

INSPECTION REPORT

RAVENSHEAD CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ravenshead

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 131814

Headteacher: Mr K Fuller

Reporting inspector: Mr Jean-Pierre Kirkland
4483

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th February 2001

Inspection number: 230593

Full 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 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Swinton Rise
Ravenshead
Nottingham

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr G Spedding

Date of previous inspection: Not applicable – this is a recently created school

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4483	Jean-Pierre Kirkland	Registered Inspector	Design and technology Music Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9189	John Horwood	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17710	Maureen Sillifant	Team Inspector	English Art and design Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
10120	Philip Crookall	Team Inspector	Science Information and communication technology (ICT) Physical education Equality of opportunity	How well is the school led and managed?
3687	Godfrey Bancroft	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Geography History	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ravenshead voluntary controlled Church of England primary school is a newly formed school, following the amalgamation of the former Pilgrim Oak Infant and Martin Roe Junior schools in September 1999. The school now occupies two buildings on one site, in an area of owner occupied housing half a mile from the village centre. Just under thirty per cent of pupils come from the area surrounding Ravenshead. There are currently 277 pupils on roll, including seventeen children in the Foundation Stage in the reception class. This is above the average size nationally. Three per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a figure that is well below the national one. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Forty-nine pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, representing just under twenty per cent, approximately in line with the national figure. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need, and this is below the national average. A small minority of pupils, about four per cent, enter or leave the school other than at the usual time of first admission or transfer. The Christian ethos of the school and collective worship are being inspected and reported separately. The current headteacher was the former head of the junior school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. Children enter the school with levels of attainment that are above average, although a significant minority have average levels of literacy and numeracy development. Teaching is very good throughout the school, and this enables very good levels of learning to take place. Many teachers are relatively new to the school, and the full effects of their very good practice have yet to be reflected in the national tests for eleven year olds. Inspection findings show a continual improvement taking place in standards across the school. This is reinforced by very good levels of leadership and management. Taking into account the very good progress and improving standards, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Inspection findings show pupils achieving above average standards in mathematics and science, and well above average standards in English by age eleven;
- Standards are above average in most other subjects by age eleven, and are well above average in music and religious education;
- Teaching is very good throughout the school, enabling pupils to make very good progress in the majority of lessons and subjects;
- Relationships are outstanding, contributing greatly to a very positive learning environment for pupils;
- A very good broadly based curriculum, with a strong emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, contributes very effectively to the very good progress made overall;
- Leadership and management are very good and strong, in directing the work of the school, and in ensuring a positive development since the new school was created eighteen months ago;
- The very good partnership between the school and the parents adds significantly to the high standards and very good progress made by pupils.

What could be improved

- Standards in science for eleven year olds, by placing more emphasis on teaching magnetism, electricity and forces in the upper junior classes;
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the whole curriculum;

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

There are two minor points for improvement for governors to consider for inclusion in their action plan. First, improving the way that personal development of pupils is recorded and reported to parents. Second, placing more emphasis on art and design teaching so it is cross-curricular for pupils under seven years of age, and putting greater emphasis on major artists and their work for older pupils.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been a very good rate of improvement since the two former schools were inspected in 1997. There has been a significant improvement in planning for all subjects, and the lack of coverage in design and technology, ICT, geography and music has been rectified. There are very good assessment procedures with reporting to parents meeting statutory requirements in full. Literacy and numeracy skills are very well taught in many curriculum areas, and this is now a strength of the school. The school development plan encompasses all aspects of development with clear targets for learning and improvement. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good and includes a broad multicultural dimension. In addition, standards have risen in most subjects, and especially in English, mathematics and science. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching, especially for pupils aged seven to eleven. Progress is continuing to improve since the former schools were amalgamated. With very good levels of leadership and management, including the very effective work of governors, the school is now in a very favourable position to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	N/a	N/a	A	A
Mathematics	N/a	N/a	B	C
Science	N/a	N/a	C	D

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

Standards in the most recent national tests for eleven year olds were above average overall, with well above average results in English, above average in mathematics and average results in science. Inspectors found a similar pattern for the current Year 6 pupils, with well above average standards in English and above average standards in mathematics. In science, inspection findings showed some improvement, with standards in Year 6 now also above average. On the basis of free meals entitlement, pupils' achievements are well above those in similar schools in English, close to their counterparts in mathematics, but were below them in science last year. Progress in lessons, and in pupils' work was judged to be very good throughout the school – the result of very good teaching and improved schemes of work. Children enter the school with above average levels of attainment, but with a wider spread of development in literacy and numeracy skills. In the newly created Foundation Stage in the reception class, progress is very good in all areas of learning and standards are above average overall. By age seven, the most recent national test results show pupils well above average in reading and close to average in their writing. In mathematics, recent tests show pupils to be in the top five per cent of results nationally, and well above average when compared to pupils in similar schools. Writing was a relative weakness in the Year 2000 tests, with pupils reaching the national average, but being below their peers in similar schools. Inspectors noted some significant improvements for the current Year 2 pupils, with standards of handwriting and extended writing above average. Significant improvements in the quality of teaching are largely the cause of this. Standards are average in art and design and above average in all other subjects when pupils reach age seven, apart from in geography, where they are well above average. Progress is very good in many lessons especially in mathematics, music and geography. By age eleven, pupils have reached above average standards in all subjects except art and design, and ICT, where they are average. In music and religious education, standards achieved by eleven-year-olds are well above average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good – pupils love coming to school and are very eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good throughout the school. There were no exclusions last year. This is a very harmonious and orderly Christian community.
Personal development and relationships	Outstandingly good and making a huge contribution to learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are very strong and have a positive influence on learning.
Attendance	Very good and well above the national picture. Pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
lessons seen overall	very good	very good	very 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.

Teaching is very good overall. No teaching was judged to be less than good. This is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection, especially for pupils aged seven to eleven, where a significant minority of teaching was judged as unsatisfactory. Inspectors judged six per cent to be excellent; forty-seven per cent to be very good; and a further forty-seven per cent to be good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school. Children in the reception class, the new Foundation Stage, learn very well due to very good levels of teaching. Planning is of a high standard, enabling all areas of learning to be covered effectively, with pupils making very good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are managed very effectively, and this is also standard throughout the rest of the school. A very good learning environment is created through outstanding relationships between pupils and staff. Staff use humour in a professional way to motivate and to capture pupils' imagination very effectively. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are very well taught throughout the school, resulting in high standards of reading, much improved standards of writing and good mental arithmetic skills. Teachers are not yet using ICT as effectively as they might in all subject areas, and this is an issue for the school to address. Apart from this, challenges are very good in lessons, especially in the way in which pupils are given problems to solve, for example in science and mathematics, or areas to investigate in design and technology and music. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is also very good. Teachers know their pupils, and their needs, very well, and this helps them plan effectively with appropriate challenges and tasks. Highest attaining pupils benefit from special attention and teaching. Other pupils benefit from additional classes in numeracy and literacy to help raise their levels of achievement. A further group benefits from specialist input to help them reach the targets on their individual education plans, mainly in literacy and numeracy.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is very good overall, with statutory requirements met in full. Teachers deliver the curriculum with strong links between subjects, raising standards across the board by reinforcing skills very well. Standards are also enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good – the school has a range of good strategies for early identification of problems, as well as excellence, so that all pupils are given very good opportunities to succeed.
Provision for pupils'	Very good overall, leading to a secure, positive and fruitful learning

personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	environment where relationships and personal development are outstandingly good and lead to a harmonious atmosphere throughout the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good levels of care and concern are set in a Christian atmosphere where each pupil is valued as an individual in his or her own right.
How well the school works in partnership with parents and carers	Very good relationships exist between the school and its parents, many of whom are actively involved in supporting the governors and staff in the determination to drive up standards.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good, with clear vision and direction for the future, and very smooth transition during amalgamation. The work of the school is guided by a good development plan, with a shared commitment to improve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good overall. Governors are very supportive and know the strengths of the school, as well as the areas for improvement. They fulfil their statutory duties very effectively. Financial understanding is a strength, and best value is sought after a critical analysis of any problem.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Through rigorous monitoring and evaluation, the school is aware of its strengths and is improving its performance overall.
The strategic use of resources	Very good, with the one area of relative weakness being in the use of ICT across the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pupils achieve good standards and make good progress the Christian values and attitudes promoted by the school good teaching very good behaviour the school listens well to suggestions from parents improvements since the new school was formed, including good leadership and management, better music provision and a good range of extra-curricular activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the extent and range of homework, especially for Year 6

Inspectors agree with all the positive views of parents. Further, inspectors judged teaching to be very good and making a very significant contribution to the high standards and very good quality learning. An appropriate amount of suitable homework was set throughout the school, including in Year 6. This was judged by inspectors to be good preparation for transfer to the secondary school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards in the most recent national tests for eleven-year-olds were above average overall, with well above average results in English, above average results in mathematics and average results in science. Standards in these two subjects have improved since the previous inspection. Inspectors found a similar pattern for the current Year 6 pupils, with well above average standards in English and above average standards in mathematics. The 2000 results in mathematics have been amended upwards due one pupil being incorrectly assessed. Standards in mathematics are similar to those of the previous inspection report. In science, inspection findings showed some improvement, with standards in Year 6 now also above average. On the basis of free meals entitlement, pupils' achievements are well above those in similar schools in English, close to their peers in mathematics, but were below them in science last year. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was well above average in English, and close to national averages in mathematics and science. Inspectors found a similar pattern in their observations of lessons and scrutiny of work for pupils currently in Year 6.
2. Children enter the school with above average levels of attainment, but with a wider spread of development in literacy and numeracy skills. In lessons in the newly created Foundation Stage in the reception class, children's standards in literacy were judged as well above average overall, and with some examples such as role play and speaking and listening, to be very high for their age. In other areas, such as personal, social and creative development, standards of work seen showed children to be above average. Progress is very good in all areas of learning, with higher attaining children producing very good observational drawings and adding single digits up to ten correctly. Other pupils learn the names of body parts and insects, and have developed an understanding of the globe. By age five plus, all pupils are likely to have reached the early learning goals, with many exceeding them.
3. By age seven, the most recent national test results show pupils well above average in reading and average in their writing. In mathematics, recent tests show pupils to be in the top five per cent of results nationally, and well above average when compared to pupils in similar schools. Inspection findings confirm these high standards. Writing was a relative weakness in the Year 2000 tests, with pupils reaching the national average, but being below their peers in similar schools. Inspectors noted some significant improvements for the current Year 2 pupils, with standards of handwriting and extended writing above average for seven-year-olds. This is due to the high quality teaching the pupils receive and the specific focus on improving creative and extended writing. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in reading and mathematics was well above average in the most recent tests.
4. The school has placed good emphasis on developing essential skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been introduced very successfully, and standards were judged to be rising in many classrooms through the improved quality of teaching of these basic skills. This has been most noticeable in the quality of individual handwriting and extended writing. Pupils now form their letters very well; punctuation is appropriate, and spellings have improved due to the increased use of dictionaries. Pupils are also encouraged to write for specific purposes, such as continuing with a story in their own words and style. Other subjects

such as history, music and religious education make major contributions to the development of literacy skills, with teachers emphasising key vocabulary at every opportunity, and providing opportunities for further writing in lessons. In mathematics, all lessons begin with a stimulating mental session, which enables pupils' thinking to be challenged well. This speeds up their responses with increasing degrees of accuracy. The use of the new ICT suite has been essential in developing a wide range of computer skills, and pupils are now ready to transfer these skills to other subject areas.

5. Standards are average in art and design and above average in all other subjects when pupils reach age seven. In geography pupils' knowledge and understanding are well above average. At this age, pupils have a very good understanding of the area in which they live, and of scale and direction. The skills being acquired in art and design, such as selecting and mixing colours, are not being extended as effectively as in other subjects, so that standards, although average overall, are below what ought to be achieved.
6. Progress is very good in many lessons especially in mathematics, music and geography. The focus on developing appropriate language and skills is the one of the main reasons for the better levels of learning, as well as teachers challenging pupils well and making lessons dynamic and interesting. In these subjects, and occasional lessons in others, there is a careful balance between oral and written work, which allows all pupils to contribute and to learn. This is especially effective in music, for example, where the emphasis on regular performance consolidates understanding of rhythm and sound very well.
7. By age eleven, pupils have reached above average standards in all subjects except art and design and ICT. This latter is due to the fact that the ICT suite has been a recent addition to the school, with older pupils not having had the longer exposure to the good quality teaching and resources. In music and religious education, standards achieved by eleven-year-olds are well above average. Standards in art and design are similar to those in the previous inspection. Inspectors noted that pupils did not have a sufficiently good grasp of the contributions made to society by the great artists, including their varying techniques and style. Standards in design and technology, ICT, physical education and religious education have all improved since the school was last inspected. There has been significant improvement in geography, history and music.
8. Progress in lessons was judged to be very good throughout the school overall – the result of very good teaching and improved schemes of work. In many cases, the improvements have come about fairly recently, so that progress for most pupils over time is good rather than very good as yet. Many of the subject leaders are new to their posts, and many are also new in the school. There is now a wave of increased learning rippling through the school, and accounting for the much higher standards seen in many lessons. The overall impact of this effect has not yet been fully realised in the national tests for eleven-year-olds, for example, but the school is fully aware of it. For this reason, the targets set in conjunction with the local education authority some time ago have now been revised upwards to account for this accelerated learning. Inspectors found many examples of this, for instance in science, music, geography and religious education.

9. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress overall, although they make better progress when they receive additional support. In the 'booster' classes, for those pupils who the school thinks might make improved progress with a little extra help, pupils make very good progress in consolidating the basic skills learnt in mainstream lessons. In literacy, the focus is on better sentence construction and improved comprehension skills; in numeracy, the mental skills are accelerated, and there is a strong emphasis on understanding connections and number patterns. Other pupils on the school's register of special educational need make very good progress when they are taught in smaller groups. Here, the teacher is able to work very closely towards the targets identified on the pupils' individual education plans, while ensuring that basic skills are understood and practised. Highest attaining pupils are identified, for example, through assessments, particularly talented expression in specific subjects, and through parental or staff concerns. In the past the school has been very successful in promoting faster learning, and enabling two pupils to transfer to the secondary school a year early. Average pupils are given additional work and specialised teaching where appropriate. Progress for all these pupils is very good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Attitudes to school and behaviour in lessons are very good throughout the school. Pupils love coming to the school, are very eager to learn and take full advantage of the opportunities the school offers. All the pupils are friendly and polite leading to a very welcoming environment. The good behaviour in lessons also extends to all parts of the school day including lunch sessions and outside playtime. The whole school community is harmonious and orderly requiring only minimal supervision at break times to ensure pupil safety. There is no oppressive behaviour such as bullying, sexism or racism; this is supported by parents and by the absence of any exclusions last year.
11. A major strength of the school is the excellent relationships which exist within the school and this has a very positive influence on learning. The pupils are very mature for their ages and have formed excellent relationships with each other and with the teachers who themselves lead by example. All the children work well together, listen eagerly and carefully to teachers and to each other and are good at waiting their turn. They enjoy their work and are able to remain interested and involved in their tasks for sustained periods, responding enthusiastically and thoughtfully when asked for ideas and often asking intelligent questions of their own.
12. The school ethos, supported by the excellent relationships and good behaviour, enables the pupils to develop progressive personal skills as they move through the school. The sharing of ideas, the ability to work in pairs or groups, the effective use of their own time, together with their genuine desire to learn make a very significant contribution to learning. During assemblies and lessons pupils are encouraged to think about issues and people; for example in religious education and geography there are studies of other countries and their religious beliefs. This enables pupils to recognise different lifestyles appropriately and to learn to care for others, as well as themselves. Within the class groups, all pupils integrate fully and there is clear evidence of pupils with problems being understood and supported by their classmates.
13. Where opportunities for responsibility occur, such as helping in assembly or taking registers to the office, pupils are keen to take them. The school plans to increase the opportunities for responsibilities with the introduction of a school council and playground peacekeepers.

14. The attendance levels at the school are well above the national average with unauthorised absence below the national average. Parents are aware of the requirement for notifying of absence and the school follow up the requirement for a reason to be given. Pupils are punctual arriving at school and also for lessons.
15. The school uses praise and celebration as a major motivator for achievement. There are positive awards systems used for academic and personal achievement. Inside the entrances to school buildings there are now large display areas to celebrate pupils successes. Both the school and the pupils clearly take pride in achievement.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. One of the significant strengths of the school in raising standards and the rate of progress is the very good teaching throughout the school. No teaching was judged to be less than good. This is a very significant improvement since the previous inspections, especially for pupils aged seven to eleven. Inspectors judged six per cent of teaching to be excellent; forty-seven per cent was judged very good; and a further forty-seven per cent was judged good. Hence, there is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school. This high quality and very consistent level of good and better teaching provides pupils with a stimulating, challenging and effective learning environment. Their response is very good learning and a thirst for knowledge.
17. Children in the reception class, the new Foundation Stage, learn very well from an early age due to very good levels of teaching. The teacher is enthusiastic in her approach, for example when introducing group reading of 'Snow White'. This enthusiasm rubs off on the children who develop their speaking and listening skills very well in subsequent role-play. In learning about ice melting in water, children develop very good levels of social skills in role-play and when working in groups, talking to each other and sharing ideas. Lesson and curriculum planning are of a high standard, enabling all areas of learning to be covered effectively, with very good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are managed very effectively, often with very good quality support from parent volunteer helpers. The teacher has high expectations of what the children might achieve, and they rise to these challenges.
18. For pupils in other classes in the school, teaching and learning are also very good, with consistency between the classes and years. A great strength is in the planning of individual lessons, and in the high challenges that follow. Teachers begin their lessons with a clear, shared vision of what is to be learnt. The aims of the lesson are often displayed on the white board to act as a focus for the lesson. In music, after a recall of previous learning, the teacher of a Year 3 and 4 class sets the tone very well by explaining that the lesson is to focus on how mood and emotions may be interpreted in music. With a very good brainstorming session, pupils are then introduced to a piece of classical music with their eyes closed. This very good lesson structure, building well on prior learning, takes the pupils into their own imagination and creativity, and results in maturity of thought and understanding which is well above average. Similarly in literacy, in a Year 1 class, the teacher begins by focusing on new vocabulary which has been labelled on the front cover of the 'Big Book', thereby enabling pupils to have a strong focus as the shared reading takes place.
19. Excellent lessons were seen across the school in a range of subjects including history, religious education, mathematics and music. The outstanding features of these lessons included:

- very high challenges, such as in Year 5 and 6 mathematics in the mental session, where pupils consolidated their understanding of multiplication facts by using specially prepared hats and number cards. A fast pace led to rapid progress, with pupils demanding a harder challenge once they had successfully answered the first one;
- providing pupils with time and space for deeper thought and reflection in a Year 3 and 4 music lesson, in order to generate high levels of creativity and imagination, resulting in a very advanced level of performance on musical instruments with dramatic rhythms and mood changes;
- using artefacts and other visual aids to bring lessons alive in religious education and history for pupils in Years 1, 3 and 4. Using the visual aids, pupils were stimulated to find answers to challenging questions, which tested their thinking and understanding to a high degree.

These outstanding examples of teaching result in a very broad and wide understanding being developed – pupils making connections between religion and the senses, for instance, through touching and feeling cloth and smelling incense. Pupils gained an excellent sense of things old and new through examining the contents of a Victorian kitchen, and increased their understanding of scientific progress by learning how older things worked, such as a mangle or a washboard.

20. Staff use humour very well in a professional way to motivate and to capture pupils' imagination very effectively. A further strength is the way in which teachers introduce this good element of humour into their teaching; this makes learning fun, and accelerates the progress the pupils make as a result of increased motivation. For example, a Year 2 teacher emphasised the need for using glue carefully when joining the corners of a chassis. Not all pupils had followed the instructions to the letter, with the result that some of the assembled parts were stuck to the paper covering the desk. By holding one up, with paper training behind, the point was made with good humour and pupils grasped the principle far more easily.
21. A very good learning environment is created through outstanding relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are very well managed, often in an excellent fashion. Teachers know their pupils very well, both in terms of personal and social development, and in terms of academic development, and set them highly challenging tasks, according to their ability. The use of assessment knowledge to plan for future progress is very good. Very good arrangements for group work enable all pupils to maximise their learning, for example in music, where performance is of a high quality. Oral work enables pupils of all levels of attainment to make contributions, which they do with confidence across the full range of subjects. Pupils learn in a stimulating environment. Creativity is encouraged at every step of learning. Pupils' work on display, which includes the design of a playground, a castle or a chair, extended writing and poems, and village life in India, all stand witness to high levels of imagination and creative thought nurtured in current and previous lessons.
22. A further strength of the teaching lies in the way in which good connections are made between subjects. Teachers emphasise the correct use of appropriate vocabulary during lessons. There are especially good examples in science, mathematics, music and geography. In other cases, the theme of a particular lesson relates very well to study in another curriculum area, such as the strong link made between the geographical aspects of life in an Indian village and the predominantly Hindu religion, which is then developed in more depth in religious education. There are strong links made for pupils aged seven between music symbols and materials that have been used in design and technology and science. These aspects of teaching lead to greater

reinforcement of prior learning, and the wider application of knowledge. This accelerates the learning process considerably.

23. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well throughout the school, resulting in high standards of reading, speaking and listening, good mental arithmetic and other numeracy skills. The school has also invested much time in eradicating the relative weakness in writing. Teachers now focus very well on developing these skills very successfully in classes, with appropriate focus on sentence structure, punctuation, story construction and neatness of writing. Skills development throughout the school is very good overall. Not only is there a very clear focus to lessons in English and mathematics, but these literacy and numeracy skills are very well integrated into many other lessons. For instance, in design and technology and science, pupils use their mathematical skills very well to estimate, to measure accurately and to produce graphs. In music, history and geography, literacy skills are very well extended through key words or phrases being displayed on the board, and by teachers using advanced language as part and parcel of their everyday debate and discussion with pupils. As a result, pupils talk confidently and with clarity; they become accustomed to counting the beat in music, and always use a ruler when drawing lines or measuring. The use of these skills is enhanced further by the very good challenges in lessons, especially in the way in which pupils are given problems to solve, for example in science and mathematics, or areas to investigate in design and technology and music.
24. Skills in ICT are being well developed for pupils under seven, using the new technology teaching suite. Here, basic skills of logging on, saving work and using different programs are very good. Older pupils, who have not had the sustained benefit of the suite, make good progress, but teaching has often to be focused on developing skills similar to those taught to the younger pupils, because these have not been consistently well taught in the past. Teachers are not yet using ICT as effectively as they might in all subject areas across the whole curriculum.
25. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is also very good. Teachers know their pupils well and their needs very well through regular assessments of their capabilities, and this helps them plan effectively with appropriate challenges and tasks. Individual education plans have appropriately detailed targets, mainly in literacy and numeracy, as well as behaviour management. Staff ensure that pupils with these needs move towards their targets successfully. This is done by taking small groups for additional lessons in basic skills, or by ensuring that they receive work appropriate to their need in lessons. In some lessons, teachers actively encourage pupils with special educational needs to take part, by giving them specific questions to answer in oral sessions, or by giving them specific tasks with other pupils. Higher attaining pupils benefit from special attention and teaching. In order to raise standards, some older pupils benefit from additional classes in numeracy and literacy to help raise their levels of achievement as they approach the national tests. Progress in these lessons is very good overall.
26. Homework is used in all classes to extend learning where appropriate. Pupils often ask for work to take home, and there is plenty of evidence in books of pupils working well beyond the limits of the original task set, as in history and science research. Year 6 pupils receive appropriate amounts of work to complete at home, and this is adequate preparation for their forthcoming transfer to the high school.

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

27. The curriculum offered to pupils is very good overall. There have been significant improvements in this aspect of the school following the inspections of the two former schools. All schemes of work are now in place, subject co-ordinators have been appointed and they have written new policy documents for all subjects. The school provides a very good, broadly based, cohesive curriculum, which meets the needs of the pupils and enables them to make very good progress and achieve well. A new curriculum was implemented in September 2000 and the school is making rapid progress towards ensuring it is fully in place by the end of the present academic year. This includes the provision for the Foundation Stage for children up to the age of five. Planning for this is thorough so that all areas of the new curriculum are covered. The current planning ensures a smooth transition when children begin the National Curriculum, which many of them do early.
28. Overall curriculum planning is good and ensures strong links between subjects. Further detailed planning for a two-year cycle of study for the older pupils is the next step. Curricular strengths are the very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the very effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. Religious education and English are strengths of the school with extra 'booster' classes in English and mathematics being held each week. Music provision is also a significant curricular strength and is still being developed by a recently appointed subject co-ordinator. The medium term and weekly curricular planning is incomplete in some subject areas, such as art, ICT and science, but this is being addressed successfully step by step. The class timetables are carefully thought out with an appropriate amount of time allocated to each subject area. The school meets the requirements of the government's 'Curriculum 2000' fully and all pupils attend an act of collective worship each day. There are no withdrawals from assemblies. All statutory requirements are met.
29. A further strength lies in the way in which teachers' planning makes good strong links between subjects, so learning is broad and relevant. Good examples of links occur between subjects such as geography and religious education, between music and literacy, and between science and mathematics. These strengthen pupils' wider appreciation and understanding and help them to consolidate learning in one area while learning new material in another subject. This in turn leads to the increased rates of progress currently being made by pupils across the school.
30. There is excellent provision for a wide variety of after school activities including clubs for football, choir, dance and chess. Day and residential visits enrich many areas of the curriculum. These include an annual visit to France for pupils in years five and six. The school maintains close links with the local church and visits are made to increase the pupil's knowledge in religious education. A particularly interesting school development is the plan to incorporate into the curriculum a study of the use of one of the last areas of Sherwood Forest woodland adjoining the school.
31. The school ensures it is socially inclusive by providing equal opportunity for all pupils. There is an effective policy to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to study the whole curriculum, including those with special educational needs and those from different ethnic backgrounds. These pupils are well provided for and higher attaining pupils are also identified and receive an appropriate curriculum. Teaching often takes place in ability groups to give opportunities for pupils with different attainment levels to make good progress. Some pupils with higher attainment or lower attainment are given

additional help in smaller groups, according to their needs. The provision for all pupils of differing abilities is a further strength of the school's overall very good curriculum. There are no significant gender issues resulting from an analysis of the test results, but the school keeps a 'weather eye' on this.

32. The school is very well supported in many ways by the Church and the neighbouring community, and strong links have been established. Many parents give practical help and also support the pupils' learning in school. They are proud of the school and wish to help it succeed still further. Parents are eager to become elected members of the governing body and play a full part in this role. They are members of various governors' committees and currently have a minor concern over the lack of time given to art activities in the school. These committees ensure the school provides effectively for personal and social education, including health and sex education, and that appropriate attention is given to drugs education. There are very good links with pre-school groups in the community, and liaison between the staff is very effective.
33. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good in all aspects. These are now all strengths of the school, representing significant improvements since the last inspection. This is especially the case for cultural provision, which was not uniformly satisfactory in the two separate schools.
34. Pupils' spiritual development is a priority within the school where there are daily opportunities for collective worship. The assemblies include hymns and prayers and themes that link religious beliefs to school life. Within assemblies as well as in some lessons such as music, pupils' experience a sense of awe and wonder. Pupils are provided with many frequent opportunities to reflect on what they are hearing, to draw a picture of the mood the music creates for them, and then to debate and discuss this with peers. A significant contribution to the spiritual development is made in religious education where pupils study other religions and their beliefs. Children's spiritual development is further enhanced through close links with the church.
35. Pupils moral development is part of the overall school ethos and the class teachers make a major contribution by explaining right and wrong and giving reasons. An example of this was seen in music where the teacher deliberately abused an instrument in order to get a message across to the pupils. Moral development is also supported in assemblies where issues such as doing good deeds and helping others are discussed. Within the curriculum, pupils explore past cultures and issues affecting third world countries and in both of these consideration is given to moral issues.
36. The provision for social development is underpinned by the pupils' acceptance of the school rules. The excellent relationships in class enable pupils to develop their skills at working together as well as independently, as circumstances demand. Within lessons pupils learn to work effectively as part of the school community helping others and sharing equipment if necessary. Group work is a very strong feature of all lessons, with pupils being given frequent opportunities to debate, discuss, to work collaboratively on projects, and to feed back findings towards the end. The wide range of extra-curricular activities available, such as chess club and external visits, provides further opportunities for pupils to develop social skills.
37. The school has made significant improvements in providing opportunities for cultural development, which now make a major contribution to pupils' education. The main elements are provided within religious education and geography where other cultures and their religions are studied. The teaching involves very interactive methods and is supported by very good and appropriate resources which ensure very good learning.

Further enhancement is provided by visits to a Synagogue and Church, trips to various parts of France, stories set in countries such as Jamaica as well as from a number of religions. Teachers take other opportunities to introduce pupils to other cultures by, for instance, calling registers in Hebrew or French as well as dressing in clothing appropriate to the country or religion they are teaching about.

38. The pupils' personal development at school is very good and they develop into very mature and sensible pupils who behave well and build excellent relationships. They readily accept responsibility and demonstrate very good attitudes to learning and life.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The provision for the welfare of the pupils is very good. It is underpinned by the strong ethos of the school and its links with the church. The 'family' atmosphere within the school is characterised by the excellent relationships within the school and the welcoming and polite way in which pupils relate to each other, staff and visitors. The staff, parents and governors are working together for the good of the school and of the children. The close relationships ensure that children are well known by staff, enabling very good understanding of their needs and their progress. There is a sound approach to health and safety with good procedures in place and regular inspections carried out by the headteacher and the governor with responsibility for health and safety. Since the last inspection there has been much improvement in school security. Activities throughout the school are adequately supervised although, because of the excellent relationships and good behaviour, the level of supervision required is low.
40. The school has adequately trained first-aid staff who are supported by external agencies as required; the nurse is a regular visitor for pupil health screening. Procedures for child protection and health and safety checks are good and meet legal requirements. The child protection officer is fully trained and all staff are fully aware of requirements.
41. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good and have ensured that very good attendance rates have been maintained. The procedures now involve transferring records on to a computer database which provides quick and comprehensive pupil attendance history. The school contacts parents who do not notify them of absence, in order to determine the reasons. Most of the unauthorised absence is due to family holidays – the attendance rates are lowest in the summer term.
42. The behaviour of the pupils in and around school reflect the very good procedures that the school has in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating all forms of oppressive behaviour, should they occur. The school policy is well known to staff and its use is consistent around the school.
43. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic progress are very good throughout the school. Pupils are assessed early in their school life and a comprehensive portfolio for Foundation Stage pupils is produced which forms the baseline for further assessment. Monitoring of progress across the curriculum follows recommended methods and the school has an 'assessment map' which leads to an action plan. This is in place for English, mathematics and science, and is being developed for other subjects. Each child now has an assessment folder, which contains records of progress and targets for further achievement. A key feature to the assessment within the school is the effective use of assessment in producing targets and if necessary taking special measures to help pupils. For example, the school has introduced English and mathematics 'booster' classes for older children in order to raise overall standards of achievement. The school has started to use local education authority software to help

monitor pupils' progress and to aid further assessment targets; a member of staff has been trained in its use but at this stage software problems have prevented its formal integration into procedures.

44. The school uses the assessment data well to identify high achievers, an example being where two high achievers were helped to move to the secondary school a year early. The very good assessment procedures and their use in guidance are now carried out across all age groups and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspections. In addition, the assessment of pupils with special educational needs is of good quality. Early identification of problems, the writing by class teachers of good individual education plans, and effective links to outside agencies are all hallmarks of the school's great concern for the welfare and care of all its pupils. The school's current procedures meet statutory requirements in full.
45. The assessment of pupils' personal development within the school is satisfactory because the class teachers work closely with the children and help them develop as part of school life. The school aims and policy for personal, social and health education guide this development but there is, however, no formal procedure in place for recording progress in this field. This has not impeded the pupils, because they have developed well. However, it is an area highlighted by the inspection team for improvement in order to ensure there is continuity of development should staff changes occur. The annual reports to parents do provide some information but reference to personal development is not consistent and only receives comments if there is an issue. The home-school agreement has been successfully introduced.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents are very supportive of the school. Many are actively involved with the school through the parents' and friends' association, as governors or by providing help in lessons or with extra-curricular activities. The majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said their children liked coming to school and were pleased with the progress the children made. They were satisfied with the quantity and type of homework although there was some concern about inconsistency across the classes and whether the homework for the oldest children was preparing them for what would be expected at secondary school. During the inspection all the points raised by parents through the meeting and through questionnaires were examined. Inspectors judged homework for older pupils in Year 6 to be consistently good and an appropriate preparation for transfer to the secondary school. The majority of parents agreed that the school is very approachable and works well with parents, keeping them well informed of progress. Some parents had been concerned about repetition of topics but the inspection team confirmed that, although the title might be the same, the content and aims were different and were appropriate to the curriculum. The majority of parents were very supportive of the leadership of the school and also of the extra-curricular activities which the school provides.
47. There is a very good effective home-school partnership, which has been maintained since the previous inspections and through the transition period of combining the two schools. There are excellent communications through weekly newsletters, a very good school prospectus, regular, well-attended parents meetings and good annual reports. A very good feature of the newsletters is that the first one of the year is very comprehensive and contains details of school procedures and a curriculum statement for each year group explaining what pupils of all ages will be studying. Annual reports have improved since the weakness identified in the previous inspection for the pupils under seven years of age, and now satisfy all requirements. The format is a computer-

based system for subject reports with one section for hand-written personal comment by the teacher. The inspection team considers that this hand-written section is an area that the school could improve by a more specific statement on the personal development of the pupil.

48. There is a very good and effective friends' society involving parents and friends of the school which supports the school in many ways such as social events and fund raising. The current success of the fund raising is the forthcoming purchase of an ICT interactive white board, which the school hopes will make a significant impact on the children's education. A large number of parents and friends help in the school during the day, which again makes a very good contribution to the children's education, especially for children under the age of five. Further parent support is demonstrated by the fact that there are at present nine parents on the governing body. Parents also support their children's education very well at home through the help they give in hearing reading, helping with research-type homework, and by keeping the school informed of problems. Parents are fully involved when their children are identified as having special educational needs. There is a good relationship between home, school and any external agencies involved. Parents spoke highly of the work undertaken by the school in this field.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. Leadership and management of the school are very good, continuing the high standards apparent in the Infant and Junior schools at the time of the previous inspection. A great strength of the leadership and management has been the very successful amalgamation of the schools to form the present one. The lead given by the headteacher and his deputy is strong and a major factor in the positive development of the new school since it was created eighteen months ago. The headteacher has a clear vision and direction for the school and has shown considerable management skills in attaining a smooth transition. He has established a good senior management team, which shares his aims for the school and provides colleagues with confidence, commitment and support. The headteacher provides a good role model of leadership and is readily available to staff, pupils and parents. A good quality common planning format is used throughout the school, and lesson plans in literacy and numeracy are monitored effectively on a weekly basis by the headteacher.
50. The school development plan is of high quality and gives a clear educational direction to all staff and governors. It is determined by the shared commitment to the success of the school of head, staff and governors, and identifies major priorities over a three-year period with detailed action plans and success criteria. An early indicator of the success of planning is the establishment of the new suite for the teaching of ICT, which is already making a major contribution to teaching and learning. Many curriculum co-ordinators are new to their posts, and new to the school in some cases, but all have clearly defined roles with job descriptions and are fulfilling their management duties well. They share the values of the school and reflect these fully in their work, assessing attainment and progress and analysing the information effectively. Challenging targets are set for individual pupils, based on consultations with class teachers at the beginning of each year; these contribute to the overall improvement targets in English and mathematics set for the school. In order to raise pupils' achievement at age eleven, some teaching of English and mathematics takes place in ability groups and pupils may be withdrawn to receive extra attention. Members of the senior management team receive non-contact time in order to monitor and evaluate teaching in all subjects across the school. Information resulting from this is recorded on specially designed forms, then fed back to staff, and improvement targets are set and followed up subsequently.

51. Governors are fully supportive of the headteacher and recognise the qualities he has brought to the school. They have been heavily involved in the strategic planning of the new school and all of them are anxious to support it and play an effective role in its development. To this effect many have undertaken training in their own time. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are committed to raising standards. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met and take an active part in school where possible. There are sub committees to oversee finance, personnel, discipline and strategic development. They monitor areas of the curriculum such as literacy, numeracy, ICT and health and safety, and produce good quality written reports based on classroom observations. The governors receive very clear information on a regular basis from the headteacher.
52. The school benefits from good quality staff, with twelve teachers who are suitably qualified and have a wide range of experience and skills enabling effective delivery of the curriculum. There has been considerable change in the staffing since the previous inspections and the amalgamation of the two former schools, but the merging of the schools has enabled the governors to appoint appropriate teachers across the age range and curriculum range. Whilst most lessons are adequately supported by support staff and parent helpers, the inspectors felt there was insufficient support for the reception teacher in the Foundation Stage during the morning session. Teaching staff, including newly qualified teachers receive good induction to school procedures and feel very well supported. Procedures for monitoring teaching are very good..
53. The accommodation was originally operated as two separate schools fifty metres apart, therefore staff and pupils need to walk between the two buildings which can be difficult in inclement weather. The accommodation overall, however, is spacious and excellent for curriculum delivery. All buildings are well maintained and are a safe environment for the children.
54. Resources in all areas of the school are good with a large range of equipment in good condition and plenty of artefacts to support the curriculum. The school has a major resource in the adjacent woodland area, which is used well by the school for developing environmental studies.
55. The new amalgamated school, which opened in September 1999, gave the governors and headteacher the opportunity to set up a new system for operating and monitoring the school's finances. This has created a number of teething problems and the school still hopes to modify and improve the present system. Financial management and control is nevertheless very good. The headteacher and office manager have set up watertight procedures for placing, checking and monitoring all orders and payments. The headteacher monitors the money spent 'as if it were my own', and the very good financial procedures are clearly based on the principle of best value for money. The governors' finance committee comprising five governors and the headteacher set the budget each year. Curriculum subject co-ordinators are allocated a budget for their area of the curriculum and they also bid for money for a particular purpose, usually already identified in the school development plan. Money from the Local Authority Standards Fund and other sources such as personal donations or from local societies comes into the school throughout the year and these funds are carefully considered and allocated where there is the greatest need. A special allocation of money for equipping the new school is being spent very wisely, mostly on resources to improve the curriculum provision. Given the very good progress and rising standards and very good teaching supported by an equally effective curriculum, set against the relatively high costs incurred due to amalgamation, the school provides good value for money overall.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 1) Ensure that a review of planning in science for pupils between eight and eleven years old takes place, so that essential elements of the curriculum such as electricity, magnetism and forces come into focus again in the teaching in the upper junior classes.
(Paragraphs 28, 90, 96).
- 2) Extend and increase the learning and progress in ICT by ensuring that:
 - staff become more confident through training in using computer software in all subjects;
 - subsequent teaching incorporates the planning of ICT into all appropriate subject areas.(Paragraphs 24, 28, 74, 81, 82, 89, 90, 97, 103, 104, 108, 125, 130, 131, 137, 146, 151)

In addition, the governors should include the following minor points for consideration in their action plan:

- ensure that pupils' assessment files contain records of personal development and that this is appropriately reported to parents. (Paragraph 45)
- ensure that the teaching of art and design for pupils under seven is extended throughout other curriculum areas, and that greater emphasis is placed in all classes on the work and influence of major artists and their styles. (Paragraphs 28, 101)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	79
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	47	47	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	277
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	49

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	96.3
National comparative data	94.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	16	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	13	16
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	27	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (n/a)	89 (n/a)	100 (n/a)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	14
	Girls	11	9	11
	Total	25	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (n/a)	89 (n/a)	93 (n/a)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	19	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	18
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	31	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (n/a)	83 (n/a)	89 (n/a)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	14	12	13
	Total	30	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (n/a)	82 (n/a)	86 (n/a)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	248
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	23.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000*
	£
Total income	338,657
Total expenditure	293,544
Expenditure per pupil	1056
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,102
Balance carried forward to next year	86,215

* the school was formed as from 01.09.1999; therefore the figures represent 7/12ths of the school's financial year

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	277
Number of questionnaires returned	93

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	36	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	43	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	46	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	56	9	6	1
The teaching is good.	59	33	1	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	48	14	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	24	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	39	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	53	34	9	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	73	23	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	30	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	37	4	2	7

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

56. The quality of provision made by the school for children during the Foundation Stage of their education is very good. The quality of teaching they receive is very good and they achieve well, making very good progress. Assessments undertaken by the school shortly after children arrive show attainment in all areas of their development to be at least in line with that expected for their age and often above average. By the time the majority of children are five and ready to begin the National Curriculum their attainment is above average in all aspects of their development.

Strengths of the provision:

- above average standards attained by children by the time they are five years old in all areas of the curriculum;
- the very good quality of teaching which leads to very good progress across the full range of areas of learning;
- children's very good attitudes to their learning and their very good behaviour, which staff capitalise on well;
- the significant contribution made by parents, in partnership with the school, to the quality of their children's education, both in the classroom and at home.

Areas for improvement include:

- during the morning session there is insufficient support for the teacher in charge and she is often working on her own at these times;
- current provision for the youngest pupils to play outside is inadequate. This is recognised by the school and plans to make good this shortfall are at an advanced stage.

57. Teaching is very good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the foundation curriculum and early learning goals are very good. Their work is supported by thorough planning that contributes to all aspects of children's development effectively. These plans ensure activities are well matched to the abilities of the children and provide them with suitably challenging work. Clear objectives for the children's learning are included in the plans. These are often shared with the children at the start of lessons. Teachers also help children to consider how successful they have been in achieving the objectives. This provides them with valuable insights into their learning and with knowledge of how well they are progressing. Teachers manage children well and have high expectations of how they will respond and behave. The children, in turn, respond well and their behaviour is very good. Teachers assess the attainment and progress of the children thoroughly and accurately. They make very good use of this assessment information to plan what they will teach next.
58. The teaching of initial sounds and other basic literacy and numeracy skills is effective. As a result pupils make rapid progress in all aspects of the learning in which these feature.
59. Many parents provide voluntary help. This has a positive impact on the learning and progress their children make. Their support for their children's learning at home also makes a very positive contribution to their education.

60. In the afternoons when the pre-school children attend, the teacher in charge receives good support from a qualified nursery nurse. During the morning session, although often supported by parent helpers, additional help is not available on a regular basis. This means that children are not supported as well as they might otherwise be.
61. The attendance by pre-school children during the afternoons is a recently introduced enhancement to the provision. The hard work of the governing body and parents during their preparation for this development has done much to ensure relationships with other providers are positive and that the subsequent transition is smooth.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Children's achievement in this aspect of their development exceeds that expected for their age. They are confident learners, responding with enthusiasm and perseverance to whatever challenges are presented to them. Their behaviour is consistently very good. The teacher praises good behaviour and children respond well to this. Organisation and protocols are well established, suitably reinforced by teachers and understood and followed by children. Many take responsibility and are eager to assist their teachers in setting out equipment and tidying up after activities. They assume leadership roles with confidence such as, when it is their turn to be table leader, ensuring everything is in place for their activities. Frequent opportunities for role plays, for example using their playhouse and a hospital in the classroom when they act as doctors, nurses, receptionists and patients, do much to enhance children's personal social and social skills. They play well together, share equipment, conduct conversations related to their activities, and often help each other.

Communication, language and literacy

63. This aspect of development is very well taught and by the time they are five many children exceed the expectation for their age. Children's abilities in speaking and listening are developed well. They are confident speakers, eager to answer questions and frequently offering detailed explanations about stories they have shared and about their experiences. They also understand and regularly use words such as narrator, author, syllable and objective in correct contexts. This follows the example set by their teacher, deliberately using long words and reinforcing their meanings, that extends children's vocabularies effectively.
64. When children read, their phonic skills are well developed. Higher attaining children read many short words correctly and often read longer words, such as 'nothing' and 'happening'. Many children use visual clues to prompt their recognition of words and they often predict words and meanings from the preceding text. They also make good suggestions for alternative starts and endings for stories.
65. The writing of the highest attaining children reaches a high standard. Some write in sentences, punctuating correctly using capital letters and full stops. Children are aware of authors they like, such as the Ahlbergs and David McKee. They have an author of the week and discuss features of the writing, producing character profiles in which they select adjectives to describe their chosen character.

Mathematical development

66. Children's knowledge of number is well developed and generally above average for their age. The teacher provides them with challenges in oral and mental mathematics that are well matched to their abilities. They count to ten correctly and add and subtract

numbers to ten and beyond quickly and correctly. They also recognise numbers beyond one hundred correctly. Their use of appropriate mathematical language is well developed and benefits from the consistent use of correct terminology and names by teachers. The majority write all the numbers from zero to nine and many set out simple calculations on paper correctly. Children recognise and name common two-dimensional shapes, describing the properties of the shapes. They refer to circles, squares, rectangles and triangles when they are looking at books, drawing shapes and making patterns.

67. The quality of teaching is at least good, with examples of very good teaching for specific activities. For example, the teacher provides children with good opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge in shopping activities, when they calculate the cost of items and give the correct amount of money for their purchases.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. Children take great interest in the things that happen around them. This is typified by their comments when watching ice melt. They have access to animals and birds, such as rabbits and budgerigars. They take pride in caring for these and explain what they have to do to feed them, clean them and keep them in good health. Their knowledge of the school site, their own locality and of the wider world is well developed and above average for their age.
69. Teaching is very good, with a wide range of good activities on offer. Children are given opportunities to design and make things with confidence, describing the objects they make in detail and explaining the processes they have followed. Products often reflect the plan children have followed appropriately. They also use their imaginations well to create original models and artefacts. Children use computers competently and many have access to home computers that support the development of their skills. They use the 'mouse' to drag items of 'clip art' into the correct position to form pictures and they know how to press buttons to activate various parts of the programs they are using.

Physical development

70. Children move with care and confidence in their classroom and around the school. They are aware of others and of the equipment and artefacts around them. Children's manipulative skills are well developed. They demonstrate these with handwriting that is very good for their age and by the care they take when drawing, painting and working with construction kits and toys. Good control and quick reactions are evident when children play with apparatus such as balls, bats and hoops. The provision for children to play outside with large toys and on suitable climbing apparatus is limited. The school recognises this and plans to make good this deficiency are at an advanced stage. Overall, teaching of these basic skills is good and levels are above average for the children's ages.

Creative development

71. Teaching is very good in this area of learning. The teacher ensures children have many opportunities to sing. They enjoy these opportunities and sing well. They know many songs connected to stories and nursery rhymes. They sing particularly well when accompanied by their teacher on the guitar. When this happens they sing in tune and with appropriate timing, pitch and volume.

72. They participate with confidence in role-plays, retelling and acting out stories such as 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' in considerable detail. Their advanced understanding of this scenario is evident when they compare their interpretation with that of a video they have seen. One child acted very successfully as narrator during this activity. They also have a playhouse in the classroom and a hospital in which they fill the roles of doctors, nurses, receptionists and patients.
73. Many children show good artistic skills. They use paint with care and make collage very effectively, for example, in leaf collages of their 'woodland friends'. They also draw with appropriate control, producing observational drawings that are very good for their age.

ENGLISH

74. English is a strength of the school with above average standards being attained by the seven year olds and well above average standards by the eleven-year-old children. This confirms the standards reported in the previous inspection.

Particular strengths include:

- very good teaching throughout the school;
- consistently very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils and their application to their work in class;
- the impact of the work and achievements in the Foundation Stage on the pupils attitudes and progress throughout the school;
- consistently good progress made by the pupils;
- the school's very good curriculum;
- the measures taken to support and cater for pupils with special educational needs and those who are especially gifted or talented;
- very good procedures for pupils' assessment and the very good use of information gathered to inform curricular planning;
- very good resources and their use;
- good leadership given by the subject co-ordinator;
- the very good contribution parents make to the education of their children.

The area for improvement is:

- more opportunities for the pupils to use word processing to support their learning in English.

75. The very good teaching is a major factor in the good progress made by all pupils throughout the school. All teachers have good subject knowledge and show enjoyment in the lessons. They plan their lessons well and use a very wide variety of materials and techniques. During part of every English lesson all pupils work in a group on tasks appropriate to their attainment level and the previous knowledge they have acquired. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. In all lessons teachers ensure the pupils speak clearly and articulately and use good, appropriate language. Some pupils reach a very high level. Time is allocated in lessons for the pupils to read aloud progressively more difficult texts. Parents, teachers and the older pupils themselves record the books they read day by day and this enables teachers to monitor the quantity and quality of reading undertaken by each pupil. The recording is ensured by the use of individual reading diaries provided by the school and regularly scrutinised by the teachers. Younger pupils, helped by their parents and using a colour-coded selection system, often choose their own reading books which they take home regularly. In school they read specific texts chosen by the teachers. Reading competence and the pupils' vocabulary knowledge throughout the school is broadened by the use of a

wide variety of texts including poetry and plays. In some English lessons there is planning for specific language development, for example through the use of antonyms and synonyms in speech and text. The older pupils read non-fiction texts associated with other subjects such as history and geography and these links could be strengthened. Pupil's scientific vocabulary is increased to a high level by the use of science-specific flash cards and the teachers take care to develop an increasing knowledge of technical terms in music lessons.

76. The quality and standard of writing is continuing to improve with attention being paid to the presentation and content of pupils' work. There is some excellent extended writing in, for example, pupils' journalistic style reports. One particularly good example seen was reporting on the Crimean war using the knowledge pupils had acquired in history. The pupils showed factual knowledge and creativity. A carefully graded spelling scheme is in place across the school and weekly spellings are learnt at home and tested regularly in lessons. This increases the pupils' tools for writing and again widens the vocabulary of some pupils.
77. The younger pupils practise their handwriting regularly with the teachers using a carefully graded scheme. The teachers take a successful, systematic approach to the teaching of phonic and text clues. From quite an early age many pupils attempt a whole page of their own creative writing and are encouraged to use dictionaries. Sometimes dictionary skills are part of a lesson. Occasionally, to make English more interesting, the lesson is linked to an activity, for example reading and writing a recipe and then making bird cakes. This is a very good technique for the pupils under seven years old and progress is very good as a result.
78. For two part days each week older pupils who need some extra learning time for English attend 'booster' classes. These classes are well thought out, the teacher identifies routes for the pupils to take in order to increase their English skills and there is excellent interaction between teacher and pupils.
79. The good progress in learning made by pupils is brought about by a number of factors in addition to the very good teaching. Lessons are planned carefully with materials that are attractive to the pupils; resources are very good with attractive books; there are new and plentiful dictionaries, thesauruses and games; the national literacy scheme of work is being closely followed with extra time allocated for handwriting; the pupils and teachers receive valuable help given by parents and volunteers in the school; and the pupils are very well motivated to learn. As yet opportunities to use the older pupils' good word processing skills are not being sufficiently exploited. The younger pupils use the computers to make up their own poems and for improving the spelling and punctuation in a piece of text. The classroom accommodation is very good. Each class has a teaching bay open to the main room and this is ideal for both story and direct teaching sessions. The teachers are able to use these areas for displays, target information on what is being currently studied and 'tips' to help pupils improve their work. There are word lists for reference, summaries of work already learnt and the week's aims for learning English prominently displayed. This is a valuable ongoing resource for the pupils, in particular in the way it gives purpose to pupils' activities and writing. The younger pupils make regular visits to a local library and this helps them develop their social skills as well as giving them access to a wider collection of books. The classroom walls have many attractive displays which are all linked to the acquisition of early reading skills and word identification.
80. All the pupils work hard and behave very well in lessons. This good behaviour and very good teachers' planning ensures no time is lost. The pupils enjoy their English lessons

and take pride in what they achieve. They use all their well-developed social skills to help them learn when they work independently and when they co-operate in pairs and groups. They are kind, friendly and helpful towards each other and the teacher and they often show a lively and appropriate sense of humour. The atmosphere in all classrooms during lessons is controlled, calm and busy. Very good learning takes place in all lessons and relationships are excellent.

81. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable, well informed and monitors teaching well. Together with other senior staff she monitors and assesses the pupils' progress and the learning materials available to them. She makes a valuable contribution to the overall success of the subject and is very ably supported by the expertise of the class teachers. Little use of computers was observed in lessons particularly with the older pupils. They did not extend their vocabulary still further through use of a thesaurus, or write their evaluations or creative writing directly onto a computer using a word processing programme. Many pupils are capable of attempting this.

MATHEMATICS

82. Throughout the school attainment in mathematics is above average. Five to seven year olds make very good progress and seven to eleven year olds make good progress. This reflects the results of the most recent national tests. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Improvement since the schools were previously inspected is satisfactory.

Strengths in the subject are:

- above average standards for pupils aged seven and eleven;
- the quality of learning;
- the quality of teaching;
- good subject leadership with the positive effect of the National Numeracy Strategy;
- pupils' attitudes to their learning and their behaviour.

An area for improvement is:

- insufficient use is made of ICT.

83. Throughout the school the quality of teaching in mathematics is very good. In some lessons it is excellent. Pupils show very good attitudes to their learning in mathematics, frequently discussing mathematical strategies and sharing their ideas with each other. Teachers place strong emphasis on the use of correct mathematical language and always encourage pupils to explain how they work out their answers. This helps pupils to understand the principles of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. For example, a lower attaining eleven year old explained how to multiply forty six by twenty five by firstly multiplying by one hundred and then halving the answer and halving it again.
84. Teachers have very good mathematical subject knowledge. They are enthusiastic and lessons often move along at a rapid pace. Because of this pupils enjoy mathematical challenges, are very well motivated, and learn quickly. Teachers plan effectively and thoroughly, ensuring activities are matched well to the abilities of their pupils. This means pupils of all abilities are challenged appropriately and become confident learners. They relish opportunities to do work which they feel is hard and extends their knowledge and understanding. When discussing multiplication by ten and by one hundred an eight year old requested opportunities to do the same activity using one thousand.

85. Some five-year-olds can double numbers such as thirty-seven in their heads. Before doing this they estimate what the answer might be. These skills are extended effectively by older pupils who estimate by rounding up and by using division to check if they have multiplied correctly, or when estimating distance in measurement exercises.
86. Younger pupils manage number facts to one hundred well and add, subtract, multiply and divide quickly and correctly. They also understand simple fractions, illustrating this by filling containers until they are a quarter full and then half full and identifying the relevant fraction. Higher attaining pupils in the five to seven years age range manage numbers higher than one hundred competently. They undertake mental calculations successfully using money, adding sums to one pound rapidly and calculating the change they need. Activities like this extend their understanding of place value and of decimals effectively. Nine and ten year olds understand the importance of place value in making calculations. They have good knowledge of the properties of shapes, they understand symmetry and construct graphs from data effectively.
87. Teachers always provide their pupils with clear explanations and use questions effectively to extend their understanding. This helps pupils enhance their knowledge and understanding at a good rate. Teachers apply the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. This is having a positive effect on standards, particularly pupils' mental and oral mathematical abilities. The introduction of this strategy is managed well by the subject leader, who shows good overall management skills. The subject is well led with good levels of monitoring of teaching and the curriculum. Learning of skills is good throughout the school. The use of 'booster classes' to raise attainment for eleven year olds in mathematics is also very effective and is making a significant contribution to raising standards in the subject.
88. Pupils enjoy their lessons in mathematics and work hard and with enthusiasm. They look forward to the mental sessions at the start of lessons, which are often in the form of 'games' or puzzles. One group withdrawn for additional help gasped in excitement at the thought of playing a mathematical equivalent of 'The Weakest Link', and they entered into the spirit of the exercise with vigour and enthusiasm. This high level of motivation, supported by excellent classroom relationships, leads throughout the school to increased levels of learning and greater rates of progress.
89. A relative weakness in provision is that pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use ICT during their learning in mathematics.

SCIENCE

90. Standards in science at the age of eleven are above average, which is similar to standards found in the previous inspection. Standards in the recent national tests show attainment to be only average, however, due to the late arrival of two pupils experiencing difficulties in the subject. At the end of Year 2 pupils are also above average in science showing an improvement at this age since the previous report.

The strengths of the subject are:

- the good teaching throughout the school;
- the high standard of lesson planning;
- the way in which pupils are assessed;
- the good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils;
- the development of skills of inquiry and investigation.

The areas for improvement are:

- long term planning;
- the use of ICT.

91. The quality of teaching in science throughout the school is good. It is based on secure subject knowledge and good lesson planning. Lessons are well structured with clear introductions, during which teachers determine pupils' prior knowledge and state the learning objectives. Teachers challenge pupils to achieve good standards and provide them with resources to meet the lesson focus. Good pace and smooth transition between activities maintains the interest of the pupils. Differentiated tasks ensure that pupils receive appropriate support to develop their potential. Plenary sessions are used to good effect to review and consolidate new learning and to assess the achievement of the objectives. When pupils receive very good teaching, science is made fun and enjoyable whilst retaining the rigour and discipline of study. For instance, an imaginative lesson dealing with lights and shadows developed from a scientific investigation to involve the construction of shadow puppets with moving parts and to become a short piece of drama was very good.
92. Assessment procedures are well in hand and the analysis of results provides a good base for the setting of targets and informing lesson planning. The implementation of 'Curriculum 2000' and the support of schemes of work devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority have been used to good advantage in meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum. Assessment starts in Year 1 with end of unit statements in pupils' assessment folders. For older pupils tracking sheets and end of unit tests provide detailed information on progress, which is used well by teachers for advancing their learning.
93. Pupils have a positive attitude in science lessons and the standard of behaviour is good. They work well, together and individually, with enthusiasm. They enjoy practical work and use their knowledge well to meet the challenges offered. Pupils join in discussions sensibly and are prepared to listen to others' views.
94. Pupils develop good observational skills for scientific enquiry. In the infant years, pupils are taught the early principles of enquiry: to ask questions and to investigate materials and their properties. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to consider evidence, make observations and record findings. They study life processes and living things, materials and their properties, and physical processes. They classify materials as insulators and conductors and they describe how chocolate changes when heated and then cooled. They know which electrical appliances produce heat, light, sound and movement, and understand the function of a simple circuit – "nothing happens because one of the wires wasn't fixed". In 'health and growth' lessons they understand the function of medicines and can produce a bar chart of favourite foods.
95. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to express their ideas and the evidence collected from experiments. Pupils know and understand the principles of a fair test. They show very good investigative skills making predictions, deciding how answers might be found, and evaluating results. They know the life cycles in plants and humans and describe the processes of pollination and fertilisation. They examine materials and their properties and study evaporation and condensation. Pupils can identify gasses and liquids and are able to explain the changes in the movement of particles as the state of the material changes from one to the other. They make good progress in learning from the solid foundations laid in Year 3, developing research and reporting skills together with a wide vocabulary of scientific terms.

96. The long term planning is based on a two-year cycle which covers all the required topics in the National Curriculum but does not provide opportunities to revisit certain specific areas. As a result, it is possible currently for elements of electricity, magnetism and forces to be omitted from the teaching in the upper junior classes. As a result, pupils in Year 6 have only a hazy recollection of these important facts as they approach the national tests. This is an area for the school to address.
97. Opportunities to enhance science lessons with the aid of ICT are not taken. Greater use of classroom computers would allow pupils to record results, produce graphs in a variety of forms and research information.
98. The co-ordinator was appointed to the position only at the beginning of the school year but has achieved a great deal in a short time. She has a clear vision and direction for the subject and has made a positive impact on the teaching of science in the school. She has produced a new policy and schemes of work in line with the new curriculum together with instruments for assessment. The monitoring of science teaching and learning has begun and is a priority for development.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Standards in art and design are average across the school and this is the same as reported in the last inspection. Since the two schools amalgamated teachers have ensured that all areas of the curriculum are covered but development of the subject is not part of the current school action plan.

Particular strengths are:

- good classroom teaching;
- the attitudes of the pupils towards the subject;
- the contribution art makes to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education;
- the use of sketchbooks across the school;
- links with other subject areas;
- very good accommodation and resources.

Areas for improvement include:

- the quality and range of learning opportunities given to the pupils and the breadth of the curriculum offered;
- the priority and time the school gives to art activities;
- the monitoring and evaluation of the subject's performance.

100. Teaching is good throughout the school. Some very good teaching was observed in junior classes. Most lessons take place in the specially equipped art room, which opened this year and is a great asset to the school. At the present time its potential is not fully exploited. Lessons are well planned and move at a good pace with all pupils fully involved. Materials are easily accessible and well used by teachers and pupils. In one lesson in Year 4 where the pupils were using a hacksaw the teacher was very competent in ensuring that safe practices were being observed. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils who work well together, discussing and planning and offering each other advice. Teachers are able to manage their classes easily and this means they have time to help and encourage individual pupils. They make suggestions for improvement and the pupils listen and act upon these. Teachers use various methods to ensure no time is lost in lessons which all start on time. In the lessons, pupils knew what they were hoping to achieve and started work right away or they listened attentively to a short exposition by the teacher and then settled immediately to

work. The older pupils have produced some very good quality work on sports people in action using a bright, layered collage technique. The final pictures give a feeling of movement and power. Teachers enhance the pupils' learning by extending their studies through the use of a viewfinder and a digital camera, and by using computer art programmes.

101. Progress by the pupils is good in individual lessons. Over time progress is satisfactory because older pupils have not been given sufficient access to certain areas of the curriculum and have an unsatisfactory knowledge of the work of famous artists, craftspeople and designers. They have not visited an art gallery or watched videos or slides of artists' work. They cannot compare or contrast the work of artists living in different times and cultures. In Years 1 and 2 art activities are not sufficiently linked to learning in other subject areas. There are very few large composite pictures to illustrate stories heard in literacy lessons or individually painted pictures. The pupils have little time to develop their creativity. Pupils across the school are now using a sketchbook to jot down and try out new ideas and these will be used, over time, to monitor their progress. The pupils compare and contrast each other's work and are positive when they do this. There are no unkind comments. Pupils are well supported at home; for example, they bring materials to use when making a chair from their own design.
102. Pupils enjoy their art lessons very much and many would like to spend more time on this area of the curriculum. In lessons they waste no time. They settle to work instantly. From an early age they are organised and independent. Little time is wasted on tidying up at the end of lessons. The pupils swiftly put all materials away and collect their work together.
103. The co-ordinator is aware that the implementation of the new curriculum is still at an early stage of development and that the use of the art room needs monitoring and improving. She hopes to increase the links with ICT. The school endeavours to enrich the curriculum through co-operating with a neighbouring school to jointly celebrate the Nottingham Arts Festival. Also an artist has recently visited to demonstrate making African masks.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. Standards in design and technology are above average throughout the school. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection reports.

Strengths in the subject are:

- Teachers' good planning which enables pupils' skills to develop well across the school;
- well chosen activities which interest and stimulate pupils' creativity;
- good classroom organisation and excellent management of pupils enabling a high level of social skills to develop.

The area in need of further development is:

- using ICT more, especially for older pupils.

105. Standards are above average throughout the school. The good level of planning ensures that pupils develop a complete understanding of the design process. Pupils use sketches and plans effectively to develop their ideas; they translate this into reality by experimenting with a wide range of materials, thus developing skills in cutting, measuring, joining and decorating. Finished products are carefully embellished to improve the visual impact. For example, castles produced by pupils under seven have

battlements added in grey paint, and toothpaste cartons designed by pupils in the junior classes are attractive, the pupils remembering the marketing principle well. This is particularly strong among infant pupils, who have visited a playground before embarking on a design of their own. The above average drawings, attention to detail, and the use of ICT to 'paint' their designs is evidence of good progress and learning. The knowledgeable co-ordinator has planned well from the new curriculum guidance, and all staff are confident in their teaching approaches.

106. The good and often very good teaching throughout the school is characterised by staff giving pupils plenty of choice and freedom in their design work. This allows, for example, older pupils to develop more sophisticated skills, such as designing a range of chairs suitable for characters of their choice. 'Tigger's' chair has a tail, for example, and the one for 'batman' has a bat for the rear of the chair. This approach keeps interest alive and gives a sense of realism to the pupils' work. They attack their work with energy, interest and vigour. Teachers have excellent relationships with their pupils, manage them outstandingly, and encourage them in all sorts of ways. For instance, in Years 2, 3 and 4, staff question pupils about improvements to their designs, praising what they have done, while making it clear that it could be better. And pupils respond accordingly, by being more accurate when gluing parts of a chassis together with paper and wood, or when cutting out sections of card for their chairs.

107. Teachers organise their lessons and their classrooms very well. There is a good balance maintained between initial talk, and subsequent practical work. Teachers use a wide range of materials to good advantage, with an abundant supply of wood, card, felt, cellophane, glues and pins, metals, colours and foil, for instance. The pupils benefit from an art room, used well throughout the school for teaching and for practical activities. Pupils collaborate well in pairs or small groups, helping one another, paying very good attention to safety when using saws or scissors, and readily evaluating their own work. The high level of social skills development, and the excellent relationships are major factors in raising standards.

108. Younger pupils have used ICT successfully in their playground designs, but older pupils have not yet been given sufficient opportunities to develop this side of their creativity further. This is an issue for the school to address.

GEOGRAPHY

109. The previous inspection of the Martin Roe Junior School identified attainment in geography as below average. Improvement since that inspection is very good. By the time pupils are seven their attainment in geography is well above average and their progress is very good. By the time they are eleven attainment is still above average and their progress is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Strengths in the subject include:

- high standards of attainment and achievement;
- the quality of teaching;
- the quality of pupils learning;
- pupils' attitudes to their learning and their behaviour;
- very good opportunities for pupils to present their knowledge and understanding in a range of ways.

110. Throughout the school the quality of teaching in geography is very good. The quality of learning by the time pupils are seven is very good and by the time they are eleven it is good. Teachers plan activities and ask questions that challenge and extend the

knowledge and understanding of their pupils effectively. They frequently set research tasks for their pupils that they pursue with enthusiasm and commitment. Pupils are highly motivated. They often continue their research at home and are eager to share their findings with other members of their classes. Pupils also work well in groups, their discussions illustrating their good knowledge and understanding for their ages.

111. Six and seven year olds know terms such as continent, equator and tropics and can identify where these are on a map of the world correctly. Whilst doing this one pupil reminded his teacher that Australasia is much larger than Australia and pointed this out on a map. Well-structured research by pupils in this age group, using various sources of evidence, including a CD-ROM, has enabled them to know where the desert regions and the tropical rain forest regions of the world are. They also know the effect that the climate of these regions has on the rest of the world. These pupils also make strong links between their work in geography and their work in history. They know where the Crimea is and identify the journey made by British troops to fight in that war.
112. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 study life in a village in India. Their knowledge and understanding develops well because of the activities devised by their teachers. For example, they supply pupils with very good photographic resources that provide evidence about the village and region from which pupils draw conclusions about what life there might be like. This shows pupils' knowledge and understanding of this to be very good for their age. The aspect of study also allows teachers to make effective links with pupils' religious education and with current events, such as the recent earthquake.
113. The oldest pupils study the evolution of rivers. Their learning is enhanced by the good subject knowledge of their teachers and by a range of well-planned opportunities to present and develop their knowledge. For example, they devise charts, graphs, and diagrams and write narratives to present their research and conclusions of their discussions. Year 6 pupils make presentations that enable them to explain their knowledge and understanding of how meanders and ox bow lakes are formed by rivers. These opportunities make a significant contribution to the high quality of pupils' speaking and listening. They understand terms such as erosion and deposition and use them correctly. One pupil extended the discussion about the contribution of the earth's rotation to the formation of meanders to include a detailed description of how the gravitational effect of the moon influences the tides.
114. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to make effective use of ICT. Younger pupils research details of a country of their choice on a CD-ROM and print their findings for displays. Older pupils often use the internet to find out information. This includes following weather patterns for Britain and other European countries.
115. Attainment in the subject is enhanced by a range of good educational visits. The oldest pupils go to France. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 visit Derbyshire every other year, gaining first-hand experience through good quality fieldwork.

HISTORY

116. By the time pupils are aged seven and by the time they are aged eleven their attainment in history is above average and their achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Improvement since the previous inspection of the schools is very good. Due to the cycle of teaching geography and history alternately to pupils aged seven to eleven no lessons were observed for this group. Judgements about their attainment are based on the analysis of their work and on talking with pupils.

Strengths in the subject include:

- high standards of attainment and achievement;
- the quality of pupils learning;
- pupils written work in history;
- the quality of teaching;
- pupils' attitudes to their learning and their behaviour;
- opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes and show their knowledge and understanding;
- communication and information technology is used well.

117. The quality of teaching for pupils aged five to seven is very good. Sometimes it is excellent. Very good planning and management of pupils are key features. The quality of their learning is very good as a result. Pupils' work shows that the quality of learning for those aged seven to eleven is good.
118. Teachers use stimulating and challenging resources and ideas to capture the enthusiasm and develop the research skills and understanding of their pupils successfully. They use questions very effectively to extend the knowledge and understanding of their pupils. Such questions as 'What would it have been like?' and 'How do you feel about?' are applied frequently, challenging pupils to formulate and express their view about historical events.
119. Six-year-olds dress up and take Victorian identities. Teachers provide an excellent range of Victorian artefacts and use questioning effectively to enable their pupils to develop their understanding of life in a typical Victorian home. 'How would water be heated for washing clothes?' 'How did they get the clothes clean?' 'How does this Victorian soap differ from soap used today?' These and other questions ensure pupils have very good understanding of life at this time.
120. Younger pupils have also produced very good written accounts about the lives of soldiers during the Crimean war and the role of Florence Nightingale. Teachers have linked this work to that in geography effectively and pupils know where the Crimea is and the challenges facing the armies in travelling there to fight. As part of this project pupils make comparisons between hospitals during the Crimean war and those of today. They know that conditions at that time were much worse than today and describe why so many soldiers died of their wounds and from diseases. Pupils' accounts of events at this time, written in the guise of journalists reporting events are very good.
121. Junior pupils explore different dimensions of life during Victorian times. Their written accounts take various forms and are of high quality, making a significant contribution to their skills in literacy. Many are very detailed. One account records the trauma and challenge of making a journey from Nottingham to London during that time. Another scripts a conversation between a child of the Victoria era and one of the present. Both illustrate pupils' good knowledge and understanding of life in Victorian times and the changes that took place during that era.
122. Pupils have researched and recorded survey information from 1871 concerning occupations in their locality. They know Ravenshead village did not exist at the time, the nearest settlement being Fishpool. They also comment, with considerable knowledge, about the development of Ravenshead as a community.
123. Good use is made of ICT in the subject. Ten and eleven year olds access the internet to research the flooding of the Tynewydd mine in the Rhondda valley. Guided by their teachers they have developed excellent displays about this event. Their accounts, using

the guise of a journalist at the event, show good understanding of what happened and the effect it had on the community. Pupils have also written very good letters, in the role of the mine manager, to the families of victims of the flood. These reveal the insights and well-developed understanding that pupils have of the history of this period.

124. Because pupils have access to a good range of educational visits this enhances their knowledge and understanding of history well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125. Overall the standards in ICT at the age of eleven are average. This is in line with the findings of the previous report. However, a significant improvement in the standards from the last inspection is shown at the age of seven. In the last report standards at the end of the Infant school were found to be below average. The improvement shown with the younger pupils is also apparent in the lower junior classes and, if current practices are continued, older pupils can be expected to benefit in a similar way.

The strengths of the subject are:

- the good teaching throughout the school;
- the high standard of lesson planning;
- the assessment instruments which are in place;
- the good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils;
- the development of the skills required.

The area for improvement is:

- extending the use of ICT into most other subjects.

126. The quality of teaching in ICT is good throughout the school. It is based on secure subject knowledge and good lesson planning. Teachers' expectations are high and they use effective methods to achieve their objectives. All teaching takes place in the newly appointed suite with fifteen computers linked by a network. The network allows the class teacher to control individual computers and demonstrate teaching points on the screen. Teachers have very quickly adapted to the new methods of teaching and show confidence and good management skills. Planning in the lessons is based on the teaching software resident in the network which ensures progression and continuity through the National Curriculum.
127. New policies and schemes of work have been developed to conform to the new requirements and considerable progress has been made in the few months that the facilities have been operating. Teachers have spent a great deal of time and energy to establish an efficient and effective system which also incorporates assessment of the pupils' progress.
128. Pupils have a positive attitude in lessons and the standard of behaviour is good. They work well in pairs sharing ideas and taking turns to operate the computers. They enjoy the tasks and use their knowledge well to meet the challenges offered. Pupils join in discussions sensibly and are prepared to listen to others' views. The younger pupils, in particular, enjoy the excitement and wonder of the world of technology.
129. The computer suite has accelerated the rate of learning since its installation and pupils in the infant years have gained confidence and assurance in using the machines. They are able to use the correct language and refer to 'tool bars' and 'icons' with understanding. They can log on with their individual password and select the appropriate folder on the screen. Mouse control is well developed and by the end of

Year 2, they are able to 'drag and drop' pictures selected from an art file, use a paint program to create pictures in the style of Mondrian and interrogate databases using the index and key word searches. Links with literacy are also strong with good foundations in word processing techniques and a sound platform built for good progress in the Junior years. Pupils in Year 3 are able to change text, font, colour and size, highlight words and insert punctuation. They have links with mathematics when drawing symmetrical pictures with a 'paint' program and with science when drawing graphs. Year 5 and 6 pupils have taken part in a simulation of a Welsh mine disaster in 1877, using the Internet. The project produced good quality work in the form of letters, telegraphs, press releases and posters incorporating many aspects of the curriculum. Almost 100 messages were received by the pupils, requiring them to respond in a 'real time' situation. All pupils have email addresses and some have already made contact with another school to send stories.

130. The area for improvement is in the use of the computer in the classrooms for immediate access and support of the curriculum. All ICT is currently taught in the suite and little use is being made of the resources in the classrooms. This is an area identified by the subject co-ordinator and steps are being taken to improve software resources and licensing facilities.

MUSIC

131. Standards are well above average by the time pupils reach the age of eleven. This is a significant improvement since the former schools were inspected and the judgement confirms the views of parents.

Music is a great strength of the school and contains many positive features including:

- very good teaching by knowledgeable and confident staff;
- very good cross-curricular links;
- above average standards of performance, especially singing;
- very good levels of personal development encouraged in lessons and at other times;
- very good use of resources;
- very good subject leadership.

The area for improvement is:

- making more use of ICT to support the curriculum.

132. The well above average standards at age eleven and above average standards in the rest of the school are due largely to the very good standard of teaching. Teaching, especially for pupils aged seven to eleven, has improved dramatically since the previous inspection. Teachers throughout the school are very knowledgeable. They have a very good grasp of technical language, which they pass on to pupils. Pupils are confident using terms such as diction, tempo, timbre, crescendo and dynamics. Younger pupils in infant classes have a secure grasp of rhythm; they learn to play a wide range of percussion instruments well, varying the dynamics and tempo. Older pupils are taught to adopt the correct posture when singing, and to pay attention to musical phrases so that they get their breathing correct. Teachers use humour very well to relax the learning atmosphere and to make the lesson enjoyable. This is a very successful strategy in all classes. Planning is very clear, with aims and objectives discussed and shared with the pupils. These are reviewed at the end so that pupils gain good insight into what they are learning and why. Teachers are not satisfied with mediocre performances – pupils are invited to discuss how they might improve their efforts, and they respond with ideas such as 'giving it more welly' or 'listening to instructions more'. Teachers use warm-up exercises very effectively to prepare them for whole class singing. The standards of

performance as a result are greatly improved, and in Years 5 and 6 are well above average.

133. Teaching of music is broader than the curriculum requires – teachers make constant reference to other subjects, especially literacy. The excellent use of technical language does a great deal to boost pupils' general vocabulary, so that they use appropriate terms and phrases with understanding. In one Year 2 lesson, pupils had designed mini-beasts, which formed the basis of a series of performances. The strong link here to design and technology and science reinforced the prior learning in those subjects with reference to materials and their properties, as well as to layout and design. Pupils of all ages learn to count, so that in the part-singing, they come in on time and do not lose the thread of their own individual melodies and words. All of this adds significantly to the very good levels of progress made in lessons.
134. Standards of performance are above average for seven-year-olds. They play their instruments very well, selecting the ones they prefer from the wide range on offer. They learn to control the sounds they make, as well as how to vary the rhythm. Older pupils sing with enthusiasm and attention to technical detail. Teachers ensure they understand words such as diction and diminuendo, so that voice control is much improved with rehearsal. Pupils also accompany the singers using whatever instrumental skills they have acquired. In three separate singing sessions, Years 5 and 6 sang very well in three parts. Several of their peers accompanied them on guitars, drums, castanets and triangles, keeping in very good tempo, although the opportunity to make just a little too much noise on the drum was too much of a temptation. Music is therefore a very significant strength of the school's overall achievement.
135. The opportunities to perform, which extend into school assemblies on a regular basis, the large amount of instrumental learning taking place using visiting specialists, plus the hard work achieved in lessons, leads to high levels of personal development. Pupils learn to be creative – they invent startling rhythms and dynamics. Techniques used by teachers to foster this is of a high standard. After listening to a piece of evocative classical music with eyes closed, pupils reflect on the piece, draw a picture to represent their own feelings and then compose and perform a piece in groups. The standard in one Year 3 and 4 class was well above average, with exciting challenging rhythms and inventive piano phrases to show anger, sadness or loneliness. Self-expression and creativity are strong features of lessons throughout the school, and they lead to very good levels of investigation and creativity.
136. Teachers use the wide range of multicultural resources very well. Every lesson incorporates some opportunity for pupils to select their own instruments and to perform with them. Skills development is very good, with pupils learning basic essentials up to age seven, then progressing to more inventive and creative things once these basic skills of control, keeping in time and playing well together have been learnt. The result is harmony not cacophony. The stage for this is very well set by the example of the subject co-ordinator, herself a music specialist. Although in post for six months only, she has helped to give her colleagues great confidence in teaching basic skills very well, and in providing them with a multitude of good ideas for use in lessons. Pupils' learning is further enhanced by regular choir and recorder clubs and performances at Christmas and in the community. Plans to extend these are already in the pipeline.
137. A minor area for future development, fully recognised by the school, is the need to incorporate more ICT into learning in music. Currently, the synthesisers are not adaptable for use with ICT, and suitable and appropriate programs have not been found.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. Overall standards in physical education by the age of eleven are above average. This is in line with the findings of the previous report. However, an improvement in the standards from the previous inspection is shown at the age of seven. In the previous report, standards at the end of the Infant school were found to be average. Almost all pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 4.

The strengths of the subject are:

- the good teaching observed;
- the good lesson plans;
- the wide range of activities;
- the very good behaviour of the pupils;
- the development of understanding in Health and Fitness;
- the good standards in swimming.

139. The quality of teaching in physical education throughout the school is good. It is based on good subject knowledge and lesson planning. Teachers share the teaching objectives with their pupils and set clear challenges. The pace is good and the lessons are well structured. Teachers develop pupils' decision making and independence as well as promoting partnerships and group work.

140. In gymnastics pupils devise and perform sequences of movements on the floor and with small apparatus. They change speed and direction smoothly working individually and in pairs. They learn to co-ordinate movements reflecting each other or moving in parallel. They perform with confidence before their peers who evaluate progress and offer support and ideas for improvement.

141. In dance, pupils show good levels of control; freezing in imaginative poses. Young pupils moving to the music "I'm walking in the air" respond well to create and perform dance movements reflecting the mood. They respond well to a change of mood in the music. Many are able to incorporate mime to portray elements of the story of their dance. Soft, slow floating movements change quickly to more energetic running, chopping and throwing movements in response to music.

142. There is a wide range of games opportunities available to the pupils and many out of school clubs and teams. Links with outside agencies provide football coaching and participation in inter school competitions and arts festivals. The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to all activities in class and after school.

143. Pupils have a positive attitude in lessons and the standard of behaviour is high. They work well individually and in pairs sharing ideas and taking turns when using apparatus. They enjoy the tasks and use their knowledge well to meet the challenges offered. Pupils join in discussions sensibly and are prepared to listen to others' views.

144. All lessons underpin the principles of health and fitness and older pupils always start their lessons by taking their pulse before and after warm up sessions. They discuss the implications of exercise and understand the significance of suitable clothing and hygiene. Swimming lessons take place during Years 3 and 4, and by the end of Year 4, almost all pupils are able to swim 25 metres.

145. Although the co-ordinator has only recently taken responsibility for the subject, a new policy and scheme of work is in place in line with 'Curriculum 2000'. Assessment and recording procedures are good and based on teacher assessment and statements of

what each pupil can do. Accommodation indoors and outdoors is good and teachers make full use of it.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

146. Religious Education is a strength of the school with above average standards being achieved by the pupils at seven and eleven years old. This is a good improvement on the standards reported in the previous inspection, especially for the older pupils who were reported to be unclear about the major events in the Christian calendar. Religious education was identified as an area for development.

Particular strengths at the present time include:

- very good teaching throughout the school;
- a very well thought-out developing curriculum supported by outside school visits;
- very good leadership and management by the subject co-ordinator;
- very good links with school assemblies and the moral teaching of the school;
- very good assessment procedures;
- the very good attitudes of pupils and their progress in lessons;
- very good resources available to the older pupils.

Areas for improvement include:

- the increased use of ICT by the pupils to support their learning especially for accessing information and for word processing;
- resources for certain areas of the curriculum and especially for the younger pupils.

147. Teaching is very good throughout the school. In particular, planning for lessons is thorough and well thought out with interesting supporting materials and books. The teachers manage the pupils easily and there are excellent relationships in the classrooms. All teachers show a very good understanding and knowledge of the subject in their lessons and the co-ordinator has excellent knowledge and shares it with all teachers. The structure of lessons, the very good teaching and the highly developed listening skills of the pupils result in very good learning taking place. No time is wasted and the pupils are very interested and involved. Lessons are structured to make the maximum impact. In one lesson a short video clip, a Cliff Richards tape, excerpts of Hindu and Christian music and class discussions brought about full participation by all pupils throughout the lesson. Excellent learning took place.

148. A strength of many religious education lessons is the interactive discussions both among pupils and between teachers and their pupils. Teachers make very good curriculum links in their lessons. Often pupils write or draw about what they have learnt, and a good example is factual reporting on their recent visit to a Synagogue. One particularly striking display on 'Moses leading His Children out of Egypt' contains some very good, detailed pieces of writing on paper cut in the shape of pyramids. The younger pupils show their skill in paper weaving by creating a watery background for baby Moses in his basket. In the school foyer there is a permanent material collage depicting the saying of Jesus, 'Let the children come to me' and this shows the importance the school places on this area of the curriculum. Assessment procedures are very well thought out to go with each unit of study. The teaching of the subject is not yet fully monitored by the co-ordinator but she examines pieces of work and has been very busy during the past year adapting the curriculum for the older pupils and writing a new one for the younger pupils.

149. The pupils are knowledgeable about their own and other religions and they make very good progress in their learning throughout the school. They can talk about the main

physical features of Church of England churches and compare them with the internal features of the buildings used by other Christian denominations. They know the purpose of the buildings and what the artefacts and furniture are used for. The school attends the Parish Church of St. Peter at harvest time, Christmas and at the end of the school year. The pupils talk about these events with pleasure and express amazement at the size of the Church. The younger pupils have a very good knowledge of the rules governing the Jewish faith and have learnt the technical language of the artefacts and practices such as Torah and Shabbat. Younger pupils know about the Christian calendar and can say why Advent is celebrated and what is remembered at Christmas and at Easter, and that Easter eggs are symbolic of new birth. The older pupils know the purpose of prayers and have written their own on paper candles. They are proud of these. Pupils retell stories from both the Old and New Testament and explain the underlying meanings and morals in each story effectively.

150. The pupils enjoy their lessons in religious education; one pupil said it was third favourite after English and mathematics. They are very interested and enjoy watching the videos and examining the artefacts and clothing.
151. The co-ordinator has taped a large number of videos to support the lessons and she also borrows items from a local resource centre. She intends to continue to improve the resources for the younger pupils, which are currently inadequate. There are currently no links to ICT, and pupils' skills in research are adversely affected as a result.