

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST LUKE'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Thurnby, Leicester

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120166

Headteacher: Mr David Herd

Reporting inspector: Mrs E Pickford  
23128

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224942

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 10
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Main Street Thurnby Leicester
Postcode:	LE7 9PN
Telephone number:	(0116) 2415105
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Bosworth
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Esme Pickford OIN: 23128	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education Special educational needs	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
Mike Hammond OIN: 19558	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare and health and safety Partnership with parents and carers Equality of opportunity
Vivien Wilson OIN: 25775	Team inspector	The foundation stage for the 4+ and reception pupils English Art and design Music Design and technology	
Mike Wainwright OIN: 11528	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Physical education	Quality and range of learning opportunities The assessment of pupils' attainment

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>8 - 10</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>10 - 12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>12 - 13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>13 - 14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>14 - 15</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>15 - 16</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18 - 21</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>22 - 33</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Luke's is an average sized Church of England Controlled Primary School, for pupils age four to ten years. It is situated in the Leicestershire village of Thurnby close to the Leicester city boundary. Of the 200 pupils currently on roll, 65 per cent come from Bushby and Thurnby and other outlying villages in the catchment area. It is a popular school and 35 per cent of the pupils travel from other areas. The majority of pupils live in privately owned houses and only 3 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Ten per cent of pupils, which is below average, are on the register of special educational needs for a variety of moderate learning difficulties and behavioural problems. Two pupils have statements of special educational need, which is average. A high percentage (8.6) of pupils come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and all but one speak English fluently.

The initial assessments made when pupils join the school at four varies from year to year, but tends to be above average, overall. The majority of pupils have had the benefit of pre-school education.

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

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory, with good features. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. The standards pupils achieve in the national tests have fluctuated considerably over the last three years, but overall standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average at the age of 7 and 10. The results of the group of Year 2 pupils tested in 2000 are well above average and show a marked improvement in comparison to the previous two years. The overall quality of teaching is good, but there is considerable variation within the key stages and pupils' progress varies, as a result. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, overall. The school is caring and inclusive in its outlook and provides very good support for a variety of special educational needs. Taking into account the school's expenditure and the standards achieved at age 10 in relation to pupils' attainment when they start school, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The pupils achieve well above average standards in mathematics by the end of Year 5.
- The pupils are eager to come to school, keen to learn and get involved in the excellent range of additional activities.
- The good quality of teaching and the interesting range of activities provided for children in the 4+ class enables them to learn well.
- There are very strong links with parents. Parents are welcomed, well informed and encouraged to be involved in their children's learning.
- The support given to pupils with special educational needs is very good and enables them to achieve their best.
- Relationships are very good at all levels. Staff know and care for their pupils very well.
- The school and governors look very carefully at standards and take action to improve them.

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

- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning and standards are below those expected at age 10.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop the processes and skills of investigative science are limited and restrict progress.
- Some planning does not provide clear structures for lessons to enable pupils of different ages and abilities to achieve their best or for their learning to be assessed.
- The time allocated to subjects on the class timetables is not sufficiently balanced to ensure that teaching time is used efficiently.
- The best teaching methods are not sufficiently shared or demonstrated to achieve consistently high standards of learning in all classes.
- The access for disabled pupils and parents to all sections of the school site is unsatisfactory, in spite of the adaptations made to date.

*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 made satisfactory improvement since the 1996 inspection. All the key issues have been tackled and some of the changes made have resulted in higher standards. Improved assessment systems now provide good tracking of pupils' progress year on year and direct support where it is needed. The provision for higher attaining pupils has also improved as a result. Curriculum planning has improved and mixed age classes in Key Stage 1 now follow a two year programme to ensure curriculum coverage. There are clear schemes of work in most subjects, which progressively build on what has gone before. There is an established system for co-ordinators to monitor standards in their subjects, but this is not yet identifying areas of weakness in some subjects. The head and deputy have attended school evaluation courses to develop their monitoring skills. Improvements have been made in information and communication technology, especially in hardware and software resources. Some staff use lap-tops to develop their own expertise. A technician shared within the group of schools provides expertise and sorts out problems. Although the improvements made have raised standards in Key Stage 1 to meet national expectations, older pupils still have gaps in their knowledge and standards do not meet the statutory requirements for pupils aged 10. The percentage of very good and excellent teaching has improved, but standards vary across the school. The school has the systems in place and the capacity to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	C	D	A	B
Writing	C	C	A	A
Mathematics	A	C	A	A

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

The table shows that standards of attainment are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, compared to schools nationally. Compared to schools with a similar intake, results were well above average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading. Teacher-assessed results in science are well above the national average. The initial assessment of the 4+ children made when they start school shows that standards are above those expected nationally for their age and the majority achieve the early learning goals in all six areas of learning by the end of the reception year. The group of pupils tested in 2000 contains a higher than usual percentage of more able pupils. Inspection findings show that for the current pupils in Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards have fallen between 1996 and 1999 due to a number of factors, including variations in the attainment of pupils on entry and long term sickness. The number of pupils tested each year has varied considerably and is an additional factor. When small numbers are tested it is normal to see considerable variation from year to year. The recent rise in standards follows determined efforts by the school to reverse the downward trend.

By the end of Year 5, standards of attainment in English and science are above those expected nationally and well above in mathematics. Evidence of the good progress made can be seen in the pupils' above average results in the school's Year 5 tests and the Year 6 National Curriculum tests taken at the high school. At age seven, pupils achieve the expected standard in art and design, music, history, geography, design and technology and religious education. By the end of Year 5, standards in history and geography are above those expected. Standards in art and design, music and design and technology are as expected for

pupils aged 10. Physical education has a generous time allocation, is very well taught and standards are above those expected at age seven and 10. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) just meet expectations at seven, although improvement can be seen by age 10, standards in ICT do not yet meet requirements. Overall, pupils of all abilities make good progress, but this is accelerated at the end of the key stages.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are interested in what they do and are proud of their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, overall. By the time pupils reach Year 5, they are very well behaved and mature.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work well and play together harmoniously. They willingly take responsibility and show initiative.
Attendance	Very good. Levels are above the national average and punctuality is good.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>Aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>Aged 7-10 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Overall, the quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good. Ninety five percent of teaching was satisfactory or better. 24 percent of the teaching was very good or better, which was far higher than at the time of the last inspection. Five per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The majority of the very good and excellent teaching was seen in lessons taught by the headteacher and deputy. The teaching for pupils in the 4+ class is good, overall, with the nursery nurse making a significant contribution to the very good and excellent teaching seen. Elsewhere, the quality of teaching varies from class to class, but, overall, is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. A minority of unsatisfactory teaching occurred in both key stages in art and design and mathematics, when the activities planned were inappropriate and did not move learning forward sufficiently. The teaching of English and mathematics is good, overall, and pupils are given good additional support, if it is required. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good, overall, and shows that most staff have benefited from their training. The average attaining pupils make good progress and achieve above average standards and are keen to rise to the challenges set for the most able. Lower attaining pupils and those with statements of special educational need make good and often very good progress due to careful assessment and the quality of support they receive. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use new technologies to support their learning which restricts progress, in ICT. Teachers are hardworking and all staff give generously of their time and contribute to a wide variety of additional learning opportunities outside lesson time.

### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. An appropriate curriculum is in place which fulfils legal requirements for numeracy and literacy and promotes progress as pupils move through the school. However, there is some imbalance in the time allocated to subjects. There are an excellent range of activities outside lesson time.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are set relevant targets on Individual Education Plans. Parents are fully involved when these are reviewed and additional support is appropriately allocated.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Only one of the youngest pupils does not speak English fluently and is given good support in class to gain confidence and progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Many aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development help pupils to develop their self confidence and a respect for the values and beliefs of others. They develop a strong sense of community spirit and citizenship.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very good. Parents' opinions of the school are very positive and they feel very much part of the school community. Parents are very supportive of



	their children's learning and the school keeps them well informed.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are known and valued as individuals by all staff. The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring health and safety are good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is an effective leader and has a strong influence on the positive ethos of the school. The head and deputy work together well as a senior management team, setting high standards in their teaching. Both are committed to raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and have a good working relationship with the headteacher. They are well informed about the school, strengthening their roles and fulfilling their responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has made good use of the analysis of school data to gain an overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses and plan for improvement. The school's improvement plan establishes appropriate priorities for development over a three year period.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of the funding received to support identified priorities. Nationally specified grants, funding for training and special educational needs are used for the designated purposes. Best value for money is obtained, but cost effectiveness of outcomes is not always considered by the governing body.

The school is adequately staffed with suitably qualified teachers to teach the National Curriculum. Additional teaching staff support pupils with special educational needs, swimming and musical instrument tuition. Nursery nurses and learning support assistants enhance learning in a variety of subjects and activities. Resources are satisfactory to teach the planned curriculum and the ratio of computers is improving. The school copes well with the problems caused by the dispersed accommodation and is soon to benefit from a major building programme. However, for the disabled, the access to the school site remains limited.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The high standards achieved in mathematics.</li> <li>• The caring ethos.</li> <li>• The approachability of the head teacher and his knowledge of individual pupils.</li> <li>• Academic standards are good, but the school is not complacent.</li> <li>• Good provision for pupils of all attainment. They are challenged, but not put under pressure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities for indoor physical education.</li> <li>• Annual written reports which are seen as impersonal and not indicating attainment clearly.</li> <li>• Feedback to pupils and parents about achievement in homework.</li> <li>• The time spent on teaching swimming increased in relation to time travelling to the pool.</li> </ul>

The team agree with parents' positive views of the school. Inspectors agree that the facilities for indoor physical education are currently unsatisfactory. Some sections of the annual reports are handwritten and targets for improvement are set and were not considered to be impersonal. Pupils were given oral feedback on the homework set during the inspection but written feedback is impractical. High standards are achieved in swimming, in spite of some parents' concerns.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Overall standards of attainment are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1. The initial assessment of the 4+ children made when they start school shows that standards are above those expected nationally for their age. Over 40 per cent of the intake are higher attaining pupils and less than ten percent have special educational needs.
2. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests, taken at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 3 is well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. These results are above average in comparison with similar schools in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. In the four years 1996 to 2000, test results showed falling standards, more marked in reading and mathematics, until this year's improved results. The national trend showed a very gradual improvement over this period. Teacher-assessed standards in science have shown less fluctuation during this time and remained above average, with an improved percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels. The group of pupils tested in 2000 contains a higher than usual percentage of more able pupils. Inspection findings show that, for the current pupils in Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
3. The fall in standards between 1996 and 1999 is due to a number of factors. Between 1997 and 1999 there were problems with long term staff sickness in Year 2 which affected pupils' progress. Initial assessments showed that the attainment on entry varied and the percentage of more able pupils was lower. The numbers of pupils in each of the year groups tested during this period ranged from 35 to 20 to 18 and was an additional factor. When small numbers are tested it is usual to see considerable variation from year to year in the school's average results, because each pupil represents 5 to 8 per cent of the group. Care is necessary in the interpretation of a change in standards.
4. The recent rise in standards follows determined efforts by the school, supported by funding from the local education authority, to reverse the downward trend. There is now a permanent teacher in Year 2. In-service training, observation of teaching and learning and analysis of results have helped to identify pupils in need of extra help. Additional literacy support is given to these pupils. All pupils in Year 2 have the advantage of working in smaller groups with pupils of similar ability to ensure that they achieve their full potential in reading and mathematics.
5. Inspection findings show that, by the end of Year 5, standards of attainment in English and science are above those expected nationally and well above in mathematics. Evidence of the good progress made can be seen in the pupils' above average results in the school's Year 5 tests and the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 6 at the high school.
6. Standards of four year olds joining the reception classes are above those expected for pupils of this age. Most of the children starting school after their fourth birthday have already attended playgroup or nursery. Standards are above average in all the areas of learning: communication, literacy and language, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Their personal, social and emotional development is also good. By the time of the start of Year 1, the majority achieve the early learning goals in most areas, as a result of the good progress they make, and begin working on the earliest stages of the National Curriculum.
7. Standards in speaking and listening were found to be above average in both key stages. Pupils benefit from the good opportunities given for discussion in lessons and emphasis given to the development of specialist subject vocabulary. The standard of reading heard during the inspection was above average. All the pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 have benefited from the structured approach to the teaching of reading provided in the Literacy Hour and all teachers encourage an enthusiasm for reading. Pupils take

home reading scheme and library books on a daily basis. Adults and parents hear pupils read regularly. There is good communication through the reading diary and parents are fully aware of pupils' reading targets. Pupils are encouraged to read a wide range of books. Older pupils read fluently and expressively and acquire basic library skills. Standards of writing and spelling seen in lessons and in work samples indicate that many pupils attain above average standards. Pupils in Year 2 can write imaginative stories and poems that are well punctuated and correctly spelt. The least able pupils write in sentences. Pupils in Year 5 are able to write for a wide range of audiences. Their writing often shows humour and imagination. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils write in a clear, legible, joined hand. Although handwriting styles mature as pupils get older they do not always take enough care with the presentation of their work.

8. Inspection evidence found the attainment in mathematics of the pupils in the current Year 2 to be above average and well above average in Year 5. The benefits of the structured numeracy lessons are beginning to show in the improvement of pupils' mental agility, which is regularly developed at the start of lessons. Pupils make better overall progress in Years 2, 4 and 5 and this is directly related to the good and very good quality teaching they receive.
9. Standards in science are above the national average in both key stages, Pupils develop a very good knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and forces through the experiences they are given and make good progress. Satisfactory progress is made in experimental and investigative science, because too little time is devoted to developing these skills.
10. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieve the expected standard in art and design, history, geography, music, design and technology and religious education. At the end of Year 5 standards are as expected for age in art and design, music, design and technology and religious education but are above in history and geography because of the good quality of the teaching. Standards in physical education are above those expected by the age of seven and 10 because the subject has a generous time allocation and pupils get caught up in teachers' enthusiasm for the subject. Standards in literacy and numeracy meet expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5.
11. Standards in information and communication technology just meet the expected standard by seven. This shows improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below. Pupils have benefited from regular teaching, better resources and long term planning to cover the programmes of study. Pupils in Year 5 are making good progress but have not fully benefited from the changes and still have gaps in their knowledge. Standards in Year 5 are below those expected in some areas of the ICT curriculum. This shows improvement since the last inspection. There is still insufficient use of ICT throughout the curriculum.
12. The average attaining pupils make good progress, achieve above average standards and are keen to rise to the challenges set for the most able. Lower attaining pupils and those with statements of special educational need make good and often very good progress, due to careful monitoring of their progress and quality of support they receive. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given appropriate support and make good progress.
13. More able pupils are identified and their progress is monitored. These pupils are given more challenging activities in some lessons and are particularly well catered for in Year 5.
14. No significant differences were noted in the attainment of boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

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

15. Pupils are eager to come to school and the majority soon become involved in a wide range of activities. They clearly take an interest in their work and this is amply demonstrated in the high level of display throughout the school. Pupils co-operate or work independently, taking responsibility for their own and other pupils' learning as much as they can. Younger pupils quickly gain confidence as they pass messages to and from the secretary when they bring the registers to the office. Members of the recently formed school council showed their concern for pupils who do not usually attract attention and

so miss out on rewards. This resulted in the introduction of the much-appreciated 'golden time'. Throughout the school, pupils respond well to questions and join eagerly in discussions.

16. Behaviour throughout the school is generally good and very good when expectations are high and teaching is good. Children in the Foundation Stage settle quickly into school routines, concentrate well on the tasks set and develop a good level of independence. However, a minority of pupils in Key Stage 1 are not always respectful to adults and there are instances when they speak out of turn in lessons. By the end of Year 5, behaviour is very good and pupils show considerable maturity. Pupils behave well during breaktimes and around the school. They move about the school in a sensible and orderly manner and the majority are polite and helpful. One pupil was excluded for the remaining part of the day on three occasions for disruptive behaviour during the preceding year.
17. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and to show their initiative without being asked. This includes the caring way in which older pupils support younger ones in the dining room. Each class also nominates representatives to the school council and debates the agenda before each meeting. Each week, different classes organise and take the Friday assembly, which is well supported by parents.
18. The school functions as an orderly and caring community, with all of the adults providing very effective role models for the pupils. Relationships and mutual respect between pupils and staff, as well as with the many adult visitors to the school, are very good and this is a strength of the school.
19. Attendance is above the national average and punctuality, both at the start of the day and in the lessons, is good. This contributes to attainment and progress.
20. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are a strength of the school and support very good educational standards.

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

21. Overall, the quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good. Sixty four percent of teaching was good or better. Twenty per cent of teaching was very good and four per cent was excellent, which shows improvement since the last inspection. Thirty one per cent of teaching was satisfactory and five per cent unsatisfactory. The majority of the very good and excellent teaching was seen in lessons taught by the headteacher and deputy. The teaching for pupils in the 4+ class is good, overall, with the nursery nurse making a significant contribution to the very good and excellent teaching seen. Elsewhere, the quality of teaching varies from class to class, but, overall, is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The three unsatisfactory lessons occurred in art and design and in mathematics when the activities planned were inappropriate and did not move learning forward sufficiently.
22. Teachers are hardworking and supportive of each other. Staff are keen to provide pupils with the best possible learning opportunities.
23. The staff in the 4+ class work together as a very well organised team, sharing every aspect of teaching. The teacher and nursery nurses are experienced and have a very good understanding of the needs of young learners. They provide a wide range of stimulating activities which enable children to make very good progress. All the staff know the children well and carefully assess the progress they are making. Children work very productively in a well organised, bright and stimulating environment. A good variety of teaching methods are used effectively. Children are taught to listen carefully to the teacher and each other and speak confidently. They have good opportunities to develop independence, choose activities, think for themselves and use their imagination. Staff have high expectations and very good management strategies. Assessment systems are very good and used well for lesson planning. However, the imprecise curriculum plans prepared by the foundation stage co-ordinator do not reflect the consistently good practice that exists. Older reception pupils in the mixed age class do not always have the same quality of learning activities and access to the curriculum. Both the teacher and the nursery nurse in this class are less experienced and do not have a clear enough understanding of the different needs of children. There is some uncertainty about the new requirements for the foundation stage of learning and

the teacher needs more help with planning and organisation for the two age groups.

24. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, overall, and is better in the single age Year 2 class. The quality of teaching provided for additional literacy is good and numeracy support is of very good quality. They are contributing to the improved standards in Year 2. Teachers are implementing a new rolling programme of study to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum and religious education in the mixed age classes to provide continuity of learning. The literacy and numeracy strategies are being satisfactorily implemented. Some lesson planning is poor and lacks clear detail of what and how pupils will learn and how this will be assessed. Teachers lack experience in planning for mixed age groups. The teacher in the Year 2 class plans very precise learning objectives, which are shared with the class and reviewed at the end of the lesson. Pupils have good knowledge of their own learning as a result. All teachers question pupils well and encourage them to speak clearly when answering. In Key Stage 1, pupils sometimes spend too much time sitting on the carpet listening to the teacher during long introductions to the lesson. Some pupils become restless and distract others, particularly in literacy lessons where some cannot clearly see the shared reading text. Pupils lose some of their enthusiasm by the time they are required to participate. Activities are rushed and there is insufficient time for pupils to develop ideas. The lesson comes to an abrupt end as time runs out and opportunities for assessment are lost. In a well paced numeracy lesson seen in Year 2, where there was a greater awareness of timing, learning was very good. In science, teachers have sound subject knowledge, but do not allocate enough time for pupils to develop their practical skills and carry out their own investigations. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills in history, geography and religious education where they are encouraged to record for themselves. Teachers generally make good use of additional adult support and ensure that they know what is expected of them.
25. In Key Stage 2, teaching is good, overall, and better towards the end of the Key Stage. Progress is accelerated towards the end of the key stage due to the higher expectations and the very good quality of the teaching. Team planning is effective and lesson planning is of a satisfactory quality. Teachers plan to match the key objectives in the literacy and numeracy strategies and follow the school's planned schemes of work. In this way, teachers successfully build on previous work as pupils move through the school and this shows improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are managed well and relationships are very good. Teachers question very well and encourage pupils to explain their thinking and share their feelings. In an outstanding gymnastics lesson, the teacher used a wide range of teaching skills based on excellent subject knowledge and had the highest expectations of the pupils' behaviour and performance. Consequently, the pace of learning was excellent, as was the pupils' attitude and behaviour. Some very good mathematics lessons were observed in Years 4 and 5; these had clear learning objectives which were shared with the class. Expectations are high and Year 5 pupils are assured that *'by the end of the week you will all be able to programme the video using the 24 hour clock'*. In the Year 4 lesson, the first in a series on time, the teacher skilfully assessed the pupils' learning through questioning in the first part of the lesson. She quickly moved into the activities, once it became apparent that the majority of pupils already knew quite a lot. In both lessons, challenging tasks were set which were carefully matched to pupils' needs. Higher attaining pupils are given the opportunity to extend their learning and make good progress. Not all teaching is of this quality and sometimes the end of lesson review is rushed and does not reinforce learning sufficiently. Science teaching is good in Year 4 when pupils are encouraged to predict, test, record and consider the evidence collected during a temperature experiment. Elsewhere, the science lessons were satisfactory, but there was insufficient pupil activity. The majority of pupils work at a good pace during lessons and concentrate well. Pupils have good knowledge of their own learning, especially in reading and writing where clear targets are set. The unsatisfactory teaching in art and design resulted from insecure subject knowledge and a lack of detail in the scheme of work to help teachers plan appropriate activities. Support staff were used appropriately.
26. Teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good. The individual educational plans are relevant and based on good assessment procedures. Targets are regularly reviewed and pupils moved on. There is a good balance of classroom support and withdrawal for statemented pupils. Effective methods and structured work programmes are used to develop reading and writing skills for pupils with specific learning difficulties. Teaching in these sessions is very good. Care is taken to ensure that statemented SEN pupils do not become too dependant on support and learn to function effectively on their own. Relationships are very good between the learning support staff

and teachers. In some classes, adults regularly support individual pupils and teachers manage this very well. Class teachers ensure that SEN pupils have the right blend of support and challenge. Pupils are encouraged to try for themselves and develop confidence and, as a result, good progress is made.

27. Teachers have worked hard to develop their knowledge and gain confidence in ICT and regularly teach skills through demonstration. This has been an important factor in the improvement in standards. Appropriate methods are used in each class to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to practise what has been taught during the week. Very good use is made of a support assistant with good ICT skills to teach small groups. Opportunities are missed in planning to develop these skills in other curriculum areas and so restricts progress. Teachers with less secure knowledge need support in identifying ways in which skills can be applied. Most acknowledge the need for further training, which is planned.
28. Marking is generally of a satisfactory standard and follows the school's marking policy. Some teachers make detailed comments and give good ideas for improvement. Rewards are fairly awarded for effort and achievement and pupils enjoy earning 'golden time' at the end of the week. However, teachers rarely comment on the poor presentation seen in some books and standards are not as high as they should be. Pupils' performance in English and mathematics is carefully monitored and reported to parents annually. Progress records are studied and extra support is allocated according to need. Older pupils are insufficiently involved in setting their own targets for improvement.
29. Homework is set on a regular basis. Younger pupils regularly read at home, learn spelling and number facts. Older pupils are given more demanding tasks. By the end of Year 5, useful routines are established which prepare pupils for the high school. The majority of parents are satisfied with the quantity of work set.

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

30. The curriculum for both key stages provides all pupils with a broad education that includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education throughout the year. There is, however, some imbalance. The generous time allocated to physical education does have a positive impact on standards, but time given to science is less than in most similar schools and is restricting investigation. Statutory requirements are met fully and there is suitable provision for sex education and awareness of harmful drugs. In the foundation stage, planning is imprecise and curriculum plans do not reflect the consistently good practice. The uncertainty about the requirements for the Foundation Stage of learning means that the children in the 4+ and reception classes do not always have access to the same curriculum. In Key Stages 1 and 2, planning is still developing. Teachers are implementing several new schemes of work, which set out clearly what pupils should be taught. Effective team planning is seen in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, rolling programmes of study have been adopted to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum for the mixed-age classes. However, there is still some lack of certainty, so that individual lesson plans sometimes have insufficient, clear detail of what and how pupils will learn. In planning in both key stages, there is sometimes insufficient reference to links with other subjects of the curriculum and insufficient use is made of information and communication technology. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good throughout the school. Their needs are clearly identified and pupils are provided with appropriately planned work and support. The strategies for the teaching of literacy have been implemented satisfactorily. Numeracy strategies have also been implemented satisfactorily, overall. In some classes, there is very good understanding and practice.
31. Class lessons are enriched in some areas of the curriculum. For example, residential visits to Quorn and to the Forest of Dean provide pupils with good experience in geography fieldwork. In some areas, however, there is a shortage of 'hands-on' experiences such as visits to historical sites, theme days and practical investigative work in science. Extra-curricular provision is excellent, with an extensive range of opportunities for pupils of all ages. Almost all adults employed in the school give additional time for this. There is very high awareness of equal opportunities, with all pupils being provided for in lesson planning. Pupils are encouraged to share and take turns fairly. For instance all, at some stage, take their turn to blow out the worship candle in assembly. Attention has been paid particularly to

ensuring the best provision for higher-attaining pupils. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.

32. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good. There is a school council and pupils' views are listened to, such as highlighting more those pupils who always behave and work quietly and well. Older pupils help the younger ones, for example, at mealtimes and do so in a caring manner. There is appropriate provision for health matters and a strong ethos of personal care emanating from all adults. This is 'the village school' and very strong links have been forged with the local community. There are established links with the church and visitors frequently lead morning assembly. Local people talk to pupils about different occupations. Pupils help to share the joys of Christmas with people in residential homes and visit with harvest gifts. The parish council has contributed funding for resources and a local nursery has donated plants. Links with partner educational institutions are good. There is a sharing of experience with a group of local primary schools, which is still developing. Visits are made to and some resources are exchanged with the High School. A local University has used the expertise of two members of the teaching staff and has donated resources for geography. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.
33. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
34. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. The quality of assemblies is good and they make a very strong contribution to this area. Teachers leading assemblies try to generate a sense of awe and wonder and emphasise strongly the need to care for others and for the world around. Time is allowed for pupils to reflect on these matters. In lessons opportunities are sometimes missed to support the sense of wonder. Insufficient lessons in which pupils investigate, in science and history for example, reduce opportunities for surprise and excitement in their learning.
35. The provision for moral development is very good. Pupils know how they are expected to behave towards each other and usually reflect this. There is a clear code for behaviour, which is enforced, and teachers make a point of praising those pupils who behave well. Any incidence of misbehaviour is dealt with calmly, but firmly. There is a mutual respect between teachers and pupils and a good sense of fairness.
36. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to work and share with others and do so well. Year 5 pupils show a high level of maturity in the way that they relate to others - caring for younger pupils and in discussions with adults. When sheets of photographs were issued in their history lesson, pupils realised that some of them would have to share. They did so very quickly, on their own initiative. In physical education lessons, pupils collaborate very well and Year 5 pupils make mature and objective comments on their classmates' performances. They are aware of and can express some of the social benefits of their residential visits.
37. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The curriculum provides pupils with a very good knowledge of their immediate locality and opportunities to compare it with other environments. Visits are made, for example, to a local farm in Year 1. Pupils also experience life in Victorian times when they dress and act out the experience on a visit to *Beaumanor Hall*. There is also good emphasis on pupils' involvement in music and drama activities such as the current production of *The Pied Piper*. However, the range of visits and visitors is somewhat limited. Pupils learn something of other cultures through comparisons in geography lessons. Other faiths are studied in religious education and there is a beneficial link with an inner city school to support their understanding of the Hindu faith.

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

38. The school provides a very happy, relaxed and stimulating environment and the friendliness and courtesy of the pupils and staff are characteristics of the school. There is a good range of policies and procedures that is applied consistently by all the staff, which effectively promotes pupils' welfare.
39. The teachers and support staff have a very caring attitude towards the pupils. Both pupils and their families are all well known and this helps teachers monitor each pupil's progress and personal

development.

40. The school's provision for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic performance and progress is very good. A wide range of strategies has been put in place. The school has worked hard on this and has made good progress since the previous inspection. In addition to the national tests at the end of Year 2, similar tests also take place throughout Key Stage 2. Information gleaned from these is analysed and used to track pupils' progress through the school. A clear picture emerges of the gains made over time. Tests carried out with the youngest pupils allow a forecast to be made of their future performance at the end of Key Stage 1. However, there is no intermediate check on progress to see if it is consistent through the key stage. Examples of good practice are seen when teachers check pupils' prior understanding at the beginning of a lesson and most teachers plan work to match their understanding of pupils' attainment levels. This is not the case in all lessons and, on occasions, in some classes, pupils are under-challenged. This is an area for further development. Some individual target setting is carried out in English and each pupil has a book with examples of work which have been assessed carefully. There is, however, insufficient involvement and sharing with the pupils of what they need to do in order to make best progress.
41. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are very good and pupils are seen caring and supporting each other. The minutes from the meetings of the school council indicate how much pupils care for each other. Pupils are confident and articulate and more than willing to talk about themselves and their feelings and to ask for help when it is needed.
42. The school is committed to a positive discipline and behaviour policy and, as a result, it functions as an orderly and caring community. Pupils are well disciplined and good behaviour is both a characteristic and expectation of the school. Parents are encouraged and are happy to contact the school should a problem arise.
43. Supervision of the children during lunchtime and other breaks is good.
44. Children with special educational needs are well supported and parents are kept fully involved throughout.
45. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting children's attendance.
46. The school has a child protection policy and all staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to deal with sick children.
47. An effective health and safety policy is monitored by the governors and an audit takes place each year. Regular fire drills also take place. A small number of health and safety concerns have been raised with the school which need dealing with before the new building is built. The needs of physically handicapped children and visitors, particularly in the old school building, should be dealt with further.

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

48. The views of parents' and carers of the school is that it is a good school which is very much part of the village community and where the hardworking staff care deeply for their children. Many said how much they appreciated the many opportunities open to them to become involved and how welcome they feel in the school and very much part of its ethos. The partnership between parents and the school is very good and is a real strength of the school.
49. The impact of parent's involvement with the school is very good. A large number act as volunteers in the school, working closely with the teachers, helping with swimming and acting as supervisors on school trips. Many parents are enthusiastic about FOSLS, the Friends of St Luke's School, which, through its activities, raises money for the school and builds up community spirit. Support for the 'Class led' weekly celebration assemblies is very good and parents value the opportunity to be involved. Good links are established with the church and the vicar regularly takes assembly.
50. The level of information given to parents is good. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress



through parents' evenings and an annual report. A number of parents felt that the computerised reports are rather impersonal and not very informative about the standards achieved. Despite this, all parents felt that they were able to talk with the teachers, if they needed more information about their children's progress. In a sample of reports seen during the inspection, it was noted that some sections were handwritten and that personal targets for improvement were set. Reading Diaries are very effectively used and include clear targets which parents find very helpful when reading with their children at home. Parents were also concerned about the lack of facilities for indoor physical education. The inspection team also considered these to be unsatisfactory, but the problems will shortly be resolved with the new building. Standards in swimming are high, in spite of the concerns of some parents about the lack of time spent in the pool.

51. At the meeting with parents, and when interviewed, they all spoke highly of the quality of relationships between themselves and the staff and expressed appreciation of the accessibility of staff and their openness and approachability.
52. Overall, the contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is very good. In addition to the large number of volunteers in the school, many parents help their children at home. A number have asked for more feedback about the work they have helped their children with at home to see if their contribution has been effective.
53. Support for children with special educational needs is very good, with parents being fully involved. Parents are all kept well informed of their children's progress through regular meetings, reviews of the individual education programmes and reports.

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

54. The headteacher is an effective leader and has a strong influence on the positive ethos of the school. As well as organising the school efficiently and representing it in the community, he teaches regularly and sets very high standards. He communicates well with all sectors of the school community and has deservedly earned the respect of the staff, parents, governors and pupils since his promotion from deputy three years ago. Through the completion of the National Professional Qualification for Headship he has developed his management skills and initiated change. The new deputy, who is an experienced and talented teacher, provides a good role model for others. They work together well as a senior management team and are both committed to raising standards.
55. There is a balance of strengths and weaknesses amongst others with delegated management responsibilities. The Key Stage co-ordinators are developing their roles. There is already evidence of the impact of leadership and team planning in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, insufficient guidance is given to support planning for the mixed age classes and the foundation stage. Strong leadership is provided by the special needs co-ordinator, who has built an effective team which meets regularly to ensure the best level of support for pupils. Some curriculum co-ordinators are having a marked influence on the development of their subject throughout the school and, in English and mathematics, have contributed to the raising of standards. All are keen to be more effective, but do not always have a clear overview and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subject. In other areas, co-ordinators are insufficiently knowledgeable and experienced to lead others and need training. All co-ordinators monitor planning, but this has not been rigorous enough to identify the problems that exist in some classes. Monitoring of teaching has been carried out by senior managers, co-ordinators and LEA advisors and has identified areas for improvement in literacy for individuals and the school as a whole. The very good classroom practice identified in many areas has not been sufficiently promoted and modelled to raise the standards of all teaching to that of the best. Not all co-ordinators are comfortable about feeding back their judgements about classroom observations to other colleagues. The dispersed accommodation limits teachers' awareness of what is happening elsewhere in the school.
56. The governing body contributes to the effectiveness of the school, fulfils its statutory requirements and is developing a better understanding of its role. The expertise of governors is used for the benefit of the school. Governors are supportive, open-minded and questioning. They have involved the school in projects to raise standards, improve the accommodation and bring additional funding for ICT. Governors keep themselves well informed about what is happening in the school through contact with the headteacher, regular visits and links with classes. The recently formed Strategy Group has developed

the school mission statement and analysed and evaluated the school's performance data very effectively. Through a presentation of findings to the full governing body a clearer view of the school's strengths and weaknesses has evolved, which is informing plans for the future development of the school.

57. The school improvement plan is detailed and establishes appropriate priorities for development in a three year cycle. Although governors are not yet involved in the early stages of planning, they appropriately allocate funds to the priorities in the plan. Funding is prudently managed and the school obtains best value for money, but, as yet, does not fully consider the cost effectiveness of the outcomes of all major spending decisions. Grants are used well for their designated purposes. The funding for new technologies has improved resources, but ICT is not being used regularly to support the curriculum. The daily administration of funds by the school's administrative staff is efficient and the part-time bursar helps governors to monitor spending.
58. The school is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified teachers. There is a useful staff handbook, which provides helpful advice for new staff and relief teachers. The support given to the newly qualified teacher could be improved. Good provision and support are regularly provided for trainee nursery nurses and physical education students. Teachers are generally well supported in class by nursery nurses and learning support assistants. The experienced nursery nurses make a significant contribution to the provision in the 4+ class. Good use is made of parents and volunteers from the community to enhance pupils' learning.
59. The school has found suitable solutions to the problems caused by the widely scattered and varied accommodation on the site. Facilities for indoor physical education provided in the Memorial hall are far from ideal and restrict some activities for safety reasons. Access for the disabled to all parts of the school site is unsatisfactory. Resources are adequate to teach the planned curriculum and the pupil to computer ratio is rapidly improving. The use of the library is restricted by its location in the Key Stage 1 block and, during the inspection, very little use was made of the new design technology area which had been created. Many of the restrictions which the accommodation imposes at present will be resolved when the new building is complete.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Governors and the headteacher should consider the following when planning for school improvement:

- (a) raise standards in information and communication technology by:
- developing a scheme of work which fits into the overall curriculum plan and enables the skills taught to be linked to other curriculum areas;
  - ensuring that pupils are given more opportunities to use new technologies to support their learning;
  - teachers identifying cross-curricular links in their planning;
  - co-ordinators supporting colleagues by collecting examples of good practice to share.  
( paragraphs:11, 27, 30, 57, 81, 84, 92, 99, 103, 109, 124)
- (b) raise standards in investigational science by:
- allocating more curriculum time to the subject;
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding to everyday situations through appropriate practical activities;
  - systematically developing pupils' investigative skills as they move through the school and monitoring their progress;
  - providing suitable staff training to support this.  
(paragraphs: 9, 21, 85, 86, 98, 91, 92)
- (c) Improve the quality of lesson planning, where appropriate, by:
- ensuring that plans contain sufficiently clear detail of what and how pupils will learn;
  - how the learning will be assessed;
  - clearly indicating the different activities planned for the different age groups and/or abilities within the class;
  - showing where additional adults will support and how;
  - planning the time spent on each part of the lesson, in order to maintain pace.  
(paragraphs: 23, 24, 25, 27, 30, 55, 61, 79, 91)
- (d) Review the time allocated to the teaching of subjects to achieve a better curriculum balance. Ensure that the time allocated to subjects on the class timetables matches this and is used efficiently.  
(paragraphs:30, 79, 92, 119)
- (e) Provide opportunities to share and model the best teaching and classroom management to achieve a consistent standard of teaching and learning across the school. Ensure that teachers are aware of what is happening elsewhere in the school and how their work contributes to this.  
(paragraphs: 27, 55)
- (f) Provide better access to all areas of the school site for the disabled pupils and parents.  
(paragraph: 59)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	20	40	31	5	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y5
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	200
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR-Y5
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	18

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
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	9	9	18

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (70)	100 (100)	100 (95)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (85)	100 (100)	100 (95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

*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	2
Black – other	0
Indian	10
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	134
Any other minority ethnic group	3

*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	3	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 – Y5**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	28.5

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	156

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	328,497
Total expenditure	330,076
Expenditure per pupil	1,759.47
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,585

Balance carried forward to next year	13,006
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## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	192
Number of questionnaires returned	63

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	32	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	38	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	37	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	40	6	0	3
The teaching is good.	70	30	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	38	8	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	21	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	27	0	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	59	33	6	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	78	19	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	27	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	68	29	2	0	2

### **Other issues raised by parents**

The computerised reports were impersonal and did not make clear statements about pupils' attainment.



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

60. Children who are under five enter the 4+ class when they start school. As new children are admitted, the older children in this age group continue their early learning experiences in the Year 1 class. Most children's development in each area of learning is above average when they start school. The good standards of teaching, overall, ensure that the children continue to make the good progress reported in the previous inspection. Nearly all children are expected to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. A significant number will exceed these standards. Children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are given very good support in their learning and make very good progress.
61. The staff work together as a very well organised team, sharing every aspect of teaching. In the 4+ class the nursery assistants' confidence and very good understanding of the children's needs make a particularly strong and much valued contribution to the children's learning. There are variations in the quality of some learning activities between the two classes, however, as children in the 4+ class benefit from the longer experience of both their teacher and their nursery assistants. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator's imprecise curriculum plans do not reflect the consistently good practice. This, together with a lack of confidence about the requirements for the Foundation Stage of learning means that the children in the two classes do not always have access to the same curriculum.
62. Staff assess the children's abilities in each area of learning shortly after they start school. They make good use of these results to plan purposeful activities to develop children's individual learning needs. Good continuing assessment is made of children's progress as they develop new skills and understanding, but observations need to be recorded more systematically.

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

63. Most of the children attend a pre-school playgroup or nursery and start school with well-developed social skills. Sensitive handling by staff helps hesitant children to gain confidence. By the time they are five, many children exceed the early learning goals in this area. Because of the adults' clear explanations, the children are able to carry out their tasks with a very good level of concentration and independence. They change into shorts and plimsolls very quickly, with clothes and shoes neatly arranged. The friendly and courteous behaviour between the adults and towards the children is reflected in the way children treat each other. They listen to each other politely and share and play together very harmoniously. Very good strategies are used to deal with any reports of negative behaviour. After receiving a note about a lunchtime incident the teacher talked with the children about caring for each other. They understood that the behaviour was not acceptable as they watched her 'put away' the undesirable information under some books.

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

64. By the time they are five nearly all the children achieve the early learning goals and many exceed them in their speaking and listening skills. They enjoy planning what to say when they deliver the register to the secretary, such as, 'Did you have mashed potatoes for dinner today?' Children in the Year 1 class develop role-play well in their 'travel shop', selling tickets and making telephone bookings. In their 'parachute game' movements, children in the 4+ class capably demonstrate their understanding of directional vocabulary such as 'opposite, underneath, backwards'. They listen with interest to stories read by adults and enjoy looking at books and telling their own stories. After hearing a story about a teddy they offer words for the writing of a sentence, correctly identifying positions for the start of a line, a full stop and a capital letter. Some children make good attempts at writing their own sentences using correct initial letters for some words. Writing materials provided in both role-play areas encourage

children to write 'messages' and 'orders'.

## Mathematical development

65. Children obviously find mathematical activities enjoyable. Most children will reach and some may exceed the early learning goals by the time they are five. The children have a good understanding of numbers to 10, counting forwards, backwards and from a given number. When counting together they reach 24. By listening carefully as the teacher counts to 10 they correctly identify which number she has missed out. They accurately re-position mixed up numbers on a 1 to 5 number line and obviously find the activity enjoyable. Some children competently re-arrange mixed-up numbers 1 to 10 and others practise writing number shapes following the nursery assistant's clearly demonstrated example, showing starting place and direction of the line. The children learn to compare and order measurements as they decide who is taller, shorter or the same height and which object is longest. They practise what they have learned in other activities, such as counting money in their travel shop. Their paintings show an awareness of shape and symmetry.

## Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. By good questioning and provision of stimulating learning activities, staff encourage children's interest in the world in which they live. They find out about living things by looking at the way trees grow and by visiting a different environment such as a farm. Experiments with a variety of materials and construction kits allow them to make their own models. In the Year 1 class, a group co-operated well as they cut and joined egg boxes together to make a large crocodile. Children in the 4+ class learn that the stick that holds the wheels is called an axle as they are shown how to make a wheeled toy. As they mould play dough, children use cutters and rollers to create different shapes. They are encouraged to make their own choice of materials and how to use tools such as the glue spreader effectively. A visitor's collection of toys and photographs of herself as a child helped children in the 4+ class to understand about events in the past. They develop information and communication technology skills by operating the tape recorder and using headphones. Children in both classes practise mouse control and use the arrow buttons when using the computer. They learn to create coloured lines and print out the patterns.

## Physical development

67. Children take part in some form of physical activity every day. Their confident movements show that they are likely to exceed the early learning goals in this area. This is due to the very good teaching of suitable skills. The outside play area provides a suitable place for playing on a very good range of wheeled toys. In the hall, the children make good progress in developing control over different movements. They use the space well as they run, jump and learn to control bats, balls and beanbags. They take great delight in crawling over or under the parachute when playing 'cat and mouse'. When they listen to recorded music, the children march, flutter their hands and make turning movements according to the theme or rhythm.

## Creative development

68. Where the learning activities are appropriate, allowing the children to use suitable tools and materials to express their own ideas, they make good progress. Most of them are likely to reach the early learning goals. They use paint confidently to create patterns, pictures and leaf prints, mixing their own colours, for instance to vary patterns on the crocodile model's skin. On occasions when the older children are restricted to copying small images rather than using their imagination to create their own ideas of line and texture, their progress is limited. The children need more opportunities to develop their own impressions by experimenting with different media.
69. When listening to the sound of castanets, tambourine or wood block, some children can name them and choose suitable instruments to represent different parts of a story. They say which part of the *Nutcracker Suite* they prefer and learn that the trumpet is used in the *Toy Soldier's Dance*. They say whether the music sounds fast or slow.
70. The well-resourced role-play areas are provided with dressing-up clothes and other suitable items to enrich the play and help the children to make up their stories and themes. When talking about the

large aeroplane they had built, they invited an adult to take a seat while one child was the pilot and controlled its mechanism.

## ENGLISH

71. In the year 2000 National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in English was well above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level is well above the national average in reading and writing. These results are above average in comparison with similar schools in reading and well above average in writing. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Taking the four years 1996 to 2000, test results showed falling standards, more marked in reading, until this year's improved results. The national trend showed a very gradual improvement over this period.
72. The recent rise in standards follows determined efforts by the school, supported by the local education authority advisory service, to reverse the downward trend. In-service training, observation of teaching and learning and analysis of results have helped to identify pupils in need of extra help. Additional literacy support is focused on these pupils. All pupils now have personal targets to attain. The school's development plan identifies the need to continue to improve standards in literacy and extend library and dictionary resources.
73. Overall, standards in English at the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Year 5 are above those found nationally. By the end of Year 5, standards of attainment in reading and writing are good. Evidence of the good progress shown in the results of school tests is seen in the above average results for the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Key Stage 2 at the High school. Inspection findings show that for the current pupils in Year 2 and in Year 5 standards are above those found nationally.
74. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs, whose standards in reading and writing are below those expected for their age, make good progress. This is as a result of work carefully matched to the targets in their education plans and the additional help they receive. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive very good support for their identified needs. The additional literacy support directed at pupils in Years 3, 4, and 5 helps them to make good progress.
75. Standards in speaking and listening throughout the school benefit from the good opportunities for discussion built into most lessons. At the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 5 standards are well above average for most pupils. They listen attentively to each other and to adults. This attitude reflects the respect and value with which teachers receive their pupils' contributions. Pupils gain confidence in presenting their own ideas and in developing different forms of speech such as poetry and play reading. Year 5 pupils, particularly, are encouraged to express themselves audibly, using appropriate vocabulary. For example when considering the effectiveness of a list of instructions, they were prompted to remember the words '*criticise*' and '*evaluate*'. Pupils practising for the '*Pied Piper*' production and for the Year 3 assembly about the Romans projected their voices very well.
76. Younger pupils make good progress in learning to read through shared and guided reading. They use initial letter sounds and recognition of sound blends to read new words. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils identified '*ou*' and '*ow*' words in a recipe and made their own additions to the lists, using the computer. Pupils in Year 5 can locate books according to subject in the non-fiction library. They use an index and glossary to focus their search for information. Pupils enjoy books by new writer *J.K. Rowling* as well as traditional favourites such as *Enid Blyton*. Above-average pupils are confident, fluent readers, using expression appropriate to dialogue and humour. They show good understanding of the characteristic features of different texts, such as instructions, plays and reports. By Year 5, pupils have acquired basic library skills. They are able to locate books according to subject and use index, contents and glossary pages to focus their search for information. Below-average pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from their extra teaching and make good progress towards helpfully recorded targets. Most pupils read regularly at home as well as to adults in school.
77. Standards in writing are generally good in both key stages. Above-average pupils in Year 2 produce different forms of writing with good use of punctuation and expression marks. They extend their descriptions with adjectives, '*delicious*', '*scrumptious*' and '*shiny*', and adverbs, such as '*kindly*', and '*happily*'. Their stories are imaginative and display suitably sequenced events. Many spellings are

correct and writing is in a neat, cursive style. By the age of 10, most pupils have a good knowledge of grammar and punctuation. They show good understanding of the styles needed for different forms of writing and for different audiences. Their writing of instructions displays appropriate brevity of language with verbs in command form. Creative writing often shows humour and imaginative ideas, particularly when evaluating a poem structure such as the 'Ten Happy...' and 'Excuses, excuses' themes. Year 5 pupils first drafted their list of excuses for not doing homework; 'The goldfish wrecked it'; 'My sister sneezed all over it'; 'The computer is suffering from a virus'. Writing to a structure particularly helps those pupils with below-average writing skills to make good progress. Writing in other subjects shows good awareness of appropriate vocabulary, such as 'atoms', 'vibrating' and 'solids' when recording science investigations. Although dictionaries are available in classrooms, these are not always consulted, resulting in many avoidable spelling mistakes. Key Stage 2 pupils are capable of very neat handwriting, but work is often carelessly presented and accepted without criticism. Standards of literacy at the end of Year 5 and Key Stage 1 are above average.

78. Two thirds of the teaching observed was good and other lessons were satisfactory. Teachers have a good understanding of the teaching of literacy and, in general, have high expectations of their pupils. They identify suitable individual reading and writing targets for pupils to reach, frequently refer to them and raise them as standards improve. Careful questioning and references to earlier learning effectively check pupils' levels of understanding. Marking usually indicates how work can be improved, but comments are not always constructive enough. In nearly all lessons, teachers give very clear explanations and demonstrations so that pupils clearly understand what they are learning. Pupils' examples of work in their 'progress books' help them to keep track of their own achievements.
79. Teaching of the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 does not always ensure that the learning focus is sufficiently clear. For instance, when teaching the 'j' sound in 'Pass the jam, Jim' the 'dr' sound was introduced at the same time. This was confusing for some pupils. Since the last inspection teachers try to extend the challenge for pupils of higher ability levels as well as those of average and below-average ability. Allowing longer periods for personal concentration could extend these further. When the first part of lessons takes too long, pupils do not have enough time to develop their ideas. Plenary sessions are rushed and opportunities for assessment are lost. More balanced timing would help pupils to extend the quantity and the quality of their writing. In lessons where some pupils cannot clearly see the shared reading text, they are not able to participate fully and try to distract others.
80. Management of English is good. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject with good attention to pupils' learning targets and assessment of standards. Termly monitoring of lessons helps to give an overall picture of teaching and learning throughout the school. This would be further improved by focusing more closely on how the teaching in Key Stage 1 could be better co-ordinated. In particular, that pupils' learning is based on a shared understanding of what should be taught in each year group. The well-organised fiction and reference libraries are stocked with a suitable range of books. The co-ordinator organises a book club and there is also a Book Fair to further promote enthusiasm in reading. Opportunities are missed in most classes to use ICT to support learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

81. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average for pupils aged seven. The oldest pupils in Key Stage 2, those in Year 5, are achieving well above the level usually seen at this age. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with above-average levels of understanding. They make satisfactory progress during the key stage and good progress during their time in Key Stage 2. Progress is accelerated in Years 2, 4 and 5 as a result of the quality of teaching provided. National test results for Year 2 pupils in the year 2000 show that those pupils performed well above the national average and also in comparison to similar schools. This was a particularly high-achieving group of pupils. The results for the year 2000 show a good reversal of the previous downward trend.
82. Teachers have received training for implementing the National Numeracy Strategy, but there is a variance in their understanding of how to teach the subject. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, in Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. It varies, overall, however, from unsatisfactory to very good. A number of very high quality lessons were seen during the inspection. Lessons vary in style and content, providing all pupils with appropriate ranges of challenges. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the

- teacher sits all the pupils in a circle to help them counting and ordering numbers. A Key Stage 2 lesson begins with quick-fire mental recall of multiplication facts. Introductory sessions to lessons which include sharp thinking and a variety of mental tasks capture pupils' interest and retain their attention very well. This enables the teacher to present pupils with increasing challenges. When this was evident, as it was particularly in lessons with Year 2 and Year 5 pupils, they enjoyed their work and were very enthusiastic to answer questions.
83. In the best lessons seen there is good progression to the mental activities which are based on the main objective for the lesson. Year 2 pupils learned to read hours and half hours on analogue and digital clocks. During the mental activities they commenced by counting in 5s to 60 and halving numbers to 30. They were very well prepared to grasp the lesson objective more quickly. In a much more advanced lesson on the same topic with Year 5 pupils, the same teacher provided mental activities so that the pupils could ultimately make difficult calculations with 12 and 24 hour clocks. Key vocabulary was displayed, explained and emphasised. Year 2 pupils read the words collectively to reinforce them. A very strong feature of these lessons was the continual asking of the question -why? Pupils were eager to answer these questions and could invariably explain them clearly. If not, they could 'ask a friend'. This was a very good strategy for retaining the interest of all and for shared learning. Challenging tasks were set, graded according to pupils' different abilities. When the task was completed, pupils moved on eagerly to further extension tasks. The pace of their learning was very good, including that of pupils with special educational needs. At the end of lessons, the pupils have opportunities to share their achievements and some of the strategies used. Not all teaching is of this quality. In some lessons, the end-of-lesson review is brief and does not sufficiently reinforce learning. There is an over-reliance on photocopied worksheets on occasions and insufficient opportunity for pupils to investigate. Pupils in Year 4 and 5 are set tasks to investigate number. For example, Year 4 pupils explore the addition of a series of pairs of even numbers and then pairs of odd numbers to extract a common rule. Clarity of thinking would be aided in all tasks, including investigations, if the purpose of each one was set down initially, so that pupils are quite clear in what they learn. Standards of numeracy are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5 but more opportunities could be provided for pupils to use these skills in other subjects, especially science.
84. The subject is led well. The co-ordinator understands the subject and provides a very good role model in his teaching. Positive action has been taken following the disappointing results of 1999. In the majority of classes higher-attaining pupils are being challenged. The involvement of the head teacher in lessons adds further very high quality teaching. Pupils are being assessed regularly and their progress tracked. When vocabulary is emphasised and reinforced it provides good support to pupils' literacy skills. However, when pupils misspell key mathematical words it is often ignored. Pupils show their numeracy skills in their use of co-ordinates in geography. Little use is made of information and communication technology, so that pupils' experience in data handling is limited. This is an area for development. Overall, there has been good progress since the previous inspection.

## SCIENCE

85. In 2000, teachers assessed the standards of seven year olds to be well above average compared to other schools nationally and in comparison to similar schools. The group tested in 2000 contained a high percentage of high attaining pupils. Inspection evidence found standards for the pupils currently in Year 2 to be above average. Pupils aged seven have a very good knowledge of living things, materials, forces, sound and electricity. They have insufficient opportunities to experiment and investigate and apply their knowledge to new situations, which lowers attainment, overall. Above average standards have been maintained in Year 2 since the last inspection and there has been a steady rise in the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 3. Pupils in Year 5 are achieving standards above those expected for their age. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are well above average, but their investigative skills are less well developed and are of only a satisfactory standard.
86. During the inspection, only three lessons were observed in Years 2, 4 and 5 due to the organisation of the timetable. Work was sampled from all classes and discussions were held with the oldest pupils. Standards in knowledge and understanding were found to be above average in all areas of the science curriculum. Pupils have good general knowledge and retain the information and subject vocabulary they have been taught very well. They can recall with enthusiasm a small number of investigations. *'Once we had a clock and had to put things round it so you couldn't hear it ticking. All the groups had different*

*ideas and some of these worked well – it was good'*

87. Pupils in Year 1 know the names of the parts of the body and can correctly sequence pictures to show stages in human growth. They can name the parts of a plant and know the functions of the different parts. Year 2 pupils can sort foods into groups and have some understanding of healthy eating. They make observations of a broad bean seed as it grows. They have a clear idea of appliances that use electricity and those that do not and can make an electrical circuit. Year 2 pupils can describe the properties of different fabrics and say which of these would be most suitable for a bathing costume. Most do not have a clear understanding of a fair test.
88. Pupils in Year 5 know the difference between solids, liquids and gases and talk confidently about the spacing of molecules inside them. They know about water and the cycle of water in nature. They have an understanding of solutions and know that hard water has rocks dissolved in it. Pupils know that sounds are caused by vibrations and that is how we hear. They have a good understanding of sound pollution and how we can prevent our hearing from damage. In a lesson observed, pupils studying sound learnt about pitch from a visitor who demonstrated using a cello. Most understood the relationship between the length of the string vibrating and the pitch of the note. Pupils were then asked to suggest how to change the pitch of the sound made when striking a bottle and write about this. There was no opportunity to experiment first. There was some class discussion about fair testing, but it was not clear what pupils understood of this and how it was related to the investigation. Pupils in Year 4, however, had good opportunities to investigate temperature variations in their classroom. They were encouraged to predict 'hot' and 'cold' spots, take accurate measurements with thermometers, record and consider the evidence. Good learning took place because the investigation was structured and pupils were actively involved. Pupils continued to take and record temperatures during the week and account for the differences they found.
89. The analysis of pupils' work shows that they make good progress in knowledge and understanding. Their wide vocabulary and good communication skills help pupils to explain their thinking and ask questions. They are curious and observant but these qualities are not always fully used by staff to develop their investigative skills. Pupils learn quickly, remember and use the new vocabulary that is taught. There is a good balance between the writing pupils are expected to do for themselves and prepared worksheets. There is a lack of variety in the methods used for recording. Insufficient use is made of bar charts, tables and graphs. Limited use is made of computers to record work and display the information collected. The presentation of pupils' work is not always as good as it could be and this is rarely commented on by teachers in their marking. Pupils with special educational needs are usually well supported by adults in lessons who help them to concentrate and record their work. They make good progress.
90. Pupils showed interest and worked co-operatively in groups in the Year 4 lesson. In Years 2 and 5 pupils listened well for a considerable length of time. They answered questions thoughtfully when asked.
91. The quality of teaching varies from good to satisfactory. The good teaching was seen in Year 4 where pupils were finding out for themselves. In the satisfactory lessons, teachers developed knowledge, but pupils were not actively involved in the learning. All teachers have satisfactory knowledge to teach the planned curriculum, but some are not sure how to develop investigative skills and need more support. The lessons seen had clear objectives which were shared with the pupils. In the best lesson the learning was reviewed at the end and shared with the class. In this lesson a variety of methods and activities were used to good effect. In all the lessons seen, good questioning assessed pupils' levels of understanding. There is little evidence to suggest that these assessments are used in following lessons to set different tasks which match pupils' ability.
92. The co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic and has good subject knowledge. A structured scheme of work is now in place, which fully covers the programmes of study by the end of Year 5. A cycle of topics is taught in Key Stage 1 to ensure that pupils of the same age in different classes cover the same work. Too little curriculum time is allocated to science, which is a core subject and this cuts down the time pupils have for investigation. Teachers need to agree the scientific vocabulary they develop within each topic to ensure progression of learning. Pupils are assessed on their knowledge and understanding of the topics studied, and progress is recorded. The co-ordinator acknowledges that

the monitoring of progress is an area for development and is working hard to improve the quality of the information collected and the use being made of it. It is a weakness that teachers do not regularly develop and assess pupils' investigative skills as they move through the school. There is insufficient monitoring of the effectiveness of planning and encouragement of a structured approach to teaching through investigation. More use could be made of information books for pupils to use with the planned topics both in and out of school. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to collect and organise data and to retrieve information. The resources have been audited and are sufficient to teach the planned curriculum. The subject budget is used mainly to replace equipment unless science is a priority for development.

## ART AND DESIGN

93. In the previous inspection report, standards were judged to be in line with national expectations. The present standards are broadly average by the end of Year 5, but progress is limited by teachers' choice of inappropriate learning activities in some lessons.
94. In both key stages, pupils have a basic range of art experiences. These are supported by a weekly *Art Club* and an annual *Art Focus*, which involves parents' lending of artefacts for study. Pupils of all abilities take care with their work and behave well. The younger pupils are taught how to mix colours, to make leaf prints and use a spatter technique to create colourful firework effects in their *Bonfire Night* pictures. The *Seaside* paintings produced by pupils in Year 2 show confident use of paint and vivid colours mixed with sand to create texture. Good linking of art and design with teaching in design and technology in a well-planned Year 3 lesson helped pupils to develop their design skills, using the computer. In an interesting discussion, pupils suggested effective ways of using colour and letter shape to express the feeling of a word. Dramatic ideas included using a red and yellow background for the word 'BANG' 'because they are the colours of fire' and the word 'BLOOD' designed in *dripping red letters*.
95. On the whole, however, work is immature by the end of Year 5. There is little evidence of pupils learning how to create interesting effects of line, tone or texture from close observational drawing. Attempts to improve older pupils' techniques by copying from instructional worksheets are unsuitable. Similarly, the younger pupils' copying from photocopies of Lowry prints and small seaside photographs does not help them to experiment and learn how to express their own ideas. A closer look at some of the school's attractive framed prints of work by Lowry, Monet and Durer would be a better starting point. Some of these are displayed too high for the children to see clearly.
96. The quality of teaching was unsatisfactory in two of the lessons seen, one in each key stage. Standards vary considerably from class to class. Teachers need more detailed, helpful examples to extend the very suitable, active approach introduced in the 4+ class. The current scheme of work does not provide enough support for staff in offering the kind of well-planned, exciting input needed to stimulate pupils' imagination. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to experiment with a variety of materials to explore their different effects. They do not regularly use their senses to study plants and other objects to observe patterns, textures and form. A beautiful, sensitively observed painting of a man's hands painted and donated by a parent and shown to the pupils during an assembly is a prime example of this approach. There is no portfolio of suitable examples of pupils' work to serve as a focus for staff discussion and help in the assessment of pupils' achievements. The co-ordinator is not providing the support needed to raise standards.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. One lesson was observed in each key stage during the inspection. Evaluation is based on talking to pupils, examples of their work and evidence from sketchbooks. This shows that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5 are broadly in line with those seen nationally.
98. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have used a suitable range of materials, including card, cartons, fabric and threads to make models. Satisfactory teaching of cutting and joining materials together



helps them to learn a repertoire of useful skills. Sometimes pupils are over-directed into making identical structures, but then they choose their own ways of attaching parts and decorating their models. Learning is good in the younger pupils' lesson when they experiment with a well-varied selection of materials to make up their 'dragon' designs. In Year 2, pupils have been well taught to extend their skills in cutting and assembling materials. Their well-constructed paper aeroplanes show competent folding and gluing and carefully cut curved shapes. Pupils have applied a simple sliding mechanism in the form of a strip of 'passengers' to be inserted behind the cutout 'windows'.

99. In a well-planned lesson in Year 4, pupils began the last stage of their 'money container' project. Their sketchbook sequences depict the processes involved in seeing their design through from an initial idea with labelled drawing, to a design with technical detail and a paper 'mock-up'. The teacher encouraged the pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of their decisions as they worked. By Year 5, pupils make well-constructed models from a wider range of products using tools that require more skill. No structures with movable mechanisms were seen and there was little evidence of understanding of systems and control.
100. Overall teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their understanding of the subject. They enjoy their learning and are taught relevant safety procedures. Planning in some classes lacks necessary detail and much is still based on the work scheme in use at the last inspection. The achievements in Key Stage 1 need to be built upon more effectively to raise standards. Valuable help offered by adult volunteers needs to be more closely directed so that pupils are undertaking all the processes themselves.
101. The co-ordinator has overseen the adequate resourcing of a designated design and technology room and there is also a kiln, but neither was seen in use for this subject during the inspection. The learning programme now needs to be brought up to date to bring all elements of this subject to the standard of the construction activities. The co-ordinator is not providing sufficient support to raise standards.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

102. Standards in geography at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with those expected of pupils at the age of seven. Pupils know about their own locality and can make sensible comparisons with seaside towns. They are also aware of some of the differences seen in other countries. They know that geography is about people and their way of life and refer to a different system of government in the U.S.A. Pupils believe firmly in the need to protect the environment, which reflects how this view is encouraged throughout the school. They have a good awareness of distance and travelling times, such as two hours to Spain and twelve hours to South Africa. Standards in Year 5 are above those normally seen at this age. Pupils are beginning to form clear ideas of man's impact on his environment. They are developing good skills in mapwork, using their mathematical knowledge of co-ordinates. Experience in the subject benefits greatly from fieldwork on residential visits.
103. Standards in history at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with what is expected of pupils at this age. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of sources of historical evidence and talk about what an archaeologist does. They know how to use and can interpret a timeline, ordering a group of artefacts correctly. Standards in Year 5 are above those usually seen from pupils of this age. They discuss their understanding of history with some surety. Pupils have a wide knowledge of sources of evidence and give examples of diary writers such as Samuel Pepys and Anne Frank. They carry out independent research tasks, using books, and some use CD-ROMs at home but have little opportunity to use ICT in school. Knowledge of life in previous times is good, so that pupils give a clear picture of the lives of those who went to school in Tudor times.
104. All the teaching seen is at least satisfactory with one very good geography lesson taught in Year 5. In history lessons, some teachers make good use of resources. A Year 1 teacher uses a range of cameras so that pupils can see the changes in construction and materials. Another Year 1 teacher makes a good link with art and design, so that pupils learn something of the work of Lowry whilst studying and sequencing a series of seaside photographs. This succeeds in retaining pupils' attention well. Preparation for the tasks is very thorough, but, sometimes, causes lessons to drag a little, so that sparkle and excitement in learning is minimal and pupils grow restless. Teaching seen in Years 4

and 5 is good, with more pupil involvement. Year 5 pupils participated in a well-managed discussion about how technology has affected car production in the last fifty years and its impact on society. Almost all the class were keen to offer their views and there was a well-balanced mixture of telling and general discussion. Pupils worked at their tasks with great application and when the opportunity was given at the end of the lesson all wanted to talk about what they had learned. There was a very good pace to the learning of all, including those with special educational needs, who were given good additional support by volunteer helpers. The only geography lesson seen, in the same class, also saw some very good teaching. Pupils used good learning from previous studies to discuss the impact of human decisions on their local environment. These pupils have been taught well, so that they are able to think and discuss at a mature level. There is very good sharing of learning.

105. Geography is led well by a knowledgeable co-ordinator. Opportunities for fieldwork greatly enhance pupils' learning. An end-of-topic self-assessment sheet allows both pupils and teacher to comment on their understanding and also their personal development. This is very good. In both geography and history, the above-average attainment in Key Stage 2 is not reflected in pupils' recorded work. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support learning. In history, insufficient use is made of investigation and visits to historical sites. For example, pupils studying the Romans have little knowledge of the history of Leicester and most of their work comprises of completing worksheets. Numeracy skills are evident in the use of timelines and in mapwork. Satisfactory progress has been made in both subjects since the previous inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

106. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average by the end of Key Stage 1 and below average by the age of 10. This shows improvement since the last inspection when information technology was below average in both key stages. The improvement is due to improved resources and better teaching. All classes now have a regular weekly lesson when the teacher demonstrates a particular skill and the class practise it during the week. The lessons that follow progressively build on what has gone before. Teachers are using the national guidance and scheme of work to plan their lessons and are teaching appropriate basic skills well. As yet, the school has not adapted this guidance to create its own scheme, but this is seen as the next stage of development.
107. Pupils in Year 2 are able to use word processing to support their topic work and can use different fonts and change their size and colour. They confidently use the keyboard and mouse to give commands and type text. They know how to use the delete key and print and save their work. They can use an art package to draw lines of different thickness by changing brushes and colour. Pupils produced some pictures in the style of Gaudi using vertical and horizontal lines and fill the spaces with colour. They are able to programme a moving toy. As yet they have not had experience of putting data into the computer and drawing graphs, but this is planned for later in the year.
108. The attainment of pupils aged 10 is below that expected for their age, because skills have not been developed systematically as they moved through the school. Pupils are making good progress in the areas taught, but there are still gaps in their knowledge and most are about a year behind. Pupils' word processing skills are developing. Some have written poems and introduced some clip-art, colour and different fonts to present these in an attractive way. Others have used computers to write and order instructions for 'making a cup of tea' and 'making a Christmas pudding'. Pupils were beginning to learn how to set up and use a spreadsheet during the lesson observed. They can name cells and write formulae to calculate totals. In Year 4, pupils were learning to 'cut and paste' to re-order instructions for making a purse, and using the skill to make the meaning clearer. The word processing skills of pupils in the current Year 3 are of a similar standard to pupils in Year 5 because they have been offered better experiences from an earlier age and the majority show good skill and confidence. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have very limited experience of using computers to handle data and use computers for research purposes. Good use is made of laptop computers and tape recorders in Year 5 to help pupils with special educational needs improve their reading and spelling.
109. The teaching seen in all the weekly demonstration lessons was good. In Year 1, after the initial explanation and demonstration of the task, a pupil was chosen to question the class and given the instructions to operate the computer and colour in the seaside picture. The teacher observed to assess

pupils' learning. In Year 5, a learning support assistant, with good subject knowledge, taught a group at the computer about spreadsheets, whilst the teacher worked with the rest of the large class on a similar paper and pencil task. All teachers have devised effective systems of demonstration which best suit the number of pupils in their class and the space available. Teachers give confident and clear instructions which pupils are able to remember until it is their turn to try the task later in the week. All classes have check lists to ensure that everyone has a turn. Whilst this teaching is effective and standards are rising as a result, many opportunities are missed to use and develop the skills taught in other areas of the curriculum. This is due to a lack of teachers' subject expertise and more support is needed at the planning stage to identify opportunities and purposeful activities. Pupils do not make sufficient use of the available digital cameras, scanners and video cameras in their work. Assessment is an area for development. At present there is no portfolio of work to show the standards of work achieved. Pupils who have computers at home and have already developed skills in some areas do the same task as others and their progress is restricted.

110. The subject is led and managed by two co-ordinators who are enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge. They have a clear plan for development and have made a bid for national funding. Much of the new computer equipment acquired arrived during the inspection week and work to install telephone lines for e-mail and internet is due to start within the next week. Staff training is planned in these areas for next term. At present, all classes have two computers, but these operate with different systems which causes confusion and wastes teaching time. There are firm plans to create a computer suite, so that pupils can have increased access to machines. Some staff have been provided with laptop computers to help them develop their skills. There is no recent audit of teachers' skills or lack of expertise, which can be used for training purposes and to develop staff confidence by sharing expertise with others. Good use is made of a visiting technician to remedy equipment faults and train staff in the use of particular programs.

## MUSIC

111. During the inspection, only one lesson, in Key Stage 2, was observed and two instrumental lessons taught by peripatetic staff. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5 are judged to be average overall. Evaluations are supported by listening to singing in assemblies and discussion with staff and pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 1 continue to make good progress, but as reported in the previous inspection, there is still no clear system for developing their musical skills in Key Stage 2.
112. Pupils sing tunefully in assemblies with clear diction and a good sense of time. In Key Stage 1, pupils practise a variety of unison songs. They all start to play the descant recorder and, if they wish, may continue in Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have learned about changes in *pitch*, *volume* and *dynamics*. In well-planned Year 2 lessons, pupils begin to evaluate the quality of sounds produced by voice and by tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments. They learn that music has a written form by inventing their own expressive notation for *calm and stormy sea* sounds in their '*seaside musical scores*' and then performing their compositions.
113. When practising songs for the *Pied Piper* production the Key Stage 2 pupils learn strategies for singing with good expression and diction from well-demonstrated singing by the teacher and repetition of challenging passages by the pianist. The girls work hard and enjoy the singing, but insufficient attention is given to the many boys who do not participate to the same extent. Pupils listen to music at the beginning of assemblies from the varied selection of recorded music. However, there is no evidence of their evaluating the work of different composers or composing and playing their own compositions. The upstairs music studio, equipped with a good range of instruments, provides ideal space for pupils' music experiments away from the rest of the school.
114. Peripatetic instrumental tuition is very good. Pupils are interested and attentive when learning to play their brass, string and woodwind instruments. They enjoy their lessons and have opportunities to perform in church, assemblies and for the *annual musical evening*. Further singing opportunities are provided by a lunchtime choir and participation in *the local schools' singing day* when everyone joins in singing the prepared songs.
115. There is no evident improvement since the last inspection. A clearly staged programme of learning

activities planned to progressively build on pupils' knowledge is needed to cover each element of the music curriculum. There are several musicians on the staff. Many pupils have a strong interest in music and well-taught instrumental skills. The task for the co-ordinator now is to combine these assets and provide the leadership to improve the breadth of the curriculum.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

116. Standards, overall, at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5 in physical education are good. The levels attained in swimming are well above those seen in most schools. The quality of gymnastics in Year 5 is also well above what is usually seen from pupils of this age. Standards in swimming are gauged from the facts that, by the end of Year 5, over 90 per cent of pupils swim at the level indicated in the National Curriculum for the end of the key stage. A good proportion of them achieve awards which require them to swim well beyond the basic 25 metres, showing a range of strokes and survival skills. In addition, they answer a series of questions regarding water safety.
117. Only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 1, in which Year 1 pupils showed an above-average response when moving to music. A few pupils showed very good levels of control. They try hard to follow the instructions and show a clear contrast in their movements, from skipping to creeping. Pupils use the space sensibly and safely. The only other dance lesson seen was with Year 3 pupils, in which they responded quickly to the teacher, freezing and holding their balances well. There is good collaboration when pupils work in pairs. Although not seen in every class, it is clear that some good teaching leads pupils to develop their body control and co-ordination to a high level. The gymnastics work of Year 5 pupils is of a very good quality. When balancing on different parts of the body they show very interesting shapes and a wide variety of balances with fine control. A girl performing a cartwheel showed very good shape and control with good leg extension. Year 4 pupils practise some athletics indoors and show application and effort throughout, striving hard to give of their best. When preparing for tennis, pupils in Year 5 display above-average racquet skills. They control the ball individually using forehand and backhand alternately.
118. The high standards seen in physical education stem from the lead of the subject co-ordinator. His outstanding gymnastics lesson showed the full range of teaching skills based on excellent subject knowledge and the highest expectations of the pupils' behaviour and performance. Consequently, the pupils learned the correct way to perform headstands, showing very good control. The pace of learning was excellent, as was the pupils' attitude and behaviour. They supported each other as necessary and were able to make objective and helpful comments about the performances of others. Teaching of very high quality in the Year 5 games lesson was based on good subject knowledge and good progression in skills. Pupils knew what skills they had to practise in order to improve their performance.
119. The high standards in the subject are supported by the generous amount of time allocated to it. The curriculum is broad and pupils experience a wide range of games and other activities. All pupils have equal access and opportunities, including those with special educational needs, so that all make good progress. Outside facilities are good, as are resources. The present indoor facilities for gymnastics and dance are unsatisfactory, but teachers make the best possible use of them. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal and social development. They play fairly and work together well, enjoying shared learning.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

120. At the age of seven and 10, pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This reflects the emphasis given to the subject in all classes and the good progress made. During the inspection, teaching was observed only in Key Stage 2, due to timetabling arrangements.
121. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 follow the planned programme of work but do not always record what has been covered in the lesson. The emphasis is on discussion, but there is a useful classbook which shows the topics covered in their lessons. Pupils had recently enjoyed a visit to the church and were stimulated to bring in and discuss a variety of photographs and artefacts associated with their

personal church visits. From discussion and the sampling of pupils' work, Year 2 pupils have thought about ways of helping in the classroom and written class rules. From this they understand the importance of sharing, helping others and being kind. They know about Christian weddings and can tell a story about Jesus at a wedding. Pupils also begin to develop an interest and understanding of different religions. Good use is made of the experiences of pupils from other faiths in the class and, as a result, pupils become very knowledgeable about Diwali celebrations. In Year 2, pupils generally record their work in writing and pictures.

122. The quality of teaching is predominately good. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and share their opinions and feelings in discussion. In the very good lesson seen in Year 5, pupils extended their knowledge of Buddhism. They were expected to think for themselves and relate parts of the story told to their own lives. Through probing but sensitive questioning pupils were encouraged to express their feelings about suffering. The teacher also shared some of his personal experiences with the group. Pupils empathised with families who had suffered due to loss of employment and made links with work in history concerning automation in the car industry. Good comparisons were made between Buddhism and Christianity, which illustrated their good knowledge of religious rules. Pupils gave good examples of selfish desires, such as 'not envying neighbours' goods, not worshipping idols and wanting better computers and cars'. The teacher's expectations of behaviour and work rate were high and resulted in very good learning. In an impromptu lesson about Advent in Year 3, the teacher showed very good subject knowledge and created a trusting atmosphere where pupils listened attentively and were comfortable to share ideas and feelings in a mature way. In this lesson, pupils showed a good knowledge of the Christian calendar and how this related to the life of Jesus. In a Year 4 lesson about a Hindu temple, the teacher showed good subject knowledge and presented the information well, but some pupils were reluctant to apply themselves fully to the task that followed and learning was restricted. Consideration should be given to the appropriateness of timetabling the subject at the end of the day and towards the end of the week.
123. Pupils record their work satisfactorily in Key Stage 2, but do not always take a pride in the presentation. More effective links could be made with literacy through story telling and opportunities given for pupils to write imaginatively. Good use is made of the local church as a resource for learning and sometimes visits are made to other places of worship such as a Sikh Gurdwara. Good use is made of the local clergy, assemblies and parents from other faith groups to develop understanding. There are no ongoing assessments of pupils' progress and samples of work to show the expected standard. Progress is reported to parents on the annual report.
124. The co-ordinator has been in post for a year. She has monitored planning and reorganised the topics studied to cover the locally agreed syllabus. Interviews have taken place with all staff to discuss their approaches to the teaching and learning of the subject. As a result, resources have been reorganised and additional purchases made. No clear whole school approach to teaching and learning has yet emerged. In some classes, there is a lack of variety in the teaching methods used and little use is made of ICT.

