In Years 5 and 6, pupils look after the school office during lunchtime and were seen doing so very efficiently. In Year 4, pupils act as buddies for the younger ones who may be having difficulties in the playground or at lunchtime. Certificates of achievement are presented to pupils for citizenship. Money raised by the parent teacher association always goes directly to the children so that they can see what has been bought with the money raised; this creates in the children a sense of value.

23. The school's setting of individual targets has given each pupil the opportunity to seek continuing improvement related to their ability; to take responsibility for their own learning and to share with teachers, parents and carers their success in achieving each target. The maturity and confidence of Year 6 pupils is the result of the many personal development opportunities offered throughout the school.

24. The development of class rules by pupils has enabled them to gain an understanding of the meaning and reason for rules; why rules change as the pupils mature and take responsibility for their own actions. The children's committee has enabled debate and the rights of others to become a part of their daily life, together with an understanding of democracy. The school's video conferencing link has enabled pupils to communicate with other schools, engendering a wider knowledge of the outside world: it provides a good base from which to develop associations with schools in geographical areas studied as part of the curriculum.

25. The school makes good use of its own, and external, expertise in the teaching of healthy living. Pupils are aware

of health and safety issues, particularly in design and technology, science and physical education lessons. They have good opportunities to discuss issues about healthy living with the school nurse and a local dentist. Older pupils value the opportunity to talk with a general practitioner about their thoughts and feelings as they grow and face the changes of puberty as they begin to develop into young adults.

26. The very good level of relationships throughout the school demonstrates the effectiveness of staff role models and expectations regarding bullying, racism and sexism. Pupils have good opportunities in class and around the school to show initiative and take responsibility, which they accept and fulfil well. Pupils with special educational needs value the buddy system and the help they receive from older pupils. Initiative is positively encouraged, for example pupils in Years 4 and 5 chose to support a Blue Peter appeal by making posters and boxes, followed by a presentation in assembly. In Year 6, pupils elected two colleagues to represent them for a year as road safety officers. They attended a luncheon at county hall; issue bulletins; maintain a notice board; run and judge competitions; prepare statistics and send the results to county hall.

27. Pupils' attendance is excellent. Attendance is well above the national average and unauthorised absence is below the national average. Pupils are keen to learn and arrive punctually for the beginning of the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

28. Teaching is good overall; 99 per cent is satisfactory or better, including 74 per cent that is good or better and 33 per cent that is very good or excellent. The quality of teaching is better than most schools and is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching was unsatisfactory in only one lesson, in art and design in Year 1. There is good teaching in every year group. There are examples of very good or excellent teaching in all year groups. Teaching of the children under five is good overall, with 20 per cent of lessons being very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Overall, teaching is good in the infants. Over 70 per cent of the lessons were good or better and 40 per cent were very good or excellent; there was one unsatisfactory lesson. In the juniors, 72 per cent lessons were judged to be good or better and 31 per cent very good or excellent. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

29. The teaching of English is very good, where 100 per cent is satisfactory or better, including 85 per cent that is good or better and nearly half being very good or excellent. The teaching of mathematics is good, where 100 per cent is satisfactory or better, including 70 per cent that is good or better and 20 per cent being very good or excellent. The teaching of science is good where 100 per cent is satisfactory or better, including 80 per cent that is good or better. Teaching in music is very good. Overall, teaching in geography and physical education is good. Teaching in art and design, and information and communication technology is at least satisfactory with some good features. The evidence for the direct teaching of design and technology, history and religious education is limited; the small amount available indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory.

30. High quality teaching in English challenges and stretches high, average and low attaining pupils in reading and helps them acquire a good knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Teaching in mathematics meets the needs of all the pupils and is consistently good. In science, teachers' subject knowledge and planning have significantly improved and teaching is now good; this is an improvement since the last inspection. The teaching of other subjects meets the needs of all pupils and none were found to be underachieving or struggling to keep up. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good; these pupils are helped to overcome their difficulties by the effectiveness of the learning support assistants.

31. Where teaching is very good or excellent, the lessons are exciting and challenging for the pupils. In a very good mathematics lesson in Year 2, challenging questions were used to verify and extend what pupils knew about three-dimensional shapes. The questioning was perceptive and, together with the effective use of resources, helped generate a spirit of enquiry and maintain a fast pace to the work of all pupils. In Year 4, very good relationships helped create an excellent learning situation in which pupils discussed the use of powerful verbs to be included in their poems. In a very good science lesson in Year 5, the teacher's good subject knowledge was used to help pupils explain and expand their ideas about how creatures are adapted to a particular habitat and their progress was very good. In the mixed age group class in Years 3 and 4, the dramatic approach of the teacher helped pupils make excellent progress in writing the opening sentences to a story. In Year 3, the teachers very good subject knowledge and ability to demonstrate well helped pupils compose and conduct group composition using different musical elements. All pupils were highly motivated and challenged by the task set and sufficiently confident to conduct the performances of their works. In the mixed age group class in Years 1 and 2, the teacher's enthusiasm for physical education was infectious. Very good use was made of pupil demonstration to emphasise the key teaching points about balancing using triangular shapes and the importance of using the legs as shock absorbers when jumping safely from

apparatus.

32. Where teaching is good, nearly all pupils increase their knowledge and skills appropriate by the end of the lesson. Basic skills and subject content are clearly explained and there is a good emphasis on correct terminology. In an information and communication technology lesson in Year 6, clear explanations and demonstrations of the use of spreadsheets helped pupils make good progress in using the correct formulae for manipulating data. Teaching in the reception year is consistently good. Good knowledge of how children learn, high expectations and clear explanations helped children work with sustained concentration and enjoyment, for example when reading from big books. The teacher used perceptive questions to assess children's knowledge and skills and indicate how they could improve.

33. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, class routines were not firmly established, time was not used well and rules about behaviour were not enforced. This was an over ambitious art and design lesson in Year 1, where pupils were using glitter and glue to decorate their pictures.

34. There are satisfactory or better levels of subject knowledge and expertise among the teachers in most subjects. Satisfactory teaching embraces the educational needs of the majority of the pupils but is not always specific about learning objectives for each lesson or group of lessons. All teachers are technically competent in teaching phonics and other basic skills. The teachers have good knowledge of the National Curriculum attainment levels in English, mathematics and science, and satisfactory knowledge of other subjects, and this leads to expectations being appropriately high. Teaching methods are generally effective. The methods in English and mathematics follow those in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and are implemented successfully, particularly in English. Overall, teachers manage pupils well and relationships are good. Assessment at a classroom level is satisfactory. The teachers and support assistants know the pupils well and encourage them to overcome difficulties. At the end of lessons, teachers check pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding well but do not give them opportunities to reflect on what they have learnt and the progress they have made in order to improve further. Homework arrangements are satisfactory and there are appropriate systems for communicating with parents.

35. In English, mathematics and science, the rate at which pupils learn and make progress is good or better in most year groups. In nearly all other lessons in these subjects, almost every pupil extends their knowledge or skills by appropriate amounts and their understanding deepens. Work is pitched at different levels to meet the differing needs of pupils. In a very good mathematics lesson in Year 5, mental work at the beginning of the lesson deepened pupils' understanding of place value. By the end of the lesson, high attaining pupils were confidently using and applying their knowledge when solving problems associated with these skills. All pupils were able to check their answers successfully using calculators. Pupils' learning and progress in English is good in most lessons; it is often very good in Year 2 and Years 3 and 4. In science, very good progress was made by pupils in Years 5 and 6. At the beginning of the lesson, a very good review was made of what pupils know, understand and can do. This helped the teacher pitch the lesson at a higher level than expected. By the end of the session, after the setting of challenging tasks, the application of intellectual effort and hard work, pupils were using and applying their research skills well to deepen their understanding about different habitats. Although the number of lessons observed in non-core subjects varied, in most subjects teaching was effective. In a very good religious education lesson about advent in Year 4, all pupils developed, as the lesson progressed, a real understanding about looking forward to an event and reflecting on the experience of waiting for it to happen. In most lessons, pupils know what they must do to improve and to meet the individual learning targets set by the teachers.

36. The teaching of personal, social, health education and citizenship is good. Teachers use imaginative and stimulating ideas exploring and developing skills in listening, feelings and reflection. In a Year 4 class, pupils were shown a wrapped, mystery gift. From their initial excitement, they were expertly led through different scenarios, for example their reaction to having to wait until Christmas before opening the present. Prompting and questioning by the teacher enabled pupils to explore a range of feelings, listen to others' views and to examine their thoughts. In Year 6, pupils showed an understanding of responsibility, both at home and at school, but required more guidance in applying effort and thought into the wider issues discussed.

37. Pupils with special educational needs are taught very well. They are fully integrated into all lessons and are set tasks appropriate to their abilities. They are extremely well supported by the learning support assistants who understand well the learning needs of each pupil. The individual education plans have clear targets and are used well by the teachers and assistants to set appropriate challenges. Teaching is focused well upon improving literacy and numeracy skills. The assistants make and use school resources very well, which helps create very good conditions for learning. Communication between the special educational needs coordinator, the teachers and the assistants is very good and helps pupils make very good progress.

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

38. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of pupils including those with special educational needs. A very good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum. All subjects are taught in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and the Early Learning Goals for pupils under five. The school gives due emphasis to literacy and numeracy and has enthusiastically adopted the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. These have been implemented well, and are helping the school to raise standards. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The programme for pupils' personal, health and social education is taught well throughout the school.

39. The issues from the last inspection report have been addressed successfully. Religious education is now timetabled in each class and makes up approximately 5 per cent of the taught time and standards have improved and are now satisfactory. The school has acquired several computers and additional resources for information and communication technology, statutory requirements are met and standards are rapidly improving. The planning for the youngest children now provides for structured play activities based upon the Early Learning Goals and is appropriate.

40. The school day is timetabled so that the best use is made of teachers' time and lessons do not go on too long. The lessons provide well for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils are set tasks appropriate to their abilities within the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from very good quality support from learning support assistants who understand very well the needs of each pupil. These pupils are identified as early as possible and contact is made with the parents so that all can provide appropriate support. The requirements of the code of practice are fully met. Effective use is made of visiting special educational need specialists to support learning.

41. The school is developing good systems for long, medium and short term planning. Schemes of work, many of them based upon national guidance, are now in place for all subjects. The school is aware, however, that the planning still needs to be developed and more consistently implemented by teachers. Greater emphasis on teachers identifying specifically what pupils are required to learn in a lesson would add to the quality of teaching. Limited planned opportunities are provided for pupils to use their basic learning skills in other subjects of the curriculum, particularly in using and applying literacy, numeracy and information technology skills.

42. In addition to the statutory curriculum, the school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities for boys and girls. These include athletics, cross-country, cricket, football, gymnastics, netball and short tennis clubs. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in competitive sports. Effective use is made of visiting sports coaches from county cricket, rugby, and football clubs to improve pupils' games skills. Other activities encourage pupils to participate in French and recorder groups and in chess and scrabble clubs; this they do with enthusiasm. Parents' concerns about lack of provision are not justified.

43. The provision for pupils' personal, social health education and citizenship is good. Lessons about healthy living are supported well by regular input from the school nurse and a local dentist. The school makes effective use of a governor, who is also a general practitioner; to help with the teaching of sex education. Older pupils value the opportunity to talk with her about their thoughts and feelings as they face the changes of puberty and begin to develop into young adults. Once a year, a health week gives all pupils good opportunity to explore an area of health that they feel is of particular importance to them, for example one class invited the school nurse to talk about drugs. A commercial package is used for drugs' education; the school has not explored the possibility of inviting the drugs' liaison officer to talk to pupils.

44. The school has an appropriate homework policy, which helps create opportunities for pupils to be supported by parents; it conforms with the recently published national guidance. The consistent setting and marking homework has been improved but parents' still have concerns about the amount of work set.

45. Links with the community are good. Parents are encouraged to help support pupils' learning in school. Local business supports developments well in information and communication technology. The liaison with religious leaders and sports clubs helps enrich provision. Educational visits are used to widen pupils' experiences of the locality, region and contrasting localities, for example visits to Hunstanton, Coventry Cathedral and environmental study areas. There is good liaison with the local upper school, which pupils visit to use their resources. This contributes to the smooth transition of pupils to the next stage of education.

46. The school provides effectively for pupils of all ages, gender and ethnic diversity. The curriculum provides equality of access and opportunities for all pupils and most make good progress in lessons. Provision for pupils' personal, health and social education is good. The issue of misuse of drugs is sensitively discussed with pupils. The governors monitor carefully that sex education is appropriately taught and that the school nurse is positively and usefully involved.

47. Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils' spirituality is promoted appropriately through school assemblies, collective worship and religious education lessons. Times for quiet reflection are given for pupils to consider personal and spiritual experiences such as in an assembly on the theme of colours. Pupils were asked to consider what a world without colour would be like and to reflect on its impact on their lives. When singing hymns, they are encouraged to think about the deeper meanings of the words and how they relate to themselves. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were very mature in their responses when thinking about the meaning of advent. Pupils' talents are celebrated in assemblies through 'live performances', for example in the story of Noah, which was used very effectively to help pupils to think about making and keeping promises. In Years 5 and 6, displays of work on the beauty and diversity of our landscapes encourage pupils to be aware of the world about them.

48. Provision for moral development is good. Stories in assemblies, the use of class rules and the underlying ethos of the school help to promote values such as fairness and respect. The school behaviour policy and its system of rewards and sanctions are well known to all and encourage pupils to make the appropriate choices, and distinguish between right and wrong. Pupils are self-assured and will talk to adults during break times to seek their advice before disputes arise. When incidents happen, teachers help pupils through discussion to appreciate the effect their actions have on others. Teachers, and all other adults in the school, have very good relationships with pupils and they provide good role models to which they can relate.

49. Provision for social development is good. All classes encourage their pupils to take responsibilities, for example in putting out and clearing away equipment, and taking registers to the office. Older pupils in Year 6 look after younger pupils during wet break times and respond well to 'staffing' the office telephone at lunchtime. Others act as reading buddies to pupils in the infant classes, which they enjoy. There is a school council of staff and older pupils, which meets on a regular basis. Pupils raise money for those less fortunate than themselves and a number of charities have benefited from this work. Residential visits for Year 6 pupils encourage them to learn to live together. Good teamwork is encouraged in dance, games and music lessons. A significant feature of many lessons was the way in which pupils cooperate and collaborate with each other, sharing ideas and resources in a mature manner.

50. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Although all pupils have a good introduction to their local heritage and culture through a series of local walks and visits, other aspects of their multicultural development are not so well emphasised. They are able to compare other localities, such as the Isle of Struay and India in their geography studies. Other beliefs and values are studied in religious education lessons. They look at other cultures through history, music and art topics but more could be made of these opportunities, for example to study other artists from other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

51. There are good procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe and looked after well. Child protection arrangements are securely in place. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are very good. The school makes good use of its own, and external, expertise in the teaching of healthy living.

52. Pupils work in a very caring, supportive and clean environment. All staff know the pupils well. There is very good supervision of pupils at playtime and lunchtime. At the end of school, a member of staff is in the playground to ensure that someone known to the teacher collects the youngest pupils. A risk assessment is carried out annually. The school has adopted the locally agreed child protection procedures successfully. Two members of staff, as well as a governor, have received appropriate training. All new members of staff, including lunchtime and support staff receive good training as part of their induction to the school. Staff undertake first aid training regularly.

53. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. When it is appropriate, teachers remind pupils about school and class rules. Pupils' respond well when asked which class rule is being broken. In most cases, the asking of the question has an effective and immediate impact. The systems of rewards and sanctions are known well by the pupils. Younger children receive stickers and older pupils merit certificates for good behaviour; this has a positive impact on others. Positive behaviour, attitudes and achievement are promoted weekly when

commendations, are entered in the Ridgeway Gold Book. Certificates of achievement are presented to pupils such as in the performing arts, sport and citizenship, as well as pupils whose endeavour should be acknowledged publicly. This helps to create a good learning atmosphere in the school. Attendance is promoted through talking to pupils about the importance of coming to school. Good attendance certificates are presented at the end of the academic year and are valued highly by the pupils.

54. The education and personal support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers and learning support assistants know individual pupils well and are fully aware of their differing needs. The arrangements for monitoring and promoting the progress of pupils towards the targets on their individual education plans are very good. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good. A healthy lifestyle is promoted well in lessons. Effective use is made of visiting health professionals.

55. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school uses assessment information well to target additional support, particularly in English and mathematics. This helps focus the learning upon individual needs and ensures that teachers are informed early of any lack of progress. The senior management and coordinators monitor pupils' progress very well and take effective action, when necessary. Assessment data is used well to raise standards and inform curriculum planning. The analysis of previous test results highlighted the growing difference in attainment between girls and boys in science; this has now been made a priority for the future development in the subject. The school makes comparisons between its results and those of other schools nationally and those with pupils from similar backgrounds. This data is used well to identify areas for improvement. Detailed analysis is made of achievement by comparing pupil performance in comparison to the baseline assessment on entry to the school. Parents value the early assessment of pupils with special educational needs, and the good provision derived from it enables these pupils to make good progress.

56. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are very good. Progress is tracked carefully as the pupils' move through the school to check on how they are getting on and to predict future results. This is particularly effective in Years 5 and 6 where teachers focus more closely on individual targets. Reference to these targets is made on every appropriate occasion to remind pupils of what they have to do to improve. This has been a significant contributory factor in the raising of standards in English and mathematics over recent time. Monitoring and assessment information identifies accurately those pupils needing extra support in reading; action was taken and standards have improved. A similar exercise has identified the need to develop writing skills across the curriculum and the school has plans to address this issue.

57. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress in other subjects is not as firmly established. The school is aware of the need to develop this aspect of its provision to meet the requirements of the new Curriculum 2000. Some collections of pupils' work have been started; this is beginning to be used to show pupils' achievements measured against the National Curriculum levels of attainment. These are providing a sound basis for end of year reports and the discussions with parents on open evenings.

58. The reception class has very good assessment procedures on entry to school and excellent on-going records are kept of the progress children make. This is used very effectively to determine when children are ready to start the National Curriculum programmes of study.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

59. The school's links with parents are very good; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Parent's involvement in their children's learning at home and in school is very good. The quality of the information that parents receive about pupils' progress is excellent.

60. Parents are kept well informed through the wide range of information the school provides. Newsletters are sent out very regularly, they are of high quality, attractively presented and informative. Parents receive very good information about the curriculum such as in the "Learning Journey – a parents' guide to the curriculum" and the school's behaviour policy. A parental survey is collected annually; they receive comments on the results and are advised about the actions being taken by the headteacher and governors. Parents have been provided with very good information about recent and future improvements to the school buildings. Parents have easy access to class notice boards, which give an overview of what children are doing in class that week, with reminders about special events and requests for help for additional learning resources.

61. A document, "Target setting with parents – autumn 2000", provides an important link for parents with their child's education. Targets are set under the headings of literacy, numeracy, personal and social development and when they

are achieved, a parent's signature is required. This helps them to know how their child is progressing on a regular basis. Older pupils are involved in writing personal targets, building on the previous year. This initiative has made a significant impact on pupils' learning, in particular it creates a clearer understanding of what they need to do to improve and actively involves parents in their child's learning.

62. Parents are involved in reviewing regularly their child's progress. Procedures that are more formal are followed when progress is reported to parents in the spring term and at the end of year. Annual reports are well presented, giving parents good information about their child's attainment and progress and identifying targets for the next year. Parents value highly the opportunity to discuss the report with the class teacher before the end of the summer term. In addition, curriculum evenings and the availability of staff at the beginning and end of the day to discuss any problems provide parents with very good opportunities to discuss any concerns they have. Parents of pupils who are experiencing learning or behavioural difficulties are informed at an early stage and are provided regularly with information about the progress of their child. Parents are always fully involved in any of the review procedures and are provided with information on how they can help their child.

63. Parents have expressed some concerns about the inconsistencies in setting homework. Some problems did exist in the early stages, and were highlighted in the annual parents' survey. These problems have now been resolved by the use of homework diaries in the juniors. Homework is included in the teachers' planning and it is monitored on a regular basis by the headteacher.

64. Parents are actively involved in the life of the school. Almost 100 per cent of parents have signed the home-school agreement. Parents help regularly in classrooms supporting the teachers and helping improve learning resources. The size of hall does not allow the school to invite parents to assembly and other events, as often as they would wish. The parent teacher association is a strong feature of the school, organising a wide range of events throughout the year. The association has provided additional equipment that has made a significant impact on pupils' education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

65. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher are excellent. She is supported well by the deputy headteacher and key members of staff. Together they set high standards and lead by example. Their evaluation of the school's performance identifies accurately its strengths and weakness. The headteacher has a clear view of how she wants the school to develop. This is conveyed to staff and they share her commitment to providing a high quality education for pupils. The school's aims are met well. The headteacher has high expectations of staff and provides them with positive and constructive advice on their performance. Subject coordinators are working hard to develop their subjects. They recognise the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility and give effective advice, support and guidance to their colleagues.

66. The school's aims are clearly expressed, have been developed collaboratively, agreed and recently reviewed. They are highly relevant and form the basis of a shared sense of purpose for the school. Policies, such as those for improving pupils' behaviour, the professional development of staff, and teaching and learning, have all been developed through detailed consultations with staff and are being implemented effectively.

67. The school development plan is constructed well and clearly identifies costs, training needs and success criteria to bring about continuous improvement over the next three years. The involvement of both staff and governors means that educational priorities identified are highly relevant. A system for target setting is well established. It involves all staff in analysing pupils' strengths and weaknesses and in identifying what pupils need to work on to make further improvements. Good analyses of test results and a detailed system of tracking the attainment of individual pupils have been developed by the headteacher and key members of staff. This has enabled the school to identify discrepancies between pupils' prior attainment at the age of seven with attainment by the age of eleven. Very effective action was taken and unsatisfactory educational value added scores, which were well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science in 1999, were improved to being well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science in the year 2000. Teachers are monitoring pupils' progress regularly to ensure these targets are achieved. In this way, staff are constantly striving to raise pupils' levels of achievement. In addition, it provides a secure framework upon which the school can plan effectively and judge value for money.

68. The governing body shares and affirms the headteacher's plans for the future educational direction of the school, is fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses and takes effective action to bring about improvements. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well and all relevant requirements are met. They work effectively through appropriate committees. Governors are well informed, interested and enthusiastic about the school. Governor training and the induction of new members are good. They fulfil their role as critical friend effectively, such as when questioning

the value-added results from previous years. The action they took at that time, in conjunction with the headteacher, was decisive and has quickly improved the situation, which is now very favourable to the school. They continue to monitor the school's performance closely, particularly pupils' attainment and progress in each year group. The chair of governors and others members with specific responsibilities for the curriculum, numeracy, literacy and special educational needs visit the school every week and have very good working relationships with the teachers and pupils. Parent governors are particularly effective and gain valuable insight into the working of the school while supporting pupils' learning. This has helped governors acquire better knowledge about the problems the school experiences, for example library and information and communication technology provision and, in the past, the need for more learning support assistants.

69. The headteacher and key staff regularly and rigorously monitor the quality of teaching and learning by direct classroom observation. This very good level of quality control is effective in planning for improvement and in helping to maintain the overall ethos of the school. Subject coordinators are beginning to sample pupils' work across the school in order to gain a better understanding of pupils' levels of attainment and what needs to be improved. Together with the headteacher, they have set realistic and challenging targets for improvement for their areas of responsibility. Subject coordinators are effective in the performance of their duties; some are new to their posts this year but already they have developed a good working knowledge about standards and the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.

70. Induction arrangements for newly appointed teachers are good and relevant statutory requirements are met. Good systems are in place for appraisal and performance management. The professional development of staff is good. National funds for this purpose are used well. Teachers and non-teaching staff are regularly in training aimed at improving school performance. The training in literacy and numeracy, for example, has had and continues to have a significant impact on raising standards.

71. The leadership and management of special educational needs are excellent. The coordinator is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a firm grasp of provision for all pupils with special educational needs throughout the school. She provides very good advice and support to the very able and highly qualified team of learning support assistants. The assistants keep up to date by attending appropriate training and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The coordinator ensures that the progress of all pupils with special educational needs is monitored and that the targets in the education support plans are clearly linked with pupils' needs. The requirements of the code of conduct are fully met. There is appropriate monitoring of practice and provision by the governing body. The recent appointment of one of its members to oversee special educational needs will enable the governing body to fulfil its statutory obligation in a more rigorous manner. Resources for the teaching of the pupils with special educational needs are good and used well.

72. Financial planning is very good; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Best value principles of compare, compete, challenge and consult are applied. To ensure their finances are spent wisely and to best effect, the school has made use of the Audit Commission's diagnostic software to self-evaluate their management of resources and finances. This has enabled them to identify areas where there is room for improvement, for example under the headings "compare" and "consult". Spending is linked well to the school development plan and includes curriculum areas, staffing and maintenance. The business expertise within the governing body is used well.

73. An increase in the number of support staff has allowed every class to have literacy and numeracy support for two mornings a week; this has made a direct impact on standards. In the current financial year, spending on literacy and numeracy is helping raise standards. A three-year investment plan for information and communication technology is aimed at developing a comprehensive computers network with a dedicated Internet link. Training of staff through the New Opportunities Fund training programme is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment.

74. The school secretary/bursar is an asset to the school, undertaking day to day financial administration effectively. She prepares and presents reports on current expenditure to the finance committee. This is now more tightly controlled by the introduction of monitoring through six monthly reports. The school is seeking ways to make their reporting to governors and the head teacher more effective through improved use of their current software.

75. The management of the school's finances is undertaken prudently, seeking best value. Financial planning and the school development plan are interwoven to ensure continuing rises in standards and improvement in the quality of education provided for all pupils. The very good level of leadership, together with the expertise of the governing body, should ensure that this trend continues.

76. Effective management has led to good levels of staffing. There has been a high turnover of staff in recent times but the current staff are well qualified and share their expertise well. The full time coordinator and well-qualified support staff are of particular benefit to pupils with special educational needs. Provision for personal, social and health

education and citizenship is good; this area of learning now has its own coordinator. Accommodation has improved since the last inspection with recent additions, notably a new reception classroom. New storage and work areas, lost due to recent building work, are to be replaced. However, given the rise in numbers on roll, the school is becoming increasingly cramped for the number of children. This is particularly true for classes in the mobile classrooms, which was a concern at the time of the last inspection. A new classroom area will shortly be added to the school to accommodate additional pupils. The grounds provide appropriate space for play and sports activities, and are well used to support learning in other subjects such as history, geography and science. Overall, resources for learning are at least satisfactory and often good; this is an improvement since the last inspection. The two new suites for teaching information and communication technology skills are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. The overall quality of other resources is good. However, the provision and organisation of non-fiction books in the two library areas is impeding the use of these facilities for research in other subject such as history and science.

77. At the time of the last inspection, the school was giving sound value for money. The school now gives very good value for money. This judgement takes into account pupils' personal circumstances and prior attainment, the quality of education provided, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development, improvement since the last inspection and the outcomes of education in terms of standards achieved. It also takes into account the unit cost of education, which is average for a school of this type.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

78. The school is pursuing the correct priorities in order to raise standards. Within the context of high standards and good teaching, particularly in English, mathematics and science, the school should now:

- raise the quality of teaching in non-core subjects from a satisfactory to a good level by:
 - improving, in any subject where this currently does not happen, the quality of weekly and daily planning by specifying clearly the subject knowledge and skills to be learnt by pupils, including pupils with different levels of attainment;
 - improving the medium term planning in art and design and in religious education, so that the order in which basic knowledge and skills are to be taught during the term is rigorously specified for each lesson;
 - set relevant and measurable targets for improvement;
 - monitor the teaching and the planning regularly to check that the objectives in the plans are effectively taught and that pupils' progress is improving;
 - report regularly to the governing body on progress towards achieving the targets set.
(Discussed in paragraphs 34, 41, 124, 129, 136, 153, 154 and 155)

- develop and extend the use of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills in non-core subjects by:
 - specifying, where relevant in the termly, weekly, and daily planning, the basic literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills to be taught in each subject;
 - monitoring the teaching and the planning regularly to identify and share effective practice in the teaching and application of basic skills in non-core subjects.

(Discussed in paragraphs 12, 13, 41, 56, 97, 102, 106, 107, 110, 118, 139, 140, 145 and 153)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	56

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	28	41	25	1	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	Y1-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	253
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery-YR	Y[1- Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	33

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	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	17	23	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	17
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	40	39	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	98 (88)	100 (90)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	17	17
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	37	40	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (88)	100 (90)	100 (95)
	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	21	18	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	20	21
	Girls	18	16	16
	Total	37	36	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (76)	92 (64)	95 (82)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	18	20
	Girls	17	16	16
	Total	36	34	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (64)	87 (61)	92 (70)
	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	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	244
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	27.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	232

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	402826
Total expenditure	408308
Expenditure per pupil	1502
Balance brought forward from previous year	40298
Balance carried forward to next year	34816

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	272
Number of questionnaires returned	115

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	33	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	43	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	48	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	41	16	4	2
The teaching is good.	54	43	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	52	9	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	29	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	30	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	48	7	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	69	29	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	37	4	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	38	16	3	10

Other issues raised by the parents.

All significant issues raised by the parents are included in the parents' summary earlier in the report.

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

79. Children join the school in the September or January before their fifth birthday. Before their admission there is a well-planned induction programme, which includes meetings with parents and a series of half day visits for children before starting. This enables a gradual introduction to school and good links with home are established. The success of this approach was very evident in the levels of confidence and security shown by all children during the inspection. The new classroom recently completed has considerably enhanced the learning environment for young children. At the time of the inspection, there were 19 children in the reception class. They are assessed within the first half term; these show that the majority of children are above average in language and mathematics, and very slightly below average in personal and social development. Boys and girls settle well and make good progress. Children with particular needs are sensitively supported and make progress in line with other children under the age of five. Current evidence suggests that a number of higher attaining children are already achieving the required levels in the new Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. In all other areas of learning, the majority of children are well on target to achieve their Early Learning Goals by the age of five. This is a major improvement since the last inspection, which found too much emphasis given to language and mathematics at the expense of other areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

80. On starting school, children are welcomed into a secure and friendly environment that recognises their potential as individuals. Most of them learn to work and play together harmoniously. Children learn to cooperate well with each other and develop their social skills through playing language and mathematical games. They show independence, for example when changing for outdoor play or physical education with the minimum of adult help. Children enjoy the responsibilities given for tidying up after activities, handing out equipment and taking registers to the office. They take turns fairly and move sensibly around the classroom and school. The children are very well behaved and well motivated to learn. The teacher and support staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn. This knowledge is used well to promote children's self-awareness, as they learn about themselves and other people through a well-planned series of topics such as 'How we grow'. Staff consistently praise their behaviour and work, which is well presented and displayed around the classroom. This helps to develop children's self-esteem and pride in their work.

Communication, language and literacy

81. From the earliest opportunities, children's speaking and listening skills are developing well. They learn to enjoy rhymes and exceed the standards expected by the time they are five; this is an improvement since the last inspection. The majority listen well to their teachers and can follow instructions accurately. When working in-groups, children speak confidently using appropriate vocabulary. They are interested in books and know that words and pictures convey meaning. A number of higher attaining children can already read simple sentences and are already launched on the early stages of word and sounds recognition. All children can write their names and practise letter formation daily in the sand tray and at the writing table. The quality of teaching and provision for communication, language and literacy is good. Children are assessed regularly and their progress noted. Very good use is made of this information to target individual or groups of children so that all are able to maintain a good pace to their learning.

Mathematical development

82. Children develop a sense of order, number, and sequence through daily counting routines, activities and rhymes. The majority of children can count confidently to twenty and beyond in ones, and up to a hundred in tens. A proportion of higher attaining pupils know the number bonds up to ten and show an ability to carry out mental calculations, for example when numbers of children present or absent at registration are calculated. The majority make good progress in learning to understand mathematical language such as 'more', 'less', 'smaller than' when playing with construction sets. The class teacher and support staff record the progress of the children in a detailed and comprehensive manner, which helps them to know when children are ready for the next stage of learning. Therefore, children achieve success and show enthusiasm and interest in the range of planned activities. The quality of teaching and provision for mathematics is good. From inspection observations, it is evident that the majority of children are well on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the age of five.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developed successfully through a wide range of well-planned activities. Through play activities, they learn about the properties of sand, water and play-dough and learn to use appropriate vocabulary to describe them. Children were observed looking at how hedgehogs hibernate and talked very sensibly about the reasons why they do so. In science-based lessons they have looked at autumn seeds and used magnifying glasses to study them closely. Children are confident in using a computer and have written and printed their names. They enjoyed making 'domino' cakes using chocolate buttons to count out the number of spots. Children are able to use accurately such terms as 'rough', 'smooth', 'heavy', and 'light' to describe a range of materials. Their knowledge of their immediate environment is well developed and they are able to move confidently around the school and its immediate environment. This is due to the good teaching of an interesting range of topics and stimulating experiences, which successfully promotes their learning of the world about them.

Physical development

84. There is a good range of large, outdoor play equipment and appropriate opportunities are taken to give children play experiences using them. The quality and range of indoor construction and other play equipment has been improved. These are improvements since the last inspection. However, the issue of the lack of a secure outdoor play area is yet to be addressed by the school. Resources for learning are used well to develop children's physical skills; daily activities are carefully planned. Children enjoy regular opportunities to be active in physical education lessons. They visit other classes' lessons to observe older pupils at work and watch how they handle equipment sensibly and safely. This has a positive impact on their own efforts and helps to develop their social skills of cooperation. The majority of children respond well and show confidence in moving to music or their teachers' commands. The quality of teaching seen in developing children's physical well being is good. Teachers make good use of a large, well-equipped hall. Practical activities in the classroom are well planned to develop children's manipulative skills in using for example scissors and pencils.

Creative development

85. All children join in and sing with enjoyment a wide range of songs and rhymes. They express themselves with confidence in painting, collage work, and show good skills of control of brushes and pencils when colouring their drawings of 'Elmer' the elephant. Many talk imaginatively about what their work represents and are pleased to talk to adults about what they have done. The great majority of children are well on their way to achieving the Early Learning Goals by the age of five. Role-play in the home-corner through the 'Travel Agency', 'School Medical Centre', and 'School Shop', for example, provide many good opportunities for children to experience imaginative play. The quality of teaching and provision for creative development is good. Teachers plan well, series of stimulating activities, which help children to develop their imagination through practical experience.

86. The issues identified in the last report have been successfully addressed and the provision for the Foundation Stage is well planned with full account taken of the recent changes in the curriculum. Assessments are excellent and used very well to plan the future development of learning for individual and groups of children. This is enabling the great majority of children to make good progress in all areas of learning. Some children are already achieving their learning goals in language and mathematics and all are well on course to achieve their goals in all other areas of the foundation stage. The quality of teaching and the planned provision for children under five are a major improvement since the last inspection.

ENGLISH

87. Overall, standards are well above average, teaching is often very good or excellent and pupils make very good progress, particularly in reading. Standards of speaking and listening are very good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, particularly in improving their literacy skills. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection report. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has had a significant impact on raising standards.

88. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests show that since 1999 standards have improved in the infants and significant improvements have been made by the time pupils reach the end of the juniors. In 1999, by the age of seven standards were well above average in reading and writing when compared with all schools and above average in reading and well above average in writing when compared with similar schools. In 2000, however, these standards at age seven have risen to even higher levels and reading and writing are now very high when compared with all schools and very high when compared with similar schools. At the end of the Juniors, the 1999 tests show that standards

among eleven-year-olds were in line with national averages for all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. In 2000, standards have risen considerably to being well above average when compared with all schools and well above average when compared with similar schools. These results show a considerable improvement in standards in reading and writing since the last inspection report. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in the infants and juniors is above average or better and that before the tests are taken 2001, attainment is likely to rise significantly after the targeting of additional resources and at least two more terms of effective teaching.

89. The 2000 National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds were well above average. Ninety five per cent of pupils achieved the expected level and 59 per cent achieved the more demanding level 5. When the performance of these pupils is compared with their achievements at the age of seven, the educational value added is well above average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. Since 1996, boys have made good progress and girls very good progress; they are now achieving similar standards. In the light of these results, the target of 80 per cent of pupils to reach the expected level at the end of the juniors in 2001 lacks challenge. The school is considering modifying this target.

90. The 2000 National Curriculum test results for seven-year-olds were very high. All pupils achieved the expected level in reading and 95 per cent achieve it in writing. Sixty eight per cent achieved the more demanding level 3 in reading; this is very high. Twenty eight per cent achieved level 3 in writing; this is well above the national average. Since 1996, boys and girls have made very good progress reading. In writing, girls have made very good progress and boys good progress. Overall, girls are achieving slightly higher standards than boys.

91. In most years, children enter school with average skills in speaking and listening and reading and above average skills in writing as measured by baseline assessments. In the reception year, they rapidly improve speaking and listening skills and make good progress in learning to read. Achievement in writing continues to be good. However, as different groups of pupils move through the school, high pupil mobility, as much as 20 per cent in some year groups, makes judgements about educational value added more difficult. The school has good monitoring systems to track and adjust the information about the standards achieved by pupils at the age of seven and how these changes influence achievement at eleven.

92. Throughout the school, speaking and listening skills are very good. A few pupils lack confidence but the substantial majority attain expected or higher levels for their age. In Year 2, pupils talk and listen with assurance in a range of situations. They are developing and using a wide range of vocabulary, particularly technical terms related to other subjects such as symmetrical and asymmetrical in mathematics and use them correctly to describe movements in physical education. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are very well spoken. They talk and listen confidently in most settings. Pupils vary expression and vocabulary to engage the listeners' attention. Most pupils in Year 6 develop ideas thoughtfully, clearly describing events and opinions, questioning others' ideas, and regularly use features of standard English. All pupils speak well in assemblies and when performing dramatic presentations to other classes. Pupils with special educational needs show a growing confidence and participate fully in these activities.

93. Standards in reading are well above average throughout the school with pupils continuously building on their prior attainment. The substantial majority of pupils are working at least one year ahead of the national expectation. In Year 1, pupils can read and understand simple text and are able quickly to work out more difficult words using phonic skills. All pupils express enjoyment in reading stories and read regularly to adults at home and in school. Pupils in Year 2 express ideas about stories, poems and non-fiction and read their own writing with expression. Higher attaining pupils read a range of text independently with increasing fluency and accuracy. Many Year 3 pupils respond well to the main elements in a story and express a preference about what they have read. They are beginning to read a wider range of books, including fiction, poetry and magazines. Year 4 pupils continue to make very good progress. They use dictionaries and encyclopaedias well and are able to locate necessary information from the library successfully. Higher attaining pupils talk with enthusiasm about their favourite authors and read and understand text that is more complex. In Year 5, pupils understand the significance of ideas, themes and characters in a range of texts. They use inference and deduction skills to explore key ideas. They read aloud with pacing and expression. Higher attaining pupils are able to support and justify their own ideas using text.

94. Nearly all of the pupils in Year 6 are independent readers who use a wide range of methods to work out the sound and meaning of unfamiliar words. They respond imaginatively to key elements of the text and can recognise figurative language. Pupils are able to distinguish between facts and fiction and collate information from a range of sources. Silent reading skills are well developed. They choose books out of interest in particular types of stories or authors such as James Bond stories or the works of CS Lewis. A small number of pupils are not yet at this level but are not far behind. These lower attaining pupils have made considerable progress since the age of seven because of effective teaching and very good support from skilled learning support assistants. The higher attaining pupils are self-motivating and confident readers, capable of tackling text at an adult level of difficulty. They use information books effectively for

research purposes and make reference to sections of text when discussing themes and ideas, for example when reading and discussing the play "Macbeth" and the changes to the meaning of words over time.

95. Standards in writing are well above average throughout the school with pupils continuously building on their prior attainment. The substantial majority of pupils are working at least two terms ahead of time by the age of seven. This has increased to at least one year ahead of time by the age of eleven; this represents good progress. In Year 1, pupils can communicate meaning through words and phrases. They write showing an understanding of capital letters and full stops. Pupils have regular opportunities to practise handwriting skills and letters are well formed and positioned. They use computers to write instructions about making a lamp to be followed by others. In Year 2, about nine out of ten pupils can write extended sentences and stories using interesting adjectives to convey meaning. Spelling is usually correct and handwriting shows accurate form and consistency in size. Higher attaining pupils are sequencing sentences and appropriately choosing words for variety and interest. They make good use of thesauruses to assist this process. They understand the difference between adjectives and nouns and write imaginatively and can predict words using context and rhyming clues. Spelling and punctuation is usually accurate. Handwriting is legibly formed and joined.

96. In Year 3, the substantial majority of pupils organise events and ideas well and write logically. They develop an opening sentence into a dramatic story by using expressions with well-selected adjectives, adverbs and verbs. Higher attaining pupils use time connectives to further improve their writing. They enjoyed the challenge of editing a story to a limited number of words without the loss of meaning. In Year 4, many pupils show an adventurous use of words when writing poetry. They spell well and use dictionaries competently. Punctuation using capitals, full stops and commas is generally correct and handwriting is legible and joined. In Year 5, average and lower attaining pupils made good progress in improving their writing skills. They make good use of imperative verbs, and show how their form is changed by moving them within a sentence. In the mixed Year 5 and Year 6 class, pupils enjoyed editing instructional writing such as when clarifying and simplifying recipes, particularly when the teacher followed their guidance when assembling and mixing the ingredients at the end of the lesson. In all these year groups, lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs receive help with phonics work, vocabulary and explanations from well-briefed learning support assistants. This support helps them participate fully in all activities and grow in confidence in their own use of language.

97. In Year 6, nine out of ten pupils are able to write stories, newspaper reports, letters and poems that are organised appropriately to suit the purpose. They use grammatically correct sentences with accurate punctuation and spelling. Four out of ten in this group have more advanced skills. They use longer, complex sentences, with commas separating clauses and well-developed adjectives and adverbs. These higher attaining pupils are consciously varying the beginning to sentences and paragraphs, incorporating standard English and colloquial forms. All pupils are able to identify words in a play not in everyday use and suggest modern equivalents, for example thane and hurly-burly when studying Macbeth. They successfully improved their writing and continued its development as part of a homework assignment using expressive phrases to describe the witch's scene from the same play. The books of lower attaining pupils show that they have made good progress since the beginning of the school year in writing sequences of sentences using more varied and interesting vocabulary. In most year groups, when opportunities occur in subjects other than English, not enough is done to use and apply pupils' literacy skills. Good opportunities are missed to extend pupils' awareness of the choices of organisation, vocabulary and style that they can use to suit the purpose of writing and improve their work, for example in science, history and religious education.

98. All pupils work hard and have good attitudes to learning. Everyone spoken to about reading showed good levels of interest in books and their authors. The infant pupils are aware of their own progress and are keen to improve and achieve higher standards. The junior pupils are choosing books out of interest, many have well developed preferences for authors, use libraries regularly and have good reading habits in their own time. All pupils apply themselves well to written work with obvious enjoyment. Many older junior pupils are enthusiastic about their writing and achieve much satisfaction from the creative process.

99. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. All teaching is satisfactory or better, including 85 per cent that is good and 46 per cent being very good or excellent. Examples of very good or excellent teaching were seen in nearly all year groups. This is significantly better than the national picture. The teachers follow closely the National Literacy Strategy and the teachers' implementation of these methods is very effective. Shared text and word level work is very well managed and basic literacy skills are well taught. Teachers' have good subject knowledge that is used well to help pupils acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding about language and literacy. They expect pupils to work hard, at quickpace, and make good progress. Teachers' questioning and explanation skills are of a consistently high quality. The teacher in the reception class, used questions sensitively to check pupils' understanding of the stories read. In the mixed age group class in Years 5 and 6, the teacher used questions well to probe pupils' understanding about the meaning of instructional writing. In a good lesson in Year 6, the teacher asked

challenging questions about the use of words when reading a play and provided good explanations about unfamiliar words.

100. Very good teaching is rigorously planned, highly motivating and stretches all attainment groups, for example in a Year 5 lesson about imperative verbs. In a handwriting lesson in the mixed age class in Years 1 and 2, the teacher gave very good advice to pupils on how to improve and achieve higher levels of performance. Where teaching is excellent, the lessons are exciting and challenging for the pupils. In the mixed age group class in Years 3 and 4, the dramatic approach of the teacher helped pupils make excellent progress in writing the opening sentences to a story. The very good relationships between the teacher and pupils in Year 4 created an excellent learning situation in which pupils discussed the use of powerful verbs to be included in their poems. High expectations and challenging questions by the teacher in Year 2, inspired pupils to achieve very high standards when discussing and writing about using words imaginatively but correctly.

101. All lessons are planned well. The tasks set meet the differing needs of pupils and lower attaining pupils are well supported. No pupils were found to be either struggling with work that was too difficult or coasting with work that was too easy. The pupils are regularly checked as they work and misconceptions and errors are quickly remedied. Assessment and test information are used well to group pupils by attainment and to identify accurately those who are best supported through booster classes and additional literacy support.

102. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and specific grants to support this work have been used effectively. Staff training is good. Teaching is observed regularly by the headteacher, checked for quality and feedback to teachers provided. Overall, resources are good and books in the libraries are up-to-date and of good quality. Assessment arrangements are very good. Arrangements for individual target setting are working effectively leading to increasing levels of involvement in their own learning amongst pupils and their parents. National Curriculum results are analysed well and the outcomes are being used to adjust the curriculum and set school development priorities, for example in introducing setting in Years 5 and 6 and developing teaching and learning strategies to address gender issues. The new coordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, particularly the need to use the library more effectively and undertake more specific sampling and discussions of pupils' work with them. She has identified the better use of information and communication technology skills in the literacy hour as part of this year's subject action plan.

MATHEMATICS

103. Standards are above average, teaching is good and pupils make good progress. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, particularly in improving their numeracy skills. Standards, progress, the quality of teaching and the use of assessment have improved significantly since the last inspection report. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a significant impact on raising standards. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests show that, since 1999, standards have improved in the infants and significant improvements have been made by the time pupils reach the end of the juniors.

104. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds showed that, although standards were above those achieved by most schools, standards were below those achieved by similar schools. However, the 2000 test results show that standards are now well above national averages and well above average when compared with similar schools. The numbers of pupils reaching the more demanding level 5 have risen from three out of ten and now accounts for just over half of the pupils. This is well above average when compared with national averages and with similar schools. There is no significant difference between the attainment of the boys or girls. The achievements of the pupils with special educational needs are very good. In the light of these results, the target of 85 per cent of pupils to reach the expected level at the end of the juniors in 2001 lacks challenge. The school is considering modifying this target.

105. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-old pupils were well above average when compared with all schools and above average when compared with schools in similar social areas. However, the 2000 test results have risen even higher and are now very high when compared with all schools and well above average when compared with similar schools. The numbers of pupils who attain the higher level 3 has risen from four out of ten to six out of ten, which is very high even when compared with similar schools.

106. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards are above average in the infants and the juniors. It is likely, however, that before the tests are taken in 2001, standards will have been raised significantly due to the targeting of additional resources. Standards are above average in all aspects of mathematics, but the school needs to ensure that the pupils' ability to use and apply their skills in number work are developed in line with other areas of

mathematics.

107. By the end of the infants, nearly all of the pupils can name and describe correctly the features of a circle, cone, cube, rectangle and different types of triangle, referring to properties such as the number of sides and corners. Higher attaining pupils can recognise and describe the features of shapes such as parallelogram, pentagon and rhombus successfully. The teacher cleverly uses her 'angle-eater fish' to help pupils understand how to recognise right angles, acute angles and obtuse angles. Most pupils can recognise multiples of 2s, 5s, and 10s, and some know the differences between odd and even numbers and many can add together numbers including hundreds. They know how to add, subtract, multiply and divide using single and two digit numbers and use this knowledge to solve simple problems. Pupils understand phrases such as half, double, more and less than, and are beginning to estimate with reasonable accuracy. They apply themselves well to the tasks set and respond enthusiastically to questions. Pupils are confident and work constructively together and are keen to share their answers to problems. Year 1 pupils are able to combine their counting skills with their knowledge of the days of the week to work out what day it will be in a certain number of days time. An appropriate and balanced range of mathematical topics is covered, but there is little evidence of information and communication technology skills being used to extend mathematical skills.

108. By the end of the juniors, nine out of ten pupils can multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 and 100. Pupils can mentally recall number facts up to 10×10 and use all four number operations to solve word problems involving numbers in 'real life'. They can calculate the perimeter and area of simple compound shapes and can change improper fractions to equivalent mixed numbers. Most pupils understand fractions and can change fractions into decimals and apply this to money. They can add and subtract decimals to two places and understand the terms 'mode', 'mean' and 'median'. Pupils can use a protractor to measure angles accurately and can draw lines of symmetry. Some higher attaining pupils extend their understanding of mathematics through investigating the surface areas of three-dimensional objects and trying to work out simple formulae, which will make the estimation more accurate and the measurement much simpler. All pupils can tabulate information in an appropriate, clear and organised manner. Approximately one quarter of Year 4 pupils, and a few in Year 3 have a good understanding of place value up to ten thousand and have an understanding of decimal notation through money. Most have good mental calculating skills, which involves addition of pounds and pence and have a good understanding that angles are a measurement of turn. They have good knowledge of their five and ten times tables. Year 5 pupils show good recall of number facts and are able to describe different ways of calculation through doubling, adding on, and used estimating skills well to aid this process.

109. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good; it is often very good. All teaching is satisfactory or better; including 70 per cent that is good and 20 per cent being very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The teachers who have very good knowledge and understanding of the subject plan in a more focused way so that they know exactly what they want the pupils to learn. This allows them to choose the most appropriate resources to aid the pupils' learning and to plan the most effective learning methods. Pupils work productively; pace of work and rate of learning is good. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is focusing teachers' work and providing stimulating learning sessions. During the mental introduction to some lessons, teachers create rapidly paced question and answer sessions, which stimulate pupils' interests and add greatly to their learning. The high quality learning support assistants provide very good help for the pupils with special educational needs. They are well briefed by the teacher and this helps ensure that the resources used are appropriate to meet the differing needs of the pupils. Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics and are enthusiastic to learn especially when the mental sessions are lively and stimulating, and the teacher's knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject is infectious. Pupils are confident and many can work independently when a task is set.

110. The coordinator provides very good leadership and is successfully managing the implementation of the numeracy strategy. Teachers express positive views about the strategy and claim that pupils' mental skills and use of mathematical language have improved since its introduction. The coordinator and headteacher monitor teaching, teachers' planning and pupils' work regularly. The coordinator monitors the progress of pupils through results of tests; this enables her to ensure that the needs of each pupil are met well and that problems with progress are noted early. This rigorous approach has helped to improve teachers' knowledge and confidence and to focus the learning upon individual needs. All pupils are now challenged appropriately. This has helped to raise standards. Resources are adequate, but additional materials for the teaching of counting, time and weighing would assist the teaching of these areas of learning. The pupils have limited opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to other subjects, and this hinders the further development of their mathematical learning.

SCIENCE

111. Standards are above average, teaching is good and pupils make good progress. Pupils' attitudes to learning

are good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Standards, progress, the quality of teaching and the use of assessment have improved since the last inspection report.

112. Standards are rising. In the 1999 National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels and those achieving the higher levels of attainment was in line with the national average. In comparison with pupils from similar schools, attainment was below the national average. The performance of boys was better than that of girls. These results were part of a continuing trend of widening attainment gap between boys and girls over the past three years. The results for 2000 National Curriculum tests show that the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels increased substantially and was well above the national average. The school has made changes to the teaching and learning in the subject with the adoption of a new scheme of work and has given more emphasis to experimental and investigative science. These are already beginning to have positive effects on pupils' achievements. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment is likely to continue to be above average or better by the time the present Year 6 pupils leave school.

113. Teacher assessments for 1999 showed the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level at the age of seven was above the national average with above average numbers of pupils achieving the higher levels. In the results for 2000, teacher assessments showed an improvement in the expected levels with nearly two-thirds achieving the higher levels. Current inspection evidence indicates that this rising trend in attainment has been maintained, and that by the end of the infants, the attainment of the majority of pupils will be well above average. This is an overall improvement since the last inspection.

114. The good start that pupils make in the reception classes is built upon in Year 1, where pupils study successfully their own and the life cycles of other living things. They are able to sort a range of materials according to a variety of properties as was seen in a Year 1 class looking at glass objects. Pupils, for example, test how far cars can travel down a ramp and make predictions before they test. In this, they use well their knowledge of push and pull forces and the effects they have on direction and movement. This knowledge and understanding is developed well in Year 2. By the end of the infants, the majority of pupils are able to identify the habitats of different creatures and classify living and non-living things. They know that the shape of a plasticine boat affects how it floats or sinks, and can describe the uses of electricity in the home. Higher attaining pupils have tested how far the sound of a tambourine carries and average and lower attaining pupils can identify loud and soft sounds.

115. Pupils in the juniors, continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of science. Pupils in Year 3 were seen identifying the different parts of a plant and most are able to describe their functions correctly. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed using their new knowledge of living things to identify why particular creatures are suited to particular habitats. They are able to use classification keys to identify different species. Scrutiny of previous work shows that their knowledge and understanding of living things is particularly well developed. Knowledge of the life cycle of plants and seed germination has been used in experiments on what are the best growing conditions. They have collected soil samples and sieved and sorted them according to size and then tested which are best for absorbing water. In work on materials, higher attaining pupils understand that some changes are reversible and some are not. All groups of pupils know that shadows are caused by something blocking the path of light. They have studied the apparent movement of the sun and earth and the effect this has on the seasons and day and night. From a scrutiny of previous work, it is evident that lower and average attaining pupils have a good knowledge of fair testing.

116. While investigative skills are developed well by the majority of pupils as they move through the school, this is not always true for higher attaining pupils. Tasks for these pupils are not always sufficiently demanding. These pupils are seldom given opportunities to set up their own experiments rather than follow one directed by the teacher. This remains an area of improvement for the school.

117. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in science activities. They receive good support from teachers and learning support assistants as well as their fellow pupils. There is generally a good match between the work set for these pupils and their prior attainment, which enables them to make good progress in most lessons.

118. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good; it is often very good. All teaching is satisfactory or better; including 80 per cent that is good and in some year groups 60 per cent being very good. This is a major improvement since the last inspection. The great majority of pupils respond well to this good teaching. They listen well when teachers are giving information and instructions, and are eager to show their knowledge by answering questions. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives, which are usually well conveyed to pupils at the start of the lesson. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge; this is also an improvement since the last inspection. This good knowledge is used particularly well in the way that teachers carefully target their questions so that all groups of pupils are able to answer and take part in the lesson. Good use is also made of resources to interest and enthuse

pupils about the planned activities. All this helps pupils to settle quickly to their work and maintain a good pace to learning. This is a noticeable feature of learning in Year 2 and the mixed age group class in Year 5 and 6. However, better use could be made of literacy, numeracy, and information technology skills to support pupil's learning across the school. More opportunities could be given to higher attaining pupils to assume responsibility for their own learning through devising their own experiments. These are areas of improvement for the school.

119. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The new science coordinator is working hard to raise the profile of the subject. She has attended recent in-service training to develop her role and gives good support to her colleagues. Science resources have been re-organised and are now making a positive impact on the teaching and learning of the subject other than the use of the library for research work, which is less well developed. There has been some monitoring of planning and pupils books in the past. The school is aware of the need to develop this aspect of the coordinators' role so that she is able to check the provision and learning in the subject systematically and with greater rigour.

ART AND DESIGN

120. The attainment of the substantial majority of pupils is in line with that expected nationally by the age of eleven. Attainment in the infants is above the national expectation. Throughout the school, there are some examples of very good quality work, but this is not sustained in all classes. Overall, this is an improvement since the last inspection, especially in the infants.

121. By the age of seven, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress because of the wide range of learning experiences provided. Pupils have good experience to improve their skills in drawing, painting, using fabrics, and printing, sculpting, model making and forming compositions from a variety of materials. Occasional computer work allows pupils the opportunity to experiment with colour and shape. Year 2 pupils show good techniques when using their painting skills to create 'Landscape', 'Seascape' and 'Townscape' pictures. These show good brush technique and effective use of colour. Pupils can talk with confidence about horizon lines and about how they colour-washed their paintings. To aid understanding of their lessons on Diwali, pupils use clay to make pots, which are fired in the kiln and painted. The finished products are good. Following a visit to Hunstanton, older infant pupils made sculptures using shells, sand, seaweed and other materials found on the beach. They are good at using the primary colours of red, blue and yellow to make a colour to suit their paintings. Pupils make repeated patterned wallpaper, which are used appropriately to decorate the walls of their shoebox houses. They exercise choices over the types of materials used and use their imaginative ideas well when constructing their work. From a very young age, pupils are introduced to the work of other artists such as Van Gogh, Paul Klee and Gustav Klint. Through this work, pupils begin to appreciate different styles and techniques in art. This is reflected in some of their work. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils were enthralled as the teacher introduced them to styles of art from several different periods of history. Pupils were asked to discuss the aspects of the paintings upon which the artist had put emphasis, and looked with great interest at the way in which colour, shape and line were used.

122. By the age of eleven, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress when compared with their achievements at seven years of age. They are encouraged to look closely at the world around them and to consider techniques to show the effects of light and shade upon objects in an attempt to reproduce them. Occasionally, pupils are introduced to the work of famous artists such as Cézanne and Henry Moore. The better use of this knowledge would allow pupils to understand more fully the way in which different techniques may be used to add expression, colour and line to their work. However, following a visit, the older pupils worked with charcoal to illustrate chosen aspects of Coventry Cathedral in the style of Henry Moore. This links well with their history work on World War Two. The finished products are of a high standard, with many showing good use of line and shading to provide depth to their drawings. Some pupils learn how to use a quill pen to form letters successfully. The teacher demonstrates this technique very well, which helps the pupils develop their own fine hand movement skills showing good control. Pupils' appreciation of art from other cultures is sometimes developed through studying techniques of artists from China. They use Indian inks and fine brushes creatively to add illustrations to previously painted backgrounds. Pupils show good control over the brushes and are enthusiastic to complete their paintings. Opportunities to develop an understanding of other cultures through art, however, are limited. Pupils occasionally use the computers to make patterns. All pupils have sketchbooks, but their skills require further development and they need to be taught how to observe more closely and to identify detail in an object.

123. Overall, teaching and learning is satisfactory and occasionally it is very good. The instances of very good quality work occurred in the classes where the teacher had a good understanding of the development and teaching of skills and techniques and expectations were high. In these instances, pupils have good attitudes towards their work. They enjoy the tasks they are given, work hard and show sustained levels of concentration. Pupils take a pride in the

presentation of their work and the quality of results. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, class routines are not firmly established, time is not used well and rules about behaviour are not enforced. This occurred in an over ambitious lesson in Year 1 when pupils were using glitter and glue to decorate their pictures.

124. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The coordinator is keen to raise standards and is introducing a revision of the previous scheme based upon national guidance. The previous scheme lacked detail of progression in terms of what pupils are required to know, understand and be able to do. Consequently, most lessons lack specific learning outcomes. However, standards have improved in some infant classes since the last inspection; this is due to more focused teaching from a teacher who has good knowledge and understanding of the subject. The curriculum is enhanced through the work of visiting artists, the use of the museum service and from pupils visiting places of interest. Although some staff training has taken place, art and design has not been a priority for development in the school. The coordinator plans to extend her monitoring role, which will allow her to share her expertise with other members of staff. Resources are adequate and are available to all staff.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

125. The attainment of the substantial majority of pupils is in line with that expected nationally by the age of eleven. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, but the evidence from teachers' plans, photographs, and pupils' work indicate that standards are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of the infants and juniors, with examples of good work in some of the classes. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress throughout the school.

126. In the reception classes, children experiment successfully using a variety of construction materials to make structures such as vehicles and houses. Children enjoy the experience of making biscuits. They develop their cutting and sticking skills well through making collages with a variety of materials and constructing pictures with moving parts. Pupils in Years 1 study the playground and make moving roundabouts out of paper, card and string. They look closely at simple vehicle design and are beginning to develop their language to include terms such as chassis and axle. Other infant pupils experiment successfully using different materials and construct weaving looms to create their own wintry look. They are encouraged to make informed choices concerning materials used and to reflect upon their choice. Pupils practise and extend their cutting and painting skills well by shaping and painting card boxes so that they resemble houses.

127. By the age of eleven, pupils have experienced many aspects of design and technology, including food technology. Year 3 pupils investigate appropriately the design of different sandwich container and make their own packages. Year 4 pupils understand and use the full design process when producing their own money containers. They look at many different types of purse, decide upon their designs, practise the skills needed, make the product and evaluate its fitness for purpose. Pupils of Year 5 and 6 experience a similar process when designing and making their own slippers. These two examples show that the pupils are beginning to understand the complete design and technology process and are appreciating that the finished product must be of good quality. These older pupils also experiment with a variety of ways of joining wood, paper and card and testing the strengths of their constructions.

128. In the limited number of lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning was at least satisfactory. Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge, which they use to plan challenging tasks to meet the differing needs of pupils. They have sound knowledge of the design and making process; this helps pupils improve the quality of the items made. Pupils are managed well and good attention is given to the safe use of tools. Teachers encourage pupils to work productively and at a good pace. They encourage pupils to show initiative and to take appropriate responsibility for planning and organising their work.

129. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. The coordinator has worked hard to improve upon standards and has organised well the adequate resources so that the planned work can be implemented successfully by the teachers. The school has adopted the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's guidance for producing a scheme of work. This has had an impact upon standards as it now provides an outline structure for the teaching. However, teachers are not identifying with sufficient clarity the knowledge, skills and understanding to be taught in a lesson. The monitoring of the quality of teaching forms part of this year's subject action plan; this will provide the coordinator with opportunities to assess standards more accurately and where appropriate support teachers and share effective practice.

GEOGRAPHY

130. The attainment of the substantial majority of pupils is above that expected nationally by the age of eleven; it is also above the expected level by the age of seven. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils were leaving school with average attainment. The issue over inadequate planning has now been addressed. The subject is taught over a two-year cycle of topics, which fully meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is supported by national guidelines, which help to ensure progress and continuity of learning across the school. There has been some monitoring of the teaching of the subject but there is no systematic assessment of pupils' achievement. The school is aware of these shortcomings and plans to address them in the future.

131. Pupils in the infant classes visit and work in the local environment regularly. Effective use is made of the mascot, 'Barnaby Bear', who is taken out on trips each week by pupils, who complete his 'passport' detailing where he has been. A good lesson in a mixed age group class in Years 1 and 2 was seen where pupils had to ask a series of questions about where Barnaby had been and then guess the location. They had prepared the questions themselves, printed them on the computer and, after guessing the location, were able to trace his journey on a large-scale local map. In Year 2, pupils move around the school grounds using maps well. The majority of pupils are able to relate the features they found to an aerial photograph. They knew the directions of the compass and could use their knowledge to place features in the locality. Only one lesson was seen in the juniors; this was also a good lesson. A mixed class of Year 5 and 6 pupils studied the water cycle and made good use of their scientific knowledge and understanding of the processes of evaporation and condensation. The majority of pupils can identify correctly which processes formed part of the water cycle and are able to place them in the correct sequence. From scrutiny of previous work and talking to the coordinator and other teachers, it is evident that pupils' work is meeting all the requirements of the programmes of study for geography.

132. In the limited number of lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning was good. Lessons are planned well and enable pupils to make good use of their local knowledge. Well-targeted questioning and class discussion help all pupils know what is expected of them. Good use is made of resources, including appropriate worksheets to support the learning of lower attaining pupils. The tasks set achieve a good balance between developing knowledge and deepening pupils' understanding.

133. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The coordinator has been in post only a short time, but is keen to raise standards and share effective practice with colleagues. Improvements since the last inspection have been concentrated around developing the scheme of work, and have helped to raise the overall standards in the subject. The Qualification and Curriculum Authority's guidance for the subject is being implemented effectively, ensuring good progression across the school. The planned curriculum is enhanced by local and residential field trips. Resources are of good quality and quantity and are being used effectively to support teaching and learning. Some sampling of pupils' work has been started and is the first step towards a clearer and more accurate monitoring of pupils' achievement and progress.

HISTORY

134. Throughout the school, standards are satisfactory as they were at the time of the last inspection. The issue over unsatisfactory planning has been addressed by the use of a nationally approved scheme of work to support teaching and learning in the subject. No lessons were seen in the infants and it is not therefore possible to make a secure judgement on teaching. In the juniors, teaching is satisfactory. From a scrutiny of previous work and planning, discussions with the coordinator and other staff, and talking to pupils, standards are at least satisfactory in the infants.

135. Pupils in the infant classes are able to distinguish between times past and times present successfully. They know about some of the kings and queens of England and can sequence them correctly. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge about the lives of some famous people, such as Grace Darling, and famous events, such as the Gunpowder Plot. They study the development of houses over time and this is helping to develop their sense of chronology. In the mixed age class in Years 5 and 6, pupils investigated thoughtfully the impact of posters on people as used in the Second World War. The good use of these resources invoked a very strong reaction among many pupils, who were very articulate in expressing their feelings. Similarly, documents, a video and pictures of artefacts from the 'Mary Rose', were used effectively in the mixed age class in Years 3 and 4 to identify and evaluate evidence from secondary sources.

136. The quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory. The broad mixture of teaching methods that are used encourage the acquisition of knowledge and help pupils to use their enquiry skills well. The new cycle of topics ensure a progressive development of knowledge and understanding across the school. Emphasis is placed on helping pupils, particularly older pupils, to think for themselves and evaluate from the evidence presented. The result is that

the majority of pupils respond well to the interesting range of activities they undertake. They are attentive, want to be part of the lesson and many are eager to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Some use is made of information and communication technology to research topics, and pupils bring work to school that they have done at home. However, more use could be made of these skills to develop literacy and research skills in the classroom. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are always well supported in class. This enables them to be a part of the lesson and make good progress over time.

137. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The coordinator is only recently in post but has already done much to reorganise the resources for the subject. Their use is having a positive impact on the teaching and learning in the subject. However, the use of the library for research work is less well developed. The curriculum now meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum and is well balanced. Pupils' personal development is enhanced through the study of the past, as they learn about other cultures, values and beliefs and how the past has influenced the present. The recent transport fair at the school helped to show all pupils the range of types of transport that have evolved, and was a great success. Currently, the coordinator monitors the planning of the subject but there are plans next year to extend this to teaching and learning in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

138. The attainment of the substantial majority of pupils is in line with that expected nationally by the age of eleven. Scrutiny of previous work and evidence seen during the inspection indicates that attainment in the infants and juniors is in line with that expected nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The issues identified in the last report concerning the provision for and teaching of information and communication technology have been addressed successfully. Two small information technology areas have been created and there is now direct teaching of subject skills across the school. Teachers are helped in planning this work by the use of a new scheme of work based on national guidelines, which fully addresses all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

139. By the age of seven, most pupils use a computer confidently. Reception class children can use a mouse to access a program and select items on the screen. Year 1 pupils have begun to develop word processing skills and can write and print their names using upper and lower case letters. Year 2 pupils can program a robot to move along a designated pathway. By the age of eleven, pupils have used an art package to design patterns using mathematical shapes. They demonstrate good levels of skills to rotate, stretch, copy and paste shapes. In Year 6, pupils have collaborated with older pupils from a local upper school to produce bookmarks. They designed these on the computer, saved them to disk and then sent them to the upper school where they were cut from plastic using a lathe. Pupils enjoy the opportunity of taking part in video conferencing with a local primary school, which they use to exchange ideas and views about their topics and school work. However, although all classrooms have their computer corner, there was little evidence during the inspection of them being used to support other areas of the curriculum. Some efforts have been made to extend the new skills being learnt to other subject areas but this remains an area of development.

140. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers are confident and competent in the programs they are using, and are ably supported by classroom assistants. They have all attended recent in-service training to develop their computer skills and this is now having a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Further training is planned to continue to develop these skills. All teachers are able to demonstrate the skills to be learnt and to show pupils the steps necessary to correct any errors made in working with a range of programs. Lessons are organised effectively and control is good enabling pupils to show satisfactory progress over time. All pupils respond well to the teachers, are interested and enthusiastic about the subject and many bring good levels of skills to school from their own work at home. Pupils with special educational needs are always fully involved in activities but better use could be made of specifically targeted programs to support their learning, particularly in numeracy and literacy.

141. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject is well led by the coordinator who gives good support to his colleagues. The school has made good use of specific grants to extend the facilities for teaching and learning in the subject. The newly adopted scheme of work enables a planned approach to the development of skills across the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There is some assessment of pupils' achievements and the school is aware of the need to develop this aspect of provision; there are targets to address this in the current school improvement plan. The subject is well placed to raise the attainment and skills of the pupils to a higher level.

MUSIC

142. Pupils' achievements are above those expected nationally by the age of eleven. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils make very good progress in their acquisition of performing and composing skills and in their ability to listen and appraise music. Their attitudes to music are very good. Pupils respond well to the very skilled teaching of the subject.

143. By the age of eleven, pupils have a good knowledge of rhythm, beat, expression and the emotional impact of music, for example when discussing war time rationing and how songs improved people's morale. They understand about the importance of lyrics and can recognise popular tunes by their rhythmic patterns. In the mixed age class for Year 5 and 6 pupils, they explored successfully the relationships between sounds and maintained their own parts well, when listening to and playing a group composition. All pupils are comfortable in appraising the work of others and they use correct musical vocabulary when suggesting improvements. Year 4 pupils achieve good standards when composing and playing tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They recorded their group compositions well using appropriate notation. Pupils are given good opportunities to play the works of others and to listen carefully to the composers' views as to whether they had played the piece correctly. In Year 3, higher attaining pupils conducted group compositions well; this developed four different types of musical pulses and phrases. Lower attaining pupils gained rapidly in confidence and successfully led their group performances. By the age of seven, pupils made very good progress in composing and playing a musical composition. Higher attaining pupils understood the use of duration, tempo and texture when playing complimentary instruments. Lower attaining pupils made good progress in playing in time and following sequences of notes. All pupils are keen and able to make improvements to their works. During assemblies and choir practices, the pupils sing with enjoyment and increasing confidence to the accompaniment of a piano achieving satisfactory standards.

144. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Most teachers have very good subject knowledge, which they use skilfully to demonstrate and work with pupils to develop high-quality music making. They provide good opportunities for pupils to use their musical imagery and memory. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to refine their performances, based on the appraisal of the quality of their work. They have very good relationships with the pupils; this helps and highly motivates pupils to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do. Teachers are particularly skilled in helping pupils demonstrate their performing and composing skills and to experience a wide range of musical styles. Lessons are planned well and pupils work productively and at a good pace. In all lessons, expectations are high and effective questioning helps challenge and extend pupils' thinking.

145. The leadership and management are very good. The coordinator has very good subject knowledge and has worked successfully to improve teachers' confidence, particularly in teaching composing, listening and appraising skills. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to perform in lessons and participate in musical productions. Visiting musicians such as the Leicestershire Arts Ensemble enhance pupils' learning. Small groups of pupils benefit from individual tuition, learning to play instruments such as the clarinet, trumpet and violin. The school is in the process of adapting the planned curriculum to meet the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's recommendations for the subject. This will help reduce the duplication observed in some teachers' long, medium and short term planning and improve the systematic assessment of pupils' achievements. Good use is made of displays to illustrate the key musical elements being studied, using correct technical vocabulary, which the pupils refer to regularly when talking about what they have learnt. Resources for learning are good but there is a lack of sufficient instruments from other cultures. The coordinator is beginning to explore ways of incorporating information technology into music teaching.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. Pupils' achievements are above those expected nationally by the age of eleven. This is an improvement since the last inspection report. Standards are good in athletics, dance, games and gymnastics. The school has access to good facilities for teaching swimming and standards are above average. On entry to school, pupils have appropriate physical skills and their achievements are above those expected nationally by the age of seven. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. All pupils follow a balanced curriculum over a year in units of work, which for the week of the inspection included dance, games, gymnastics and swimming. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very good. They respond immediately to teacher's instructions and participate enthusiastically in all activities. Pupils cooperate well with others and thoroughly enjoy their lessons.

147. By the age of eleven, pupils are able to plan, perform and evaluate their movements successfully. They know and understand the importance of warm up and cooling down activities to protect the body from injury. Pupils are very aware of safety issues. Pupils have good opportunities during the year to achieve the target of swimming 25 metres by visiting a local full-size pool. In Year 6, pupils show increasing control when passing and dribbling a basketball. They discuss in a mature manner how to improve their technique when performing a chest pass. Higher attaining pupils are particularly skilful and show a good understanding of the tactics of small team games. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs make good progress in improving their throwing skills; they receive very good support from learning support assistants. In Year 5, boys and girls work together well in developing their dance routines. They recorded the agreed dance steps in notation form, including time for improvised movements and performed the completed work well. Year 3 pupils responded well to firework music following and moved freely to the strong rhythmic beat of the dance. They captured the mood and feeling of the music and achieved good levels of performance. In Years 4, pupils show improving skills in jumping and landing from an appropriate range of apparatus. However, their sequences demonstrating jumping, landing and rolling on a mat were less successful when they were asked to form square shapes as part of this work.

148. By the age of seven, pupils are improving their balancing skills. They can reproduce simple sequence with control and coordination. Pupils developed imaginative ways of moving using the floor space and apparatus. Balancing using different types of triangular forms and jumping showing symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes was particularly effective. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 achieved good standards in this work. Higher attaining pupils worked productively and at pace but the quality of their movement lacked refinement. All pupils are able to talk about the importance of warming up and cooling down when taking part in exercise. Children in the reception class made good progress in using dance movements and facial expression to tell the story of Joseph and the Shepherds. They used beanbags and hoops as imaginary flowers and vases when moving their bodies in response to the colour theme for the week. Children in the reception class enjoy watching other classes at work; this helps them learn how to move apparatus safely.

149. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good knowledge of teaching dance, gymnastics and games; this helps them observe and analyse movements and give good advice to pupils on how to improve. Lessons have a clear focus and the skills to be learned are demonstrated well. Teachers give clear instructions and check carefully whether pupils understand the tasks set and the pupils respond with enthusiasm. Work proceeds at a good pace and pupils are expected to improve such as in a Year 2 gymnastic lesson in which progress was very good. Pupils listen carefully and closely follow the teachers' guidance about working safely. The sensitive support given helps those with special physical needs grow in confidence. Teachers give sufficient time for pupils to practise and consolidate their skills, for example when throwing and catching balls or moving on apparatus. Very good teaching is rigorously planned, highly motivating and stretches all attainment groups, for example in gymnastics in Year 2 and dance lessons in Year 5, Year 3 and reception classes.

150. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The coordinator has good subject knowledge and uses the time given to monitor the planning and quality of teaching well. Demonstration lessons have improved teachers' confidence in teaching dance and gymnastics. The school's policy and scheme of work gives good guidance for teachers' planning and the development of knowledge and skills; it is being revised to meet new developments in the subject. The physical education programme is balanced over a year. Good use is made of visiting sports coaching staff to support these activities. Pupils have good opportunities for outdoor adventurous activities when taking part in residential visits, however, the use of the school grounds for orienteering is less well developed. The development of assessment procedures forms part of the subject's action plan for the coming year. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in competitive sport and a wide range of extra-curricular clubs. Resources for learning are very good and are used well to promote learning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. Throughout the school, standards are satisfactory; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Statutory requirements are now met fully. No lessons were seen in infants and it is not therefore possible to make a secure judgement on teaching. From a scrutiny of previous work and planning, discussions with the coordinator and other staff, and talking to pupils, standards are at least satisfactory in the infants.

152. By the age of seven, the pupils experience stories from the bible and are beginning to understand the ceremonies of other religions. They talk about themselves as babies and about their baptism. Pupils confidently discuss festivals such as Diwali and make candle holding pots out of clay. By the age of eleven, appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to achieve standards, which are broadly in line with expectations related to the local Agreed Syllabus and they make satisfactory progress. Pupils are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of Christianity and aspects of other major world religions such as Islam. They learn about important religious figures and books from different faiths groups. Pupils know that the Bible is the major book of the Christian faith and can distinguish between the Old and the New Testament. They have good knowledge of stories such as The Lost Sheep and can talk in outline about the events leading up to Jesus' death. Pupils understand the importance of the Resurrection of Jesus to the Christian faith and about how Christians retain the significance of the Last Supper through the Communion Service. They learn about Islam and the life of Muhammad, and can talk about Diwali as being a special day for Hindu people.

153. Pupils of Year 4 discuss in some depth, issues surrounding Jesus being the Bread of Life, the Light of the World and the Good Shepherd. They talk as a class and discuss with other pupils the meaning of these phrases. Pupils relate them to their knowledge of the bible and are fully engrossed in discussion. However, more use could be made of pupils' writing skills to record their knowledge, thoughts and feelings. The pupils with special educational needs make very good progress during this lesson as the support assistant encourages, supports and explains. In their work on Advent, pupils of Year 5 discuss how they feel about exciting events, which are about to happen in their lives. However, the link with how other people from different faith groups would feel if they believed that a special event was to take place was not fully developed. In Year 5 and Year 6, pupils discuss in a mature way why Christians choose to celebrate Easter and show good understanding that the Resurrection marks the beginning of the Christian faith.

154. In the limited number of lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning is of least a satisfactory; it is sometimes very good. When teachers have good subject knowledge, clarity of the purpose for the lesson and motivate the pupils to learn, the teaching is very good. Pupils respond well to stories told about Easter and Advent and give thought to the discussions. Teachers use good questioning skills to challenge pupils' thinking. The pupils respond very well and can work independently and cooperate successfully when working in groups. When teaching is satisfactory, lessons are appropriately planned and met the differing needs of pupils. However, they do not always identify sufficiently the specific learning objectives for each lesson or groups of lessons. Teachers manage of pupils well and relationships are good. At the end of lessons, teachers check pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding well but do not give them opportunities to reflect on what they have learnt and the progress they have made in order to improve further.

155. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The subject is now part of the timetable for each class and the school works to the local Agreed Syllabus. All statutory requirements have now been met. The coordinator is enthusiastic to develop the subject and raise standards. She is monitoring of teachers' lessons regularly and is giving constructive advice to colleagues. However, some teachers lack knowledge of the subject. Insufficient attention is given to translating the general aims of the scheme of work into more specific learning objectives of the knowledge, skills and understanding to be developed in a lesson or units of work. Resources are adequate, but the coordinator is aware that teaching would be improved by the provision of additional artefacts for Christianity and Judaism.