

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BURFORD PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Arnold, Nottingham

LEA area: City of Nottingham

Unique reference number: 122429

Headteacher: Mr P Unsworth

Reporting inspector: Mrs L J Traves  
24039

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> October 2001

Inspection number: 230621

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary and Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Oxclose Lane  
Arnold  
Nottingham

Postcode: NG5 6FX

Telephone number: 0115 9151560

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Dr. Mike Spurr

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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24039	Mrs L Traves	Registered inspector	History Geography Special educational needs Equal opportunities	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Leadership and management Key issues for action
11084	Mrs J Hughes	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
30954	Mr B Ashcroft	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology	
3624	Mr P Snelling	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
1492	Mr D Twist	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science	Teaching and learning
12394	Mrs C May	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Burford Primary and Nursery School is the same size as most primary schools, with 254 pupils on roll aged between 3 and 11 years. Of these, 47 are children who currently attend part time in the nursery and reception classes. The school has a more or less equal number of girls and boys. The population of the school is predominantly white and all pupils have English as their first language. The school draws its pupils from an area that has high levels of social and economic need. Over half the children in the school (57 per cent) are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. An above average number of pupils (38 per cent) have special educational needs. Children's attainment on entry is well below average.

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

Burford is an effective school, which is improving at a good rate. It cares for its pupils very well. The number of pupils reaching the expected and higher levels in tests at age 11 is increasing and is now at the national average in science and closer to it in mathematics. Most pupils achieve well from a low starting point because teaching is good. Pupils in the nursery and reception classes get off to a flying start. The headteacher, key staff and governors are leading the school's continuing improvement well. They have a clear idea of how they want the school to be. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Children in the nursery and reception classes get off to a very good start
- Teaching is good and as a result, most pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs
- The school takes very good care of its pupils
- The school develops pupils' personal, social and moral awareness very well
- Relationships within the school are very good
- The headteacher is a dedicated, strong and effective leader
- There is a very strong commitment by the headteacher, governors and staff to improving the school

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

- The opportunities children are given to use the skills they have learned in English, maths, science and information and communication technology (ICT)
- The challenge for more able pupils, particularly in mathematics throughout the school, English in the junior classes and science in the infant classes
- The usefulness of teachers' marking in helping pupils to improve
- The way that pupils record and present their work

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in February 1998, when it was judged to be improving. The school has continued this improvement. There is now an upward trend in test results. This has been recognised by the Department for Education and Skills, which gave the school an award for achievement earlier this year. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen and pupils' achievement in these areas, particularly in the infants, is better. Standards in art have also improved. Teaching is of better quality, with more teaching judged to be good and very good. There is better provision for



pupils' personal development and for children in the nursery and reception classes. The school keeps a better check on pupils' welfare and progress.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	E	E*	E*	D	well above average A above average B
mathematics	E	E	D	B	average C below average D
science	E	E*	C	A	well below average E lowest 5% E*

In the national tests for 11-year-olds, summarised above, standards in mathematics are getting closer to average and in science, standards have already reached this level. Test results in English place the school in the bottom 5 per cent in the country. This is largely because of the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs who do not reach the expected level, despite achieving well, given their difficulties. More pupils are now reaching both the expected and higher levels in the English tests at age 11, but there is still a long way to go. When test results are compared to those of similar schools, the picture is better. Standards are above average in mathematics, well above average in science and below average in English. Whilst inspection findings also show that standards are improving in English, mathematics and science, standards in science were not judged to be as high as the test results suggest. This is because children do not develop their skills of investigation as well as they develop their scientific knowledge.

When children join the nursery, their attainments are well below average, particularly in their language development. At the end of the reception year, most children have achieved really well and are on course to meet the national standards, known as the 'Early Learning Goals'. However, fewer children are likely to achieve these in language and communication than in the other areas. Speaking skills remain a weaker area throughout the infants and juniors and standards are below average when children leave the school.

By the time they are 7, standards for the majority of pupils are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, there are some significant improvements in all areas and most pupils achieve well. In the junior classes, most pupils continue to achieve well in English, maths and science. In mathematics and science, however, pupils' skills of investigation do not develop as quickly as their knowledge and understanding. Although achievement is satisfactory for more able pupils at both key stages, their progress could be sharper if they were given work that was more challenging. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in all classes because they are very well supported. At both key stages standards are better than those found in most schools in art and design and are average in all other subjects. The school sets itself appropriately challenging targets in English and mathematics and is successfully achieving these.

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning, work hard and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school. They get on well together, both at work and at play.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships are very strong throughout the school. Pupils show good levels of initiative when encouraged to take responsibility, for example on the School Council.
Attendance	Well below average, despite the school's best efforts. There has, however, been a significant reduction in the number of unauthorised absences.

Good attitudes to learning help children make the most of their time in school. Children respond very well to their teachers because of the very strong relationships that exist between them.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

Inspectors judged two-thirds of all lessons to be good or better. Of these, almost half were very good. There were two unsatisfactory lessons. Teaching in the school meets the needs of most pupils well and helps them achieve well.

In the nursery and reception classes, lessons are never less than good and often very good. Teachers and support staff form a very effective team, planning together to offer children the right level of challenge to suit their needs and abilities.

In the infant and junior classes, three-quarters of all lessons were good or better. There are several key features that are regularly found in the best lessons. Teachers give children generous praise for their efforts in answering questions. This helps them feel good about themselves and enjoy their learning. They are keen to 'have a go'. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. As a result, pupils are usually able to get on with their work without the pace of lessons being interrupted. Teachers are very clear about what they want pupils to learn and share this well with them. This ensures pupils know what is expected. The use of support staff to help pupils with special needs is very effective and they make good progress because of this.

A feature of the teaching that is weaker is written marking, which does not help pupils as much as it could. Comments are brief and not sufficiently informative. Another aspect of teaching that could be improved is that, in some lessons, teachers do not always take the opportunity to challenge and extend the most able pupils to their limit. On some occasions, although extra work is given to these pupils, it is not at a harder level of challenge.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory throughout the rest of the school. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in mathematics, science in the juniors and some aspects of English
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. They are particularly well supported in small groups and for reading and writing activities. Individual children are provided for very well.
Provision for pupils'	Good, overall. Very good for moral and social development.

personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory for spiritual and cultural development. The school is very good at teaching pupils how to relate to each other. It is not as successful in teaching children to understand the cultures of others.
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How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Procedures for child protection are very good. The school is very good at ensuring the pupil's welfare and safety; all adults within the school community contribute well to this area.
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The school's partnership with parents is good. The school makes a very determined effort to involve parents in its work and keep them informed. A small number of parents provide valuable support in school and many more are keen to attend assemblies and concerts. Some parents support their children at home, for example by ensuring they complete their homework.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher gives a strong and effective lead to the work of the school. He is clear about how he wants the school to be and works closely with key staff to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. They make an effective contribution, which is helping the school to improve. However, some statutory requirements are not met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good, overall. The headteacher, key staff and governors have a very clear understanding of what the school does well and what needs to be improved.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses its funds very well to raise standards. They apply the principles of best value well.

The school has a good number of teaching and support staff to carry out its work. Support assistants make a very skilled and valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The site manager and administrative staff are very efficient and effective in their roles. The school is well resourced in most areas. However, there are not enough computers or library books and this limits the opportunities pupils have to develop their skills in these areas.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons</li> <li>• Some parents would like more information about how their children are getting on</li> </ul>

Parents hold the school in high regard and are pleased with what the school offers. Inspection findings endorse parents' positive views. The activities offered to pupils outside lessons are similar to those found in most primary schools. Reports to parents are variable in quality and some do not give enough information to parents about their children's progress.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Results in the national tests since 1998 show a fluctuating picture in reading and mathematics at age 7. Results have improved each year in writing at 7. Results in English, science and mathematics at age 11 have been well below average and in English and science, sometimes in the bottom five per cent of schools in the country. In the 2001 tests, significant improvements have been made in reading, writing and mathematics for 7 year olds, although standards continue to remain below the national average. There has also been a significant improvement in mathematics and science results for 11 year olds. Although standards overall remain below average in mathematics and English, more pupils are now leaving the school having attained the expected level for their age in mathematics. In science standards have now reached the average in the tests for 11-year olds. More pupils are also reaching the higher level 5. However, despite some improvement in English, results for 11 year olds remain in the bottom 5 per cent of schools in the country.
2. When compared to similar schools, the picture is better in 2001. Results are above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, results are well above average in science, above average in maths and below average in English.
3. There are significant factors that influence the school's performance. The area served by the school is one of economic and social disadvantage, with over half the pupils being eligible for free school meals. More pupils than in most schools (38 per cent) have special educational needs. In some classes in recent years, half of the pupils have had learning difficulties, particularly with reading and writing. Although the school identifies these pupils early and supports them very well, many do not reach average standards. The school works hard at trying to overcome these factors through developing good attitudes to learning in its pupils and supporting parents. Improvements have been made in challenging circumstances.
4. Most children enter the nursery with well below average attainments, particular in their language development. With very good teaching, they make very good gains in their learning. As a result, a significant number will meet the expected standards, by the end of the reception class, in all of the areas of learning. However, fewer are on track to meet the goals in language and literacy because of their low starting point.
5. Standards in English are below average at both key stages. The high numbers of pupils with special educational needs and the low starting point of many pupils are factors in this. The overall achievement of pupils in reading and writing, however, has improved as lost ground is being made up more quickly in these areas. National 'catch up' programmes are used particularly

well for this purpose. The national literacy strategy has had a significant impact on teaching and learning. Pupils now build systematically on their understanding of letter sounds and spelling patterns and are introduced to a wide range of books. However, older pupils, in particular, do not develop their research skills to a high enough level. More able pupils achieve very well when taught in small groups. Occasionally, in some class lessons, however, they are not challenged as well as they could be and do not make such sharp progress. Speaking skills remain a weaker area. Although achievement in speaking and listening is satisfactory at both, key stages, standards in speaking are below average at ages 7 and 11. This is because of the low starting point of many pupils, but also because opportunities to develop their speaking skills year on year are not always planned systematically enough.

6. Standards in mathematics are also below average, but are rising throughout the school. Achievement is now good in both key stages. The most dramatic improvement is to be found in Key Stage 1 because this is where standards have been lowest. Standards are rising as a result of better teaching. Teachers have a clearer idea of what it is they want pupils to learn, as a result of training they have received. They are also much better at identifying which questions in the tests pupils find most difficult to answer and adapting their teaching accordingly. This information is also being used to set appropriate targets for individuals and different groups of pupils, though there is still more to be done in this area, particularly for more able pupils. Pupils' achievement is best in their number work and in their understanding of shape, space and measures. Pupils' investigative skills are weaker, however, because they are not given enough opportunities to work out how to solve problems for themselves.
7. Standards overall in science are judged to be below the national average at the end of both key stages, despite the average results achieved in the national tests for 11-year-olds. However, as in English and mathematics, the picture is one of improvement. Standards are rising because of better teaching. In both key stages, pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of science at a good rate. This is one reason why the oldest pupils are beginning to achieve more in the tests. However, older pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills of practical investigations in science and do not achieve as well in this area of the subject.
8. In art and design at both key stages, standards are higher than those found in most schools and pupils achieve particularly well. Teachers ensure that pupils use a wide variety of materials and learn an increasingly challenging range of techniques as they move through the school. Good links are made between art and other subjects, particularly history.
9. In the remaining subjects of the curriculum, standards are in line with expectations for pupils aged 7 and 11.

10. From its annual analysis of pupils' progress, the school is able to set appropriately challenging targets for what pupils are expected to achieve by the end of Year 6. The school is making good progress towards the goals it has set itself.

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

11. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good throughout all year groups and this helps them to make the most of their time at school. They are enthusiastic learners who enjoy lessons for the most part and try hard to follow teachers' instructions. They participate eagerly in question and answer sessions, as for example, during the literacy and numeracy hours. In a mental mathematics session in a class of mixed Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, they were very keen to earn rewards ('positives') by estimating correctly what value coins the class teacher was dropping into a bucket. Everyone applied themselves well to the task, no one tried to cheat and all were able to give sensible answers and to add their 4 numbers together correctly to find the answer. In another Year 3/4 class, in a religious education lesson, pupils grappled with the meaning of the parable of the Good Samaritan and worked well together, keeping each other involved in the activity and composing some thoughtful comments.
12. Standards of behaviour are never less than good; frequently, pupils' behaviour is very good as they move about the building, have lunch and play outside. Pupils bring a mature approach to all the activities in which they are involved and they understand the very high expectations adults have of them. They respond very well to the incentives and rewards offered to them by the school and they mirror the very positive role models set by adults in the school. There were 5 fixed period exclusions from school in the past year. These all relate to one former pupil.
13. Much of the school's success leads directly from the very good relationships found within the school community. Pupils generally relate very well to one another, sharing resources and showing an awareness of the rights and needs of others. There is a warmth between pupils and adults and a recognition by pupils that staff want what is best for them.
14. Pupils' personal development is very good overall and is better than when the school was last inspected. Pupils are very willing to accept responsibilities in their classrooms and around the building and as a result, they become increasingly confident and independent. This often has a positive impact on pupils' awareness of issues relating to their lives outside school as well, for instance, increasing their interest in environmental education and democracy in action. Elected pupils are proud to represent other pupils on the School Council and carry out their duties conscientiously, under the careful guidance of the deputy headteacher. Many of their decisions help other pupils to extend their own independence, for example, by improving playtime facilities or raising funds for charities.

15. Levels of attendance are well below the national average. Instances of unauthorised absence have decreased significantly since the last inspection although they are still above the national average. The vast majority of pupils are punctual and there is a very prompt start to the school day.

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

16. Since the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be good in the nursery and satisfactory everywhere else, there have been improvements. It is now very good in the Foundation Stage (the nursery and reception classes) and good in the rest of the school.
17. In the Foundation Stage classes, lessons are never less than good and often very good. Teachers and support staff form a very effective team, planning together to offer children the right level of challenge to suit their needs and abilities. The excellent relationships which adults establish with the children give them the confidence they need to attempt new activities and experiences. They are secure in the knowledge that their best efforts will be valued. In planning a rich range of activities, teachers draw upon their in-depth knowledge of the children to put emphasis for learning in the right place. For example, they concentrate hard on developing social confidence and communication skills, which are the weakest area for most children when they arrive. The busy learning atmosphere in the Foundation Stage is a result of teachers having high expectations of the children and keeping them on track through giving clear instructions and encouraging and motivating them to work at a fast pace. No opportunities are missed to engage children's interest or check how they are coping. In one brief exchange between teacher and child for example, the teachers asked a visiting boy who was about to start in the nursery, 'Would you like to answer that phone? – I think it's for you'. This gave the boy a chance to practise his speaking skills but also ensured he felt included in activities from the start.
18. In Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching is broadly similar with three-quarters of all lessons at each key stage being good or better. There was one lesson in each key stage that was unsatisfactory. Two lessons out of every 10 were judged to be very good.
19. There are several key features that characterise the better teaching and are regularly found in lessons across the school. Teachers are very good at maintaining pupils' self esteem through appropriate use of generous praise for their efforts. This means that pupils are not afraid to answer questions in case they get the answer wrong, for a good try is always acknowledged. If pupils are willing to make a contribution to class discussion, they know that what they say will be valued. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson, the teacher made sure that all were attentive as he told the class ' I think you'll find that what William has to say will be really useful to us all'. The widespread use of incentives, such as the 'positive' rewards, helps teachers to manage their pupils effectively. The schools' agreed approaches to managing behaviour are consistently applied by all teachers and the result is that pupils know



what is expected of them, behave well and are able to get on with their work without interruption.

20. The way in which teachers deploy the support staff and the quality of the contribution these staff make is a frequent strength of lessons. Support staff know exactly what teachers are hoping to achieve in the lesson and this helps them to organise their work to support groups of pupils very well. They are usually asked to support lower attaining pupils and the way in which they skilfully offer guidance without over-supporting them helps these pupils to make good progress. In a Key Stage 2 science lesson for example, the support assistant modelled the method of recording for the pupils. This enabled them to concentrate on their practical task without losing touch with the rest of the class. They drew their own conclusions but followed her lead in writing up their notes and as a result made very good gains in their learning. Where teachers or other adults are working with a distinct group, such as the higher attainers or groups requiring additional literacy support, the teaching is very effective. This is because it is very highly focused on developing particular skills and because staff keep very detailed records of how well pupils are progressing. Where they show that they have problems, the teaching is adjusted to help them catch up and their progress is maintained. In most lessons, support for pupils with special educational needs is well focused to help them to access the same curriculum as everyone else. Individual education plans are detailed. Teachers contribute to them and act upon their targets, particularly in the areas of literacy and behaviour.
21. An aspect of teaching that is much better than last time is the setting of clear objectives for lessons. Teachers are very clear about what they want pupils to learn and share this well with them. For example, when Year 3 pupils were told that they were going to be able to recognise and describe two-dimensional shapes, they knew exactly what was expected and could tell whether they were on track to achieve this. Most lessons feature a summary session at the end and these are well led by teachers who use them to check whether or not most pupils have managed what was expected.
22. Teachers in both key stages use resources well to help pupils learn. Simple things such as scissors are distributed in sufficient numbers so as to allow pupils to get on with their tasks without waiting. In a Year 6 physical education lesson, the resources were well prepared to support the activities. A good quantity of good quality resources helped the pupils to practise skills such as throwing netballs, dribbling footballs and using hockey sticks to steer the ball.
23. The regular team teaching approach in which two teachers run one lesson for the large group of oldest pupils is effective. The teachers work very efficiently together, and whoever is not directing the lesson uses their time well to support any pupils who need help or to clarify teaching points with individuals. Where two teachers share a class for different parts of the week, good communication, joint planning and similar expectations ensure that learning is smooth and continuous for these pupils.

24. A short but well focused Year 6 science lesson provides an example of several other common features of the school's good teaching. The teacher gave clear explanations and showed good subject knowledge in leading the discussion on animal adaptations. When he introduced the information that some scientists believe that humans will eventually lose their little toes through lack of use, the pupils showed real interest and were able to relate the idea of evolutionary changes to their own species. The lesson's pace was maintained throughout with quick responses required from the children and the learning was to be completed for homework by pupils who had still to finish writing their ideas. Homework, whilst satisfactory overall, is not always used as well as in the above example, however and does not always relate as closely to pupils' current work. The homework club on the other hand is a very good initiative and motivates pupils really well.
25. Some teachers are very good at posing interesting and challenging questions. In looking at the parable of the Good Samaritan for example, pupils were asked to consider 'What does this ancient story mean for your everyday life today?' This really made them think and helped them relate to the message behind the parable.
26. A feature of the teaching that is weak is written marking, which does not help pupils as much as it should. Comments are brief and sometimes too negative and do not match the intentions set out in the marking policy. For example, comments such as 'You are confused..' or 'You have not done...' have a negative effect on self-esteem without helping pupils to understand how they can improve. At the other extreme, some teachers offer pupils good advice such as 'Now try this....' The problem here is that there is seldom any follow up to check whether pupils have followed the advice, and work samples indicate that this is rare.
27. Another aspect of teaching that could be improved is that of taking opportunities to challenge and extend the higher attaining pupils to their limit. These are sometimes missed. In a Year 2 geography lesson, for example, the more able pupils finished their task quickly and the supplementary work given to them was not at a higher level of challenge. This meant that some of these pupils were not stretched as far as they could have been in their understanding. In a Year 6 lesson on line graphs, the most able pupils found the work too easy with the result that they too experienced insufficient challenge and could have started at a higher point.
28. Literacy teaching is good overall, and teachers follow the nationally recommended strategy well. They use resources such as big books and overhead projectors effectively, and feature well-chosen texts that interest the pupils. In Key Stage 1, early reading skills are well taught as pupils are skilfully introduced to frequently used words and taught to recognise new words from both the sounds of their letters and the context in which they appear. One area of English skills that could profitably receive more attention is that of speaking. Teachers need to plan more opportunities in their lessons

for pupils to develop and practise the skills of extended speaking as opposed to short responses.

29. Most aspects of numeracy are well taught across the school and lessons feature lively mental and oral sessions that help to reinforce pupils' number skills. Teachers give good attention to the development and use of accurate mathematical vocabulary. Teachers could do more to provide pupils with high quality problem solving experiences in order that they can better develop the application of their number skills. This applies in particular to higher attaining pupils.

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

30. The learning opportunities provided for children in the nursery and reception classes are very good. They have improved since the previous inspection and closely reflect the national recommendations for learning in the Foundation Stage. All areas of learning are given appropriate attention and the nursery and reception staff work closely together in planning activities. They choose these activities carefully and provided the right resources to back them up. The activities are exciting to the children; for example when they are given the task of making cuddly toys. Pupils are given a wealth of opportunities to take part in imaginative play through which staff concentrate on developing children's language skills.
31. The national guidelines for teaching literacy and numeracy have been implemented successfully in Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers provide pupils with interesting lessons drawn from them. In other subjects the curriculum is satisfactory though some aspects of some subjects are stronger than others. For example, in science, older pupils undertake a lot of work learning facts but not enough doing practical investigations. In music, junior children spend a lot of time performing in singing but too little time in composing activities. In ICT, insufficient attention is given to developing data handling skills. There are particular strengths in the curriculum as well. The art and design curriculum is rich, with pupils experiencing work using a wide range of media.
32. Teachers make good links between subjects. For example, they use the environment particularly well to cover a lot of ground. Through geography, pupils address social and moral issues such as fox hunting and the impact of building a new tram system. The 'lights, taps, doors team' in each class has responsibility for energy conservation. This links into history and ICT when the local river is studied and computers are used to research information. Art is used to illustrate history when pupils make Egyptian and Victorian masks. More links could be made to promote literacy and numeracy through work in other subjects; for example writing 'newspaper' style reports in history or developing data handling skills through science. Not enough use is made of ICT in handling data in mathematics.

33. The curriculum provided is suitable for all pupils. Those with special needs benefit from particular initiatives such as additional literacy teaching, which provides them with materials and challenge well matched to their needs. This level of challenge is not always achieved in the work given to special needs pupils in class but the high quality of the adult support enables them to succeed. Similarly for more able pupils, the work is sometimes but not always at the right level of challenge. There are inconsistencies between subjects and classes. Sometimes higher achievers are given extension activities but these tend to be 'more of the same' rather than a higher level of challenge to start with.
34. The opportunities provided for pupils to learn outside normal classes are similar to many schools. At different times of year there are clubs for art, music and sport. After school clubs give pupils the opportunity to participate in a range of interesting activities. There is a good range of visits and visitors. A particular strength is the number and variety of residential trips offered to pupils. They can go camping in Year 2, youth hostel in Year 4 and stay in a hotel in Year 6. These visits extend pupils' learning experiences and help develop their personal and social skills. Pupils in the Foundation Stage make frequent use of the area around the school to extend their learning.
35. Useful links are forged with other schools in the same Local Education Authority 'family' as Burford Primary. Recent initiatives include a new PE training session in which staff benefit from the equipment and expertise of staff at the secondary school to which many pupils transfer. A number of links are established with colleges of further education, students attend on work placements and offer new experiences to pupils. Two student literacy volunteers from Nottingham Trent University support pupils' learning in English each week and this helps to consolidate their learning.
36. Pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is a particular strength of the school's provision; it plays a significant role in pupils' personal development. It is very well co-ordinated by the headteacher and another senior staff member and it cleverly links the school's good quality policies on behaviour management, social and moral development and pupils' attitudes to their learning. Much consideration has been given as to how the PSHE programme should be structured and the school's unusual, dual approach works very well. Pupils experience detailed sex education and drugs programmes, they learn about healthy eating and relationships and become increasingly aware of their feelings. At the same time, shorter periods of PSHE are used for pupils to learn through the vehicle of co-operative games playing. This is a privilege, which is sometimes foreshortened if pupils have misbehaved, as they then 'owe' time to their class teacher and become spectators for the first part of the session.
37. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is good overall. Particular strengths of this provision lie in very effective social and moral programmes that combine well with the PSHE and religious education programmes of study.

38. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and comes mainly from religious education and PSHE lessons. That this provision is not stronger is a disappointment, in view of the strong spiritual and moral policy adopted by the school. School staff did not draw up this document and there is no obvious ownership of its aims. Likewise, there is no measurable impact of the policy on what pupils learn or experience. Pupils do have opportunities to reflect on their feelings in religious education and PSHE sessions and the tasks they are set in class or for homework are frequently based on these. Occasionally, pupils marvel at some aspects of the natural world, such as in a Year 2 design and technology lesson where pupils were amazed at the patterns made by the seeds on the inside of a kiwi fruit 'They look like the rays of the sun', observed one boy.
39. Another area of satisfactory provision is pupils' cultural development. Younger children are taught songs and rhymes connected with their local environment, a range of music is used in assembly to improve pupils' understanding of their own cultural background and in some physical education / dance lessons, pupils enjoy learning the intricacies of Morris dancing. In history, for example, pupils study what life was like years ago in Britain at the time of the Victorians and there is some good use of artefacts and educational visits to support their learning. There are insufficient planned opportunities created for pupils to prepare for life in a multicultural society and the school's provision for their development in this area is a weaker aspect. The school has few multicultural resources of its own and pupils do not benefit from more practically based sessions on different cultures and beliefs. Pupils generally struggle to recall facts about other cultures when asked. Inspectors did not find the same degree of evidence in school to support pupils' multicultural education as at the time of the last inspection. For example, a considerable length of time has elapsed since the last trip to a Mosque.
40. All adults promote a very strong moral and social awareness among pupils; indeed, this is one of the strongest features of the school's provision and central to its work on personal development. Staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and they are encouraged to become increasingly independent and self-disciplined. The school uses a very effective behaviour management system and pupils are very clear about what they are allowed to do and what happens when they break the rules. Pupils become increasingly trustworthy as a result and can be counted upon to fulfil any duties conscientiously. The school encourages pupils to support charitable causes and to understand the problems of less fortunate members of the community. Much of the PSHE programme centres on feelings and how people relate best to each other.
41. Very strong relationships are at the heart of what the school achieves and this results in the very effective social development of pupils. Staff are extremely good role models for pupils, combining a healthy work ethic with a friendly, respectful approach. The reward system values pupils' achievements

and staff constantly reinforce good behaviour and effort. Mixed age classes help to promote socialisation across the year groups and pupils often play with older or younger pupils at lunchtimes. The school does not encourage pupils to take enough responsibility for their own learning through well-planned research in lessons or at home and this is an area for development.

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

42. Standards of pastoral care are very high and have improved since the last inspection. Much credit for this is due to the leadership of the headteacher and the commitment he inspires in his staff to provide such standards for all pupils. The atmosphere created is warm and relaxed, yet purposeful. Relationships are strong and pupils feel happy and secure as a result.
43. Procedures for child protection are very good and ensure that pupils or families are always offered appropriate levels of support. The headteacher is designated responsible for this area and he is well supported in his role by the deputy headteacher. Staff are well informed about the procedures to follow and good links are established with outside support agencies.
44. Pupils' health, safety and general well being receives very high priority in school. Accidents are carefully recorded and there are good first aid measures in place. Emergency procedures are practised termly and all staff are aware of their role. A strong feature of the school's pastoral system is the extent to which all adults work together for the good of children in their care. Lunchtime supervisors benefit from exceptionally good guidance from the school. They attend special training sessions. As a result of these sessions, they are able, for example, to consistently maintain the behaviour code in the dining hall and playground. They establish very supportive relationships with pupils and encourage them to maintain the highest levels of fair play and self-control. All members of staff play an equally important role in the guidance and support offered to pupils during their time in school. Teaching assistants, nursery nurses and other support staff combine very effectively with class teachers to ensure pupils are happy and that their individual needs are met. The site manager makes certain that the school is very clean and free of any dangers. He also makes a significant contribution to pupils' extra-curricular experiences, accompanying them on residential and camping trips, supporting their weekly swimming activities. As site manager, he contributes significantly more to children's learning and personal development than is found in most schools.
45. Since the last inspection, the school has worked very hard to promote good attendance among pupils. Although attendance rates are similar to those reported previously, the deputy headteacher expends a large amount of time and energy in monitoring attendance and, as a result, the rate of unauthorised absence has fallen significantly. Staff follow daily procedures carefully and rigorous systems are effective in identifying late or persistent absentees. Staff, and an officer from the education welfare service, follow up unauthorised absentees to good effect. Since the introduction of

computerised attendance registers, the school has been able to monitor pupils' attendance patterns in far more detail and parents are more aware of the importance of regular attendance for their children's learning. However, a small number of families continue to have persistent attendance problems, despite the school's best efforts. Also, a small number of parents still sanction days off 'here and there' for their children, with no real justification, and this slows their learning.

46. Procedures to promote good behaviour are very effective and ensure pupils behave well in all areas of the school. They are particularly well behaved as they move around the building and the very good rapport that lunchtime supervisors strike with pupils ensures that the atmosphere in the dining hall is calm and pleasant. Pupils enjoy the appetising menus carefully prepared by the cook and kitchen staff as they sit and chat to supervisors, staff and friends. The very consistent behaviour management maintained by all staff ensures that pupils have a very clear understanding of adults' high expectations. A system of 'checks' and 'positives' results in pupils' earning reward credits or debits, depending on how well they have behaved and worked. This is a very simple, yet effective, system that everyone understands and respects. As a result, there is an orderly learning environment where pupils work hard and have fun. No instances of unacceptable behaviour were seen during the inspection and parents report that they are very happy with the standards of behaviour in school.
47. Overall, assessment procedures have improved significantly since the last inspection. The school now maintains good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress and personal development. The improvements in the standards pupils achieve by the end of Key Stage 2 prove the success of the current procedures. The assessment coordinator is well organised, gives good support to staff and is engaged in continuing to improve current systems. The school undertakes a detailed analysis of its test results in English, mathematics and science and benefits from the good support offered by the local education authority in this area. For example, the school checks which questions in the science tests children have struggled with and adapts curriculum planning and teaching accordingly. The information gathered helps the school to set clear targets and priorities for its work, based upon solid evidence. For example, as a result of recent test results, extra support has been provided for groups of pupils who need additional help with literacy.
48. Class teachers have good systems for checking how well children are doing in English and mathematics, and these are now helping more pupils make faster progress than was the case at the previous inspection. The school has very recently started to identify the higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 2 and is providing highly focused teaching for these pupils in small groups in English. While these pupils are making very good progress in these sessions, they are not always sufficiently targeted for more challenging work in other English lessons. Procedures for checking progress in science and ICT are not yet as strong as in English and mathematics. They are not as consistent.

The school is aware of this and has begun the process of developing systems and designing assessments to match planned programmes of work in these areas. Assessment procedures in other curriculum areas are more informal and of more limited use, since they do not always provide sufficient information to fully assist in planning the next steps in children's learning.

49. The special educational needs coordinator has a very clear picture of the needs of each individual child in her care. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and realistic targets set. Procedures for tracking the progress of pupils receiving additional literacy support are a particular strength of the school and enable pupils to make up lost ground speedily, as a consequence.
50. Good quality support and guidance is offered to parents of young children as they begin school. A flexible induction system enables parents to visit the school on several occasions. A starter pack is also issued to parents which provides much basic information about what their children should expect at school and how best to support them. This ensures that the vast majority of children settle quickly into school routines and feel comfortable in the school environment. They become familiar with the main school building and are confident enough to perform a song at Harvest Festival in front of the whole school and watched by parents, neighbours and visitors. Staff have a good knowledge of pupils' needs and plan work for them accordingly. This helps them make very good progress.

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

51. As at the time of the last inspection, parents comment favourably in questionnaires and discussions on all aspects of the school. They are very appreciative of the work of the headteacher, staff and governors and support the school's main aim to provide an environment 'in which children can grow and progress in every aspect of their development'. They believe that the teaching is good and most would feel comfortable approaching the school with concerns. Above all, they feel welcome in school. Inspection findings confirm their positive opinions.
52. The headteacher and staff dedicate much effort to good communication with parents. The school prospectus is packed with useful information, although the presentation is rather dull. However, in contrast, newsletters and noticeboards are eye-catching and are generally read by parents. Home-School diaries are used well to provide weekly feedback to parents on how well their children have behaved and to draw attention to any attendance issues. Individual targets for each child are also included and these help parents to understand what teachers are looking for next in their child's work. Effort is taken to ensure no parent feels overwhelmed by the school's expectations. The Home School agreement is a very good example of how to produce an effective, yet simple code by which to work. Examples of possible comments parents can use when signing reading diaries or looking at



homework are on display and ensure that all parents can be part of the process.

53. Parents have a good understanding of what their children can do in school. They are invited to parents' meetings at regular intervals to discuss their children's work. Ongoing dialogue in the home school diaries complements this flow of information on a daily basis. The quality of the annual, written reports to parents is variable. The current format does not provide for each subject to be reported separately and, as a result, some curriculum subjects do not have any coverage. Many of the comments made about subjects such as history, art or design and technology are bland; they tell parents what their children have studied but without the vital information of how well they have achieved. The best reports are very good, full of evaluative comments, particularly for English, mathematics and science and paint a very clear picture for parents of what their children can do and what they need to do next to improve. Links with parents of pupils with special educational needs are good and parents are kept fully informed of the support their children require and the progress they make.
54. Parents have a satisfactory impact on the work of the school, although the contribution they make to their children's learning is variable. Approximately ten helpers come into school regularly to support pupils' learning in the classroom. Many parents accompany pupils on educational visits. This extra adult support helps pupils to get the most out of these visits. Parents are also very supportive of their children's contributions in concerts and assemblies. For instance, over forty parents attended the Year 2 class assembly during the inspection week. They were treated to a rousing assembly based on the theme of 'numbers' whilst a similar number of parents joined in the Harvest Festival service the next day. Support from parents for their children's learning tends to improve as the children grow older. They oversee homework and ensure their children give work in on time. Above all, the vast majority are very supportive of the Home-School agreement and this helps their children to have the right attitudes to school and to make the most of their time there.
55. The school has maintained and built upon the previously reported good provision in this aspect of its work.

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

56. The headteacher is a dedicated, strong and effective leader, who has a clear vision of how the school should be. Since the last inspection, he has continued to build a strong team of staff committed to the development of the school and to providing well for its pupils. With good support from the deputy head, he ensures that all staff and governors share a common purpose, which is focused on raising standards. Governors are supportive of the school and make a good contribution to its development because they are closely involved in its day-to-day work.

57. The headteacher, key staff and governors are now very effective in analysing the school's performance in tests and checking on how well children are doing. They make good use of the information they gather, for example, to ensure that groups of pupils who are struggling in English and maths receive the support they need. This is having a strong impact, for example on those pupils who need extra help with reading and writing. However, the impact on higher attaining pupils has been less strong. The school has recognised this and has recently put a programme in place to provide some group teaching these pupils at Key Stage 2 in English. Good use is also being made of the analysis of test results to set realistic targets for pupil performance in English and maths. More pupils are now meeting the expectations set for them and this is one reason why there is an upward trend in the school's results.
58. The school's systems for checking on its work have developed since the last inspection, with governors and subject leaders taking a much greater part in this. The main priorities for action are identified and set out in a comprehensive school improvement plan. This helps to focus the work of the school in key areas. However, the plan does not always set out the steps that need to be taken towards improvement in enough detail, or spell out clearly enough what the effect of the action will be on teaching and learning. As a result, it is harder for the headteacher, staff and governors to check how successful their actions have been.
59. Teaching quality has improved throughout the school since the last inspection. One reason for this is that the deputy head and some subject leaders are now given time to check on work in their subjects. Along with the headteacher, they observe teachers in the classroom and give them feedback on what they are doing well and what they need to improve. On occasions, the focus of these lesson observations is too general and does not pinpoint sharply enough those aspects of teaching that could be further improved. This makes it more difficult for staff to know exactly what action to take to make teaching that is satisfactory good or that which is good, even better.
60. There is strong leadership and management in important areas of the school's work, which is helping to raise standards. For example, in the Foundation Stage, good leadership has resulted in an improvement in the way the staff in the nursery and reception classes work together. As a result, children in the Foundation Stage get off to a strong start. The management of the school's provision for special educational needs is very good. It underpins the good achievement of these pupils, who are very well supported in class and in small groups.
61. The governing body does its job well. Governors are well informed about the school. This is because they receive high quality information from the headteacher and key staff. It is also a result of the extensive planned programme of work they undertake in checking on the work of the school for themselves. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection and as a result, they now have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are actively involved in decision making and

successfully apply best value principles. For example, they compare their school's performance with national standards as well as with schools of a similar kind. They check the value they get from the services they buy and discuss different cost options. However, the governing body does not fulfil all its statutory responsibilities. For example, reports to parents do not contain all the required information and the Annual Report for Parents does not contain the school's targets for English and mathematics.

62. The arrangements for performance management are developing well. This is because the school has built well on its previous well-established systems for staff development. The systems for helping new teachers settle into school are very good. New entrants to the profession, in particular, are given high quality help and support from other staff and clear guidance on what areas they need to improve. This helps them develop very quickly and ensures that pupils benefit, as a result.
63. The school is well staffed to carry out its day to day work and implement new initiatives, such as providing time for the special needs coordinator to track pupils' progress and work with small groups of more able pupils. Support staff make a very significant contribution to the work of the school. They play a vital role for example, in supporting those children who have difficulties with reading and writing.
64. Resources are generally good. However, more library books are needed to enable children to use their research skills sufficiently well. There are not enough computers in school and as a result, children have insufficient opportunities to practice their skills in this area.
65. The site-manager undertakes his role very effectively. He takes great pride in ensuring that the building is clean and well maintained. He also takes a full part in the life of the school, for example by accompanying teachers and pupils on educational visits.
66. The school budget is managed very effectively. Specific funds are used very well to support the priorities for improvement. For example, funds have been made available to enable two teachers to work together to teach literacy, numeracy and science to Year 6 pupils. This is helping in the drive to raise standards. The office staff are very efficient. They manage the day-to-day administration of the school very well. This enables teachers to concentrate on their work with few disruptions.
67. Burford has continued to improve since its last inspection. Its results and the quality of its teaching and learning are improving. Given this upward trend and the strong commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors, it has the capacity to continue this improvement. The school is giving good value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

68. The headteacher, staff and governors should now raise pupils' standards and rate of achievement by:

a) Giving them more opportunities to develop their skills in:

- investigative science for older pupils;
- problem solving and investigations in maths;
- speaking;
- library and research skills across the curriculum;
- numeracy in other subject areas.

(paragraphs 5, 6, 7, 28, 29, 32, 64, 95, 97, 103, 106, 109, 114, 118)

b) Improving the challenge to higher attaining pupils, particularly in mathematics throughout the school, in English at Key Stage 2, and in science at Key Stage 1

(paragraphs 5, 27, 29, 33, 48, 94, 100, 108, 114, 117)

c) Improving the quality of teachers' marking

(paragraphs 26, 100, 108, 137, 143)

d) Improving the quality of pupils' recording and presentation

(paragraphs 98, 99, 106, 137, 143, 167, 168)

The governors might also consider the following minor issues for inclusion within the action plan:

- i. to provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures;  
(paragraphs 39)
- ii. to ensure all statutory responsibilities are fulfilled;  
(paragraphs 53)
- iii. to improve the quality of information for parents;  
(paragraphs 59, 61)
- iv. to evaluate teaching more sharply.  
(paragraphs 102, 110, 121)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	15	22	15	2	0	0
Percentage	0	28	41	28	3	0	0

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

### 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)	22	225
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	119

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	97

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	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	5.9	School data	1.0
National comparative data	5.2	National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	15	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	8	10
	Girls	11	15	15
	Total	21]	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (54 )	76 (73)	86 (53)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	6
	Girls	15	15	13
	Total	25	25	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (63)	86 (53)	66 (50)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	19	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	12	12
	Girls	9	10	14
	Total	16	22	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	47 (44)	65 (47)	77 (65)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	9	10
	Girls	6	9	11
	Total	12	18	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	35 (35)	53 (47)	62 (47)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (89)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	21
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	182
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*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	5	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)	9.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26:1
Average class size	28.1

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

Total number of education support staff	5.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	174

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Total number of education support staff	3.4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	45
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.3:1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	570790
Total expenditure	579827
Expenditure per pupil	2377
Balance brought forward from previous year	46295
Balance carried forward to next year	37258

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

246

Number of questionnaires returned

38

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	34	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	26	8	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	50	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	55	34	3	8	0
The teaching is good.	71	16	5	3	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	71	16	11	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	18	5	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	16	0	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	71	18	8	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	82	16	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	24	3	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	45	11	3	8

### **Summary of parents' and carers' responses**

Parents and carers feel that the school is well led and managed and that teaching is good. They feel that their children like school and teachers expect them to work hard. A small percentage would like more information on their children's progress and would like the school to provide more activities for pupils outside lessons.



## **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**

69. Children get off to a strong start in the Foundation Stage. All groups of pupils in both the nursery and reception classes make very good progress in all the areas of learning, as a result of very good teaching. Teachers and support staff provide activities that interest and challenge them at the right level and because they are encouraged to achieve from the moment they start school. This stage of learning is a strength of the school. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection. Nursery children got a good start then, but provision is even better now. The main improvement is in the better links that exist between the nursery and reception, which now operate to the same principles.
70. Children enter the nursery after their third birthday and transfer into the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five. As a result, some will have longer than others in the reception class before moving on to Key Stage 1. The school ensures that all children get a fair deal by making sure that they are given activities and tasks that match their developing ability no matter whether they are in the nursery or reception class. This is achieved through careful planning by the two teachers with a valuable contribution by the teaching assistant who is highly skilled and plays a very full part in the success of this stage of learning. Joint activities in which reception children join the nursery to take advantage of their outdoor facilities, help to make the most of Foundation Stage resources for the benefit of all children. Those nursery children who are approaching the stage where they will be transferring to the reception class join their older peers for literacy and numeracy lessons. This enables them to get off to a good start in the types of English and mathematics activities that are geared to preparing the children for the approaches that will be used in Key Stage 1. The children are ready for this introduction to the literacy and numeracy strategies and these good links between the two Foundation Stage classes help them to progress at a very good pace.
71. When they enter the nursery, children's attainment overall is very low, particularly in the area of their language and communication skills. Many have very limited vocabulary and some have very little confidence to mix with other children. There are a few children with more average attainment, but those who have a lot of ground to make up outnumber them. Although the majority of children enter the reception class with attainment that is still below and in some cases well below average, they have nevertheless made very good progress in the nursery from their starting points. By the time they leave the reception class, almost all children are on course to reach the expected levels of attainment known as the Early Learning Goals in the areas of creative and physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical development and social and emotional development. In the area of language, literacy and communication, most are on track to reach

the expected level, but the proportion is smaller, reflecting the very limited experience that many bring to school in this area. Overall, the progress made across all the areas of learning is very good for boys and girls of all abilities.

72. In the Foundation Stage, teachers are in the process of changing their method of assessing children's progress. They have begun a system of pupil tracking which gives detailed notes from direct observation on children's aptitudes and behaviour patterns. These lead to summaries of their stage of development and recommendations of where to challenge them next in their learning. It is this detailed knowledge of the children that allows all staff, including the teaching assistant to offer a good level of challenge to all children. This results in the few more able children being pushed along. At the other end of the spectrum, it also enables staff to give a child with more severe learning problems the support he needs to allow him full participation in all activities through well-judged guidance and encouragement.

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

73. This area is given a high priority in both the nursery and reception class. As soon as children start in nursery they are encouraged to become more independent, learning routines and making decisions over which activity they will start the day with. They begin to build their sense of personal responsibility by undertaking simple tasks such as registering their attendance through selecting their nametag and attaching it to their milk carton in readiness for their break. For some children who have limited confidence to join their peers, the nursery takes a very flexible approach, encouraging parents to work alongside their children until they have settled to their tasks and are happy to be left.
74. Teaching in this aspect of learning is very good in both classes because staff are constantly alert for opportunities to build children's social skills and get them to relate well to each other. For example, in one morning discussion time, the teaching assistant introduced a soft toy called 'Peter the rabbit' and asked the children to introduce themselves to it one by one. This was followed up by Peter asking her about their families and thus another round of speaking began as he was passed around the children who told him who lived in their house. This type of activity raises their confidence to speak in front of others and teaches them to give attention to each other. Passing a hug around the circle further strengthened the feeling in the children that they now belong to a group and need to look after each other and think about what others need.
75. In reception, staff continue to build well upon the development in the nursery so that children continue to make very good progress. Working as a group with a parachute for instance, the children are challenged to work co-operatively as they raise and lower it, swap places underneath its canopy, or play catching games around its circumference. Working together and selecting partners for these games activities helps to teach them the importance of including everyone in their play, regardless of aptitude or

problems. High expectations of the children are evident as they are expected to become more self-reliant in their work. For example, a child asking for help with a task was reminded of the class rule by the teacher who asked 'Have you remembered to ask a friend for help first before you come to me?' This drive to develop independence is supplemented by a continual emphasis upon praise when children achieve well. The allocation of 'Positives' as a reward for effort or attainment along with regular comments such as 'You star!' encourages the children to work hard, follow the class rules and show initiative in their activities.

### **Communication language and literacy**

76. Children progress very well in this area of learning with the majority starting from a very low base. Most have a limited range of words on entry and many are hesitant to engage adults or other children in conversation, using mostly short phrases or one-word responses. Very good teaching in both classes helps all the children to extend their speaking and listening skills and prepares them well for early reading and writing activity. For example, in the nursery, the role-play area is set up as a hairdressers and children are encouraged to make phone calls to book appointments, record bookings on paper or send out letters in envelopes to customers. These activities give pupils planned opportunities to develop their speaking skills, with a clear purpose. They also help them to realise the place that writing plays in everyday lives and give them an opportunity to have a go at mark making without being afraid of making mistakes. However, by the end of the reception class, despite the good progress made, fewer children will meet the expected standards than in the other areas of learning. For a significant number, speaking skills remain a weaker area, despite the good teaching they receive.
77. In both the nursery and reception, staff read short stories well, using big versions of simple storybooks that give the children something to see as well as listen to. Their interest is engaged and they become used to finding their way around books, learning about the job of author and illustrator for example. In the nursery, books such as 'Just for Jasper' are used well to lead the children to recognition of letters and their sounds. All those whose names had the initial letter 'J', for example were able to spot the connection.
78. As reception children become used to sharing books in the book corner, they are beginning to recognise key words that are frequently used. Most have at least one favourite book and some are very familiar with the plot or characters in it, reading along from memory as the pages are turned and connecting the pictures with the story events as they unfold. Particular letter sounds are learned and children are able to recognise an increasing number of letter shapes. They also learn blends of letters such as 'ch' by being shown collections of words that use the blend. Singing rhymes such as 'Children chewing chocolate' reinforce their knowledge of these. Good teaching lets few opportunities pass to challenge children. For example, the teacher picked on the word 'said' during a reading session and asked a child to spot how

many of its letters also featured in his name. After some thought he decided correctly that there were two.

79. Writing skills are developed effectively as children make their own books on themes such as 'Me as a baby.' One or two children are able to attempt their own simple captions to go with the photographs they have stuck in, but most are at the stage of telling the teacher what they wish her to scribe for them. Some are then able to copy this underneath and most are able to read it back later. Children who have been identified as having particular difficulties are often placed on the first stage of the special needs register, often for problems with language or social skills. Staff make a very effective effort to meet these children's needs, talking with them at an appropriate level, boosting their self esteem with well chosen comments and ensuring that they always have sufficient support to enable them to participate successfully in all the nursery and reception activities.

### **Mathematical development.**

80. Children in both classes make very good headway in their mathematical learning in response to very good teaching. At the beginning of the year, their knowledge in this area, although below average, is better than in language and social skills. By the time they are in reception, almost all are well on course to achieve the expected level and one or two will exceed it.
81. The nursery and reception classes are well resourced with equipment to help the children become familiar with numbers and shapes. Staff use these skilfully together with teaching aids they have made themselves to help children make rapid progress. In the nursery for example, children learn to count up to ten and often beyond. They add a shiny shape with a Velcro patch to the class block graph on boys and girls attendance whenever they arrive for a session. Adults enquire how many are now in and the children quickly run up the graph with their finger to arrive at an answer. In the reception class, very good teaching helps to extend the children's number skills. They are expected to become familiar with a number line from 0 to 20. The teacher has a 'number of the day' and focuses the children's attention on where it comes in the line. They pick up on the number sequences very quickly and most can say for example, where the number 17 would fit into the sequence. They can also recognise which numbers came before and after it. Very useful homework ideas in reception are addressed to parents on laminated cards and staff are good at encouraging them to work with their children on simple number rhymes such as 'Ten green bottles' or on activities such as counting spoons or buttons. This helps the children to become familiar with basic numbers quickly and enables the teacher to move on to higher challenges.
82. Progress is equally good in recognising basic shapes and colours. The computer is used well to help children become familiar with these, as they use their mouse skills in the nursery to dress Teddy in a large yellow coat or small red boots. In reception, more difficult challenges are available, and

some children are very adept at selecting from menus on the screen to create objects that match three criteria such as a medium sized blue triangle. The secret of their successful learning in mathematics is that teachers have made it fun to learn. The games and songs that children pick up so quickly are teaching them the basic building blocks of mathematics very effectively. The teachers are also skilled at providing activities that match the children's stage of development. For example, whilst some are happy to write figures without help, those with more challenging learning difficulties appreciate the support of having for instance, 8 pieces of play dough available to help them to count up to eight without losing their place.

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

83. Most children make very good progress from a low starting point in this area of learning because good teaching in both classes provides them with interesting activities. This helps raise their level of insight into aspects of scientific and geographical knowledge and helps them to understand their own place in the world. The aspect, which they find most challenging, is that of explaining and communicating their experiences to adults and to their friends, although for most this improves significantly as they move through the Foundation Stage.
84. Nursery and reception children often join together to learn in this area. For example, as part of their learning about babies and what they need and how they grow and change, a mother volunteered to bring a young baby into the nursery to be bathed and changed. The children were very attentive as she explained what the baby needed to be made comfortable, and they learned the importance of being gentle with a very young child and of keeping her warm and dry. Both classes followed up this experience with the opportunity to show that they had understood what to do, by bathing dolls in the water tray and using talc and nappies to make the 'babies' comfortable. Their understanding of growth was further reinforced when the teachers used photographs of the children as babies as a focus of discussion about how they had changed. When the nursery teaching assistant asked a child 'Why were you in a push chair in the photo?' he replied by explaining that he couldn't walk as a baby but he could now. The rest agreed and the teacher went on to get them to spot other common differences between then and now, such as longer hair and more teeth.
85. Understanding of their environment is a strength of the programme in this area. Visiting a local café and a supermarket gives them an insight into how people shop and how some earn their living in the local area. The children also make visits to the nearby park with the specific intention of observing the changes as autumn arrives. In the nursery they use their miniature figures and buildings to create a village and draw its roads on to large sheets of paper. This gives them an understanding of how settlements are made up and allows them to develop their early ideas of direction and scale. In reception, children regularly chart up changes in the weather during the day, which helps not only their awareness of their daily environment, but also their

ability to show initiative. In their computer skills, most children in both classes show that they can operate basic programs to help develop skills such as number and reasoning. There are occasions when some children need more assistance with less familiar software in order to make the most of their time at the computer.

### **Creative development**

86. Teaching is very good, overall and as a result, most children are on track to achieve expected levels of attainment in most aspects of creative development, such as music and art. The level of imagination and inventiveness they are able to show in their role play activities, however, is behind that which would normally be expected. This is due to the limited vocabulary and speaking skills with which many pupils enter school. Good progress is made, as a result of good resources, well-planned opportunities and skilful teaching, but by the end of the foundation stage, many children still have a lot of ground to make up.
87. In the nursery, children have made and decorated their own musical instruments. Painting is a regular feature of the day and children paint boldly and with confidence. They have not yet mixed their own colours but use brushes well as they try to paint familiar images such as their families, pets or homes. Those with better language skills construct rooms from the miniature furniture and characters known as 'small world' and develop stories and situations together as they play. Others also like to play with the small figures, but sometimes they create their own scenarios in silence if they have not yet developed the confidence to interact sufficiently with friends. Reception children have used a computer program to create their own pictures and designs and print them out for display as well as making pictures of their own in paint or other media. They also make models of vehicles or space ships using cardboard boxes, glue and paint. The children themselves do much of this work, and adults are very good at stepping back just enough to be able to offer support if needed but not superimpose their ideas on the children.
88. Children in both classes sing well for their age and are good at remembering the words and tunes of simple songs and rhymes. Some of these are dual-purpose songs, teaching the children other concepts as well as the musical content. For example, in the harvest festival the two classes sang together with a mathematical countdown song about having five potatoes and digging them up one by one until there were none left.

### **Physical development**

89. In this area, children do well. Unlike in the other areas of learning, most are broadly average when they enter school, and are on course to reach the expected level by the end of reception, with several exceeding it. Again the teaching is very good and children in both classes benefit from being challenged in both their manipulative skills and larger movement activities.

90. Children are presented with a range of small-scale activities, which challenge them to develop their fingertip control. For example, they fit often quite difficult jigsaws together, or thread wool through punched holes as they make small soft toys. Building with construction kits or large wooden blocks helps them develop co-ordination as they balance them to make a tall wall in the reception class for example. Cutting and sticking activities also help develop children's manual skills as they make their own collages from a variety of materials.
91. In their outdoor play, the classes often join together, but are given opportunities to work at their own level as they steer trikes and other wheeled vehicles around the nursery path, or use the climbing frame and slide. In their indoor physical education session, reception children show good control and balance as they demonstrate different ways of moving along a balance beam or sloping bench. On the floor mat, children show good levels of skill as they perform rolls, with a few more confident children executing a full forward roll to a very high standard under supervision from the teacher.

## **ENGLISH**

92. In recent years, test results for pupils aged 7 and 11 years in English show that standards have been well below national averages, and in some years have been in the bottom five per cent of schools in the country. At both 7 and 11, pupils have not performed as well as those in similar schools. At age 7, pupils have performed better in writing than they have in reading, against the national picture. Throughout the school, standards are better in listening than they are in speaking.
93. There are significant factors that influence the school's national test results for English. One is that thirty seven per cent of pupils in school have special educational needs, including many with language difficulties. Although the school provides very well for these pupils in English and they achieve well in relation to their difficulties, many do not reach the expected standards. Also, many pupils who join the school in nursery have well below average language skills and despite very good teaching, some have not made up lost ground by the end of the reception class. Despite these factors, the school has worked hard to improve standards and the figures for pupils aged 7 and 11 years in 2001, whilst still well below national expectations, show an improvement.
94. Improvements in teaching since the last inspection are resulting in a better pace of learning for many pupils and achievement in both key stages in reading and writing is now good. The introduction of the literacy hour has been beneficial in raising standards, for example by ensuring that children are taught letter sounds and spelling patterns systematically.
95. Special needs pupils achieve well because of the very good support they receive, both in small groups and in class. They have detailed individual

educational plans and their progress is carefully monitored, especially in reading. For pupils following the national 'catch-up' programme, graphs mapping their progress are drawn up so that teachers can see at a glance how well the children are doing and identify any unexpected dips in performance. When taught English in small groups, more able pupils make sharp progress because the work is very well matched to their needs. However, the achievement of these pupils in class lessons is not always as good as it could be, because they are not always challenged sufficiently well.

96. For pupils aged 7 and 11, speaking skills are below average. Despite achieving well in the Foundation Stage, from a very low starting point, a significant number of pupils enter Year 1 with speaking skills which are still below average for pupils of their age. Many find it difficult to express their thoughts and ideas in a sustained manner and a significant number find it difficult to converse freely with an adult. By the age of 7, there has been some improvement and pupils' vocabulary is developing at a satisfactory rate, due to teachers' efforts in this area. Some pupils are becoming confident enough to share their ideas with the class and are beginning to answer questions about the stories they have read. However, often these answers are still limited to one or two words or short phrases and teachers do not always take the opportunity to encourage children to extend these further. By the age of 11, although satisfactory progress has been made, many pupils still find it difficult to extend their answers to questions beyond one or two sentences and some still lack confidence in talking to adults. Although more opportunities are planned for children to develop their speaking skills than at the time of the last inspection, for example through the debate of subjects such as fox hunting, these are still not systematic enough to allow children to develop their skills year on year. Opportunities are also missed to develop pupils' speaking skills for example, through taking a more regular part in assemblies. Listening skills are better and standards are average in this area by the time pupils leave the school. This is a direct result of good teaching and high expectations in lessons. All pupils are encouraged to listen carefully to their teachers, for example during introductions to lessons. This helps them focus well on their learning. From the earliest stages, pupils are encouraged to take turns to speak and value each other's responses, through listening politely. Most rise to the challenge, particularly in the shared sections of literacy lessons.
97. Standards in reading are improving throughout the school from a low starting point and achievement is good at both key stages. In the infant classes, pupils are keen to learn how to read and spell the words that appear most frequently in their reading books. They respond well to books and stories. They recognise the main features of books, such as the title and are able to identify authors and illustrators, explaining what they do. Teachers use carefully chosen 'big books' well to help children learn to read in the literacy hour. Pupils develop their skills at a good rate because teachers usually provide a good example for them, by reading aloud with enthusiasm and expression to show them how it is done. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher read 'Six Dinner Sid' and kept the children enthralled by his use of



different voices and expression. Pupils learn new words and spelling rules on a regular basis. They are taught systematically how to build words and work out what they mean. By age 7, most pupils can read a simple text independently and the more able pupils can answer questions that ask them to predict what might happen next in the story.

98. This good progress in Key Stage 1 is sustained throughout Key Stage 2. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are able to identify verbs and adverbs in the texts they read. They also make good attempts at reading quite difficult unfamiliar words, using and building on the strategies they have learned in the infants. Higher attaining pupils in Year 4 working with a teacher in a small group were successful in changing regular and irregular verbs in a poem from the present to the past tense. This difficult task was completed well because of skilled and focused teaching. However, in class lessons, although teachers challenge these pupils appropriately through the questions they pose to them, for example in shared reading sessions, they do not always give them tasks that stretch them to the limit. By Year 4, most pupils are able to read fluently, understand what they have read and predict what will happen next. The more able pupils are able to locate information in non-fiction books and talk about authors they like. By Year 6, most pupils have developed these skills further. They read a wider variety of books and can recognise and appreciate some of the literacy skills used by authors and poets to enliven their writing. For example, most pupils can demonstrate their understanding of personification, simile and metaphor by including some of these when writing their own poetry. However, pupils do not develop some of the higher reading skills, such as working out from the text how a character might act, at a fast enough rate to enable them to answer these questions well in the tests. Throughout the school, pupils learn how to make satisfactory use of a dictionary and a thesaurus. However there are insufficient books in the school libraries and pupils are not taught library and research skills systematically enough throughout the school. Research is sometimes from books chosen for them and they copy out 'chunks' rather than reorganising the information in different ways. This slows their learning in other subjects, such as history and limits independent learning, particularly for the more able pupils because they are not always challenged appropriately by the research tasks given.
99. Standards in writing are also improving throughout the school and achievement is good overall. At Key Stage 1, attainment in writing has been better than reading in recent years. This is largely because of the skill and enthusiasm of the teachers in this area. The approach to creative writing and in particular, poetry catches pupils' interest and develops their skills well. They learn by having the opportunity to become poets and authors themselves. This has a beneficial effect on the more able pupils in particular. Good links are made between reading and writing. This helps pupils start to appreciate the needs of an audience and to understand, for example, how authors use words for effect. By age 7, most pupils can write sentences correctly and are becoming more aware of the need to use capital letters and full stops. More able pupils extend their sentences by joining phrases with

'and' and 'because'. They are beginning to enliven their writing by using descriptive words. Whilst handwriting is usually clear and the letters correctly formed, not enough attention is paid to presentation of work and as a result, work is not as neat and tidy as it could be.

100. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress with their writing, although by age 11, writing is not as strong as reading. However, writing continues to be taught well in most classes. For example, in the Year 4/5 class, pupils made a good attempt at writing humorous poetry in response to 'The Owl and the Pussycat'. Good teaching enabled pupils to come up with phrases in their own poetry such as, '...in a bright pink limousine'. Opportunities were given in this lesson for pupils to re-draft the teacher's work and also their own. Teachers ensure that enough time is devoted to developing pupils' skills. They also give pupils satisfactory opportunities to write in other subject areas, such as history, although these could be extended further, for example by pupils writing newspaper reports and letters. Almost all pupils in these year groups now use joined writing and their handwriting skills are average by the end of the key stage. As at Key Stage 1, pupils do not give enough attention to the presentation of their work because teachers do not always set clear expectations for them in this area and accept work which is not as neat and careful as it might be.
101. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall. In the best lessons, teachers are skilled at teaching both reading and writing. For example, in a Year 4/5 class, the teacher chose a book at a good level of challenge for the reading group she was working with. She used questions well to help the pupils draw out the meaning from the text. As a result, good progress was made. Lessons are well planned and structured and teachers make it very clear to the pupils what they want them to learn. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher explained what he expected them to learn at each stage in a lesson related to the book 'Six Dinner Sid'. By the end of the lesson, most children could clearly explain what they had achieved. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and manage them well. This helps them to concentrate on their work and make best use of lesson time. In most English lessons, teachers use questioning well to find out what children already know or to encourage them to think more deeply. Teachers plan the work of classroom assistants well, to ensure that pupils with special educational needs can understand and follow the main teaching points and complete their work. In some lessons, at Key Stage 2, teachers miss opportunities to challenge the more able pupils as deeply as they could. Occasionally, the first task they are given is well within their capabilities and they finish this quickly. They are given extra tasks to do, but these are sometimes 'more of the same' rather than a harder activity. In almost all classes, marking is a weakness. It is not used effectively enough to guide pupils' learning because teachers do not always make it clear in their marking how pupils can improve the standard of their work.
102. Good use is made of computers in English to support pupils with special educational needs. They often work on spelling programmes, for example,

supported by classroom assistants. However, there are too few computers to ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to practice their ICT skills in English lessons.

103. The two English coordinators lead the subject well. During the past year, with the support of the Head and the Literacy Governor, and the co-operation of the rest of the staff they have made considerable improvements in the curriculum for English. There is a new English policy in place and the principles and framework of the National Literacy Strategy are firmly embedded. The coordinators monitor all plans for teaching English and provide effective advice and support for the rest of the staff. Although some monitoring of teaching has taken place, lesson observations need to be more clearly focused to identify the points that make the difference between a satisfactory and a very good lesson.
104. The coordinators are aware of the deficiencies of the school library. They have been working with the school library service to address these. There are gaps in the library stock especially at Key Stage 2, particularly with regard to books reflecting other cultures and faiths, other languages, art and music. This limits the opportunities for children to undertake their own research.

## **MATHEMATICS**

105. Standards in mathematics are rising throughout the school. The most dramatic improvement is to be found in Key Stage 1 because this is where standards have been lowest. A look back over test results shows that in 1997 only 2 in 5 pupils were reaching the expected level at seven. In the most recent tests in 2001, this had risen to more than 4 out of 5. In Key Stage 2, steady improvement has been maintained since the previous inspection and the good teaching has been sustained. Pupils were already doing better in this key stage and they have continued to make good progress. Standards overall are not as high as they are in most schools nationally but they are closer than at any time in the past. Pupils in both key stages are now doing well in comparison with those in schools of a similar background.
106. There are a number of reasons why standards are rising. The unsatisfactory teaching seen in Key Stage 1 during the previous inspection is no longer present and teachers are clear as to what they want the pupils to learn in lessons. They have become more confident in teaching numeracy in the nationally recommended way, partly through good support and training by the local education authority numeracy consultant. Also with the help of the local education authority, the school has become much better at looking at its test results and working out which types of question pupils find most difficult to answer. From this information it has made changes to teaching and to the curriculum; for example it is teaching some elements of data handling earlier. More is beginning to be done in using this information to set targets for individuals and different groups of pupils, though this work still has some way to go to achieve the fullest impact, particularly on more able pupils.

107. Pupils' achievement is best in their number work and in their understanding of shape, space and measures. The school has already identified a need to give more attention to developing pupils' abilities to collect, present and use data. However, giving pupils more time to work in this area will not lead to higher standards unless teachers raise their own expectations. For example, in the work pupils undertook during last year, graphs were often judged acceptable when drawn inaccurately and without the axes being properly labelled. There is also too little use of ICT to support work in this aspect. Pupils achieve sufficiently well in using and applying their mathematics skills though more able pupils could be challenged more. For example, older high achieving pupils are given many worksheets through which they reinforce and use their existing knowledge to answer problems. However they are not given enough investigative challenges that require them to work out for themselves how to solve problems rather than just doing them.
108. Mathematics is largely taught well in both key stages though one lesson seen was unsatisfactory. This was because the pace of the lesson was too slow and the work given to the pupils, which was the same for all, was too difficult for many. There were good features in all the other lessons observed and some very good teaching was seen in the lower junior classes. Sharing the objectives of the lesson with the pupils is now a common feature of the teaching, so pupils are usually clear what it is they are expected to know or be able to do by the end. Where this worked best was when the teacher shared the objective in language the pupils could easily understand and came back to it at the end to see if it had been achieved. Teachers give good attention to developing pupils' mathematical language. They are encouraged to use terms such as 'digit' or 'vertices' and many can do so by Year 2. As they move through Year 3, teachers ask questions like, 'What's an easy way of saying vertices?' to ensure that they also understand the meaning of the word. Teachers use questions well. Where this is done best, different year groups within a class or pupils of differing abilities are asked harder or easier questions. During oral and mental work this allows for all pupils to be challenged at the right level so they make best progress. Teachers make good use of resources such as laminated boards for pupils to write their answers on during question and answer sessions. This ensures all pupils can take a full part in answering and that the teacher can easily see who is successful and who is struggling to understand.
109. Pupils with special needs achieve well in most lessons, particularly when classroom assistants, who are very skilled in their work, support them. This often enables them to succeed in completing the same tasks as their classmates. However, there are times when pupils who find learning difficult do not have additional support and at such times the work they are given can be too hard. On the other hand, higher attaining pupils are not always challenged to go the extra mile, in all parts of the lesson. Sometimes they are given extension work after completing the basic class task but this tends to be more of the same rather than work at a higher level. At other times they are expected to work more independently but if the task is not hard enough they can become bored. This inconsistency in some lessons in ensuring

pupils always have work at the right level of difficulty is a weakness. Another aspect of teaching which has shown some improvement early this year but which is still weak is marking of children's work. There are some very good examples of useful guidance to pupils through comments such as 'try this...' or posing further questions for them to answer. However, for lower achieving pupils there are also examples where a string of comments such as 'you have not...' or 'you were meant to...' give no help for the future and simply reinforce failure.

110. One or two examples were seen during the inspection of pupils using numeracy skills in their work in other subjects. A most interesting assembly taken by the pupils in Year 2 had a number theme. It included number rhymes, songs, counting activities, games and putting numbers in order. The pupils clearly enjoyed performing it and took the opportunity with enthusiasm. Also in Year 2, a good link was made to shape when the teacher drew attention to a pineapple as a hexagon and to triangles inside cut oranges. However these occasions are the exception rather than the rule. Overall, not enough opportunities are identified in other subjects to use and consolidate numeracy skills.
111. There is good management of the subject. The coordinators in different key stages are beginning to work closely together, which is important to ensure that new initiatives have the best impact. For example, the contribution of homework to pupils' better achievement varies. A new approach has been implemented in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 that needs to be built on in Key Stage 2 if full value is to be gained from it. Whilst the coordinators have a good knowledge from monitoring of what needs to be improved in the subject, this could be done more sharply. Teaching and learning need to be closely observed to identify the finer points that make the difference between satisfactory and very good.

## **SCIENCE**

112. Inspection findings show that standards in science are below the national average at the end of both key stages, but despite this, the picture is one of continuing improvement. This is particularly so at Key Stage 2, where the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level has risen over the last four years.
113. Performance in the most recent national tests in 2001 is now average at Key Stage 2 and well above that in schools in similar circumstances. In terms of the proportion of pupils who manage to reach the higher level 5 in their tests, the school is also well above average compared with these similar schools.
114. This picture is much better than at the time of the last inspection. Progress for pupils in Key Stage 1 was then unsatisfactory and it is now judged to be satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, the previously satisfactory progress has now improved and most pupils make good progress. Teaching has also improved across the school and is now good overall.

115. Although the results show very good improvement by the time the pupils leave, there are still strengths and weaknesses in their attainment. On the positive side, most pupils are building up a good range of knowledge across the three main areas of science; life processes, materials and physical processes. It is in these aspects of the subject that improvements have raised the school's overall performance, because these are the areas that are most tested at age 11. There is one area where pupils don't do as well as they should. This is in developing the investigative skills they need to become young scientists. Although children undertake practical experiments, their work shows that some of these are done to demonstrate what most already know or have been told rather than to discover new knowledge for themselves and push forward their understanding. There is not enough opportunity, particularly for more able pupils, to extend their practical skills of investigation to the limit. During their practical work, they need to be asked more questions such as 'What else do you think you could find out?' or 'How could you devise a test to find out?'
116. In Key Stage 1, pupils' work shows that they have a good understanding of topics such as plants and animals, describing for example, how creatures such as tadpoles change size and shape as they grow. No lessons were seen in this key stage, but workbooks indicate that teachers are helping pupils to record their knowledge in different ways, such as through tables or diagrams. They also have opportunities to set out their experiences of first hand observation, such as when they describe how different senses reacted to exploring a banana which felt 'cold and hard to touch,' 'wet and soggy' to taste and 'nice and ripe' to smell. In Year 2, they get the chance to predict which plants might be found in the school grounds before exploring to check the accuracy of their ideas. Teachers also plan lessons that set new concepts in contexts that are more familiar to the children. For example, they learn about changes of shape due to the application of forces by squashing play dough, or about changes of materials due to heat by talking about bread turning to toast. This helps them to grasp new ideas because they are explained in terms that are within the children's own experience.
117. What is not yet happening, is stretching the few pupils who are more able than most by introducing higher level work at the top of the key stage, or expecting them to go into more depth in their investigations through answering questions such as 'Why do you think that happens?'
118. At Key Stage 2, there is some good and very good teaching, which is helping pupils to progress at a good rate. In the younger mixed age Year 3 / 4 classes for example, pupils are learning about the way electrical power operates in a circuit. The teachers set a very clear aim for their lessons, telling the pupils that they were going to investigate whether it was correct to say that 'Bulbs will always be the same brightness, no matter how many there are.' Pupils had good resources to set up a series of tests and good guidance to help them record their findings. The teachers led them skilfully towards the conclusion that the statement was wrong, by returning to answer the original

question at the summary session at the end of the lesson. Most pupils made very good progress in their understanding. However, an opportunity was lost to fully challenge the most able by asking them to draw their own conclusion with less support or to take the investigation further by finding a different way to wire the circuit so that the statement might be more accurate. In Year 6, the curriculum has a different emphasis with more time being devoted to developing and revising pupils' knowledge and understanding. This drive to improve pupils' recall of information in preparation for the national tests at 11 has been responsible in part for raising the schools' performance. Lessons are taught well. Efficient teaching with well-chosen resources and effective questioning to establish pupils' prior understanding helps pupils to make good progress. For example, the question 'In what ways do animals adapt to their habitat or environment?' established that some pupils did not understand the term 'adapt'. The teacher was then able to revise the term and move the lesson on to the next stage. The lesson moved at a good pace, introducing plenty of new knowledge and challenging pupils to record their ideas quickly. This prevented them becoming bored and kept them engaged in the learning. Good use of homework helped the pupils to complete their tasks in time to extend their learning in the next lesson.

119. Despite these useful experiences, older children need a better balance. Although they get good experiences of first hand observation during trips to places such as Scarborough, they need more opportunities to undertake practical investigations in order to develop their skills of finding out.
120. A real strength in many science lessons is the way in which pupils with special educational needs are helped in their learning. Skilled and highly focused support from teaching assistants keeps the pupils on track. Showing them how to record their findings enabled them to keep up with the pace of the lesson and achieve as much as the others in the class.
121. An aspect of the subject that needs developing is the way pupils' progress and learning is assessed. There are several approaches being used at the moment. These include observation in lessons, occasional end of unit assessments and end of key stage tests, but this is not providing a coherent approach. As a result, teachers do not always find it easy enough to judge how much pupils know and thus what level of challenge to give them next. The school is aware of this shortcoming and plans are in place to develop a series of assessments to match the activities in the scheme of work. Another aspect that could be developed is the use of computers in science lessons, for example to record results and produce graphs and charts from them.
122. The subject leader has a good grasp of the subject's strengths and development priorities and is leading the subject well. Recent improvements include the detailed analysis of Key Stage 2 national test performance based on good information provided by the local education authority. This is enabling the school to concentrate on those aspects in which pupils have not fared as well. Monitoring of pupils' on going work through sampling their books is useful, but the school has yet to develop the full potential of

observing teachers at work in the subject to ensure that all the features found in the best lessons are spread throughout the school.

123. Overall the picture is an improving one and given the school's current level of insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, it has the capacity to continue this improvement.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

124. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve standards that are above those expected for their age at both key stages. These standards have improved since the previous report.
125. Basic skills are developed systematically as the pupils move through the school. Pupils are given many opportunities to use a range of media such as paint, crayon, tissue, charcoal and pastels. They explore pattern, texture, colour and line. In Year 2, for example, pupils were looking at the patterns that different fruits created when they were cut open. They were learning to observe carefully and sketch details accurately. In Key Stage 2, there is a wide range of artwork displayed. Year 3/4 pupils have created sea view scenes, as if looking through a porthole, using tissue paper and paint. In Years 5/6, pupils have linked their artwork to mathematics. They are able to draw in detail to illustrate tessellations and other symmetrical patterns. They use pencils with good effect to produce line and tone pencil drawings. Throughout the school topic work is well illustrated using a variety of methods. In Year 4/5 pupils have painted good portraits in the style of Picasso.
126. In the lessons seen, the teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to very good, although teaching is judged to be good, overall. The unsatisfactory lesson in Year 1 was because of a lack of organisation and pupils were working with inappropriate materials so that they could not achieve what was expected of them. In the good and very good lessons in Years 3/4 and Year 2, teachers have good expertise. They select stimulating activities to engage pupils' interests and enhance their learning. This motivates the pupils to work hard and produce good results. Lessons are carefully planned to provide pupils with a good range of art experiences.
127. The subject leader manages the subject effectively. She advises colleagues on ideas and techniques and arranges visitors to provide the pupils with expert tuition. Staff are using the nationally recommended guidelines which offer good quality support in planning the curriculum. The subject is well resourced to enable pupils to experience a wide range of materials and media.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**



128. Standards in Design and Technology are average at both key stages and pupils make satisfactory progress. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
129. There were no lessons taking place in Design and Technology during the time of the inspection, so it is not possible to form a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the pupils reported that they enjoyed the practical tasks of designing and making. Their evaluation sheets and design folders show that they have appropriate experience of evaluating their finished products. Photographs and the pupils' completed work show that an appropriate range is covered.
130. At Key Stage 1, pupils follow designs using a variety of materials, and are becoming skilled in handling these. For example, in Year 2, pupils are using scissors to practice cutting carefully. They are also learning methods of joining materials, through using glue and learning how to tie things together. They are becoming competent in cutting, attaching and decorating paper and card and stitching and gluing felt, for example, to make puppets.
131. Pupils build soundly on these skills as they move through the school. In Key Stage 2, a strength is the way in which design and technology is used to enrich the learning in other subjects. For example, Egyptian masks have been designed in Years 3 and in Years 5 and 6, Victorian peg dolls and masks have been made to link with history topics. By Year 6, the pupils have developed a range of techniques to incorporate movement into their work. For example, they make the arms and legs work on the monsters they have designed and made.
132. The coordinator has only recently been appointed and, although she has not yet had the opportunity to promote the raising of standards in the subject, she is proving to be an effective subject leader. She manages the budget well, is putting together a portfolio of pupils' work and has organised resources and information for the staff. The school has adopted the nationally recommended guidelines for the subject and is adapting these to meet the needs of the school. There is an appropriate range of tools, equipment and materials that are organised well and are used to support the learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

133. Standards in both key stages are average and have been maintained since the last inspection. Satisfactory Improvements have been made in the way in which work is planned to ensure that pupils build steadily on their knowledge and skills from year to year. A new nationally recommended scheme has been introduced and this is now giving good guidance to teachers. However, some aspects of geography are not taught in sufficient depth and this limits the attainment of the older pupils, in particular.

134. In both key stages, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. All pupils gain a sound knowledge and understanding of places and of different environments through the planned opportunities each class has to make study visits in their own locality and in places further afield. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils have visited an environmental centre in Sherwood Forest and its surrounding village. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have studied a seaside location at Scarborough, and explored rivers and landscapes in the Derbyshire Dales. As a result of these experiences, younger pupils can compare these locations to their own area of Arnold and talk about features that are similar. They can describe what they like and dislike about each area. Older children are able to describe the important features of the contrasting localities they visit and compare them to Nottingham. These visits enrich all pupils' experiences and deepen their understanding and enjoyment of the subject.
135. Although by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a reasonable understanding of the water cycle and some other physical features such as river estuaries and mountains, their knowledge of the wider world is less secure. Year 6 pupils found it difficult, for example, to identify continents and oceans, or to name capital cities. Mapping skills are also not as well developed as they could be because children do not have sufficient opportunities to practice these.
136. A strong feature of geography is the way in which an awareness of environmental issues is developed. For example, children learn about energy conservation in a practical way, by becoming members of the 'E' Team who are responsible for ensuring lights and taps are switched off and doors are closed to conserve heat. Changes to the local environment, such as the installation of tramlines in Nottingham are also debated.
137. Good use is made of the Internet to research topics such as rivers at Key Stage 2. However, there are not enough computers available to allow all pupils to have experience of this on a regular basis. The use of the library to develop skills of enquiry and research is very limited, because of the numbers of books available. These are supplemented by library loans, but this provides only a partial solution, as children do not have the opportunity to locate books for themselves.
138. During the inspection week, geography was taught only in Key Stage 1 and only one lesson was observed, in the Year 2 class. This was a very good lesson taught by the subject leader. The teacher's expertise in the area was demonstrated through skilled questioning, which helped all groups of children build rapidly on what they already knew. The teacher supported pupils with special educational needs very well in this lesson and as a result, they were able to complete the same work as other pupils. However, a weaker aspect was the follow-up activity planned for the more able pupils. This involved them in a similar activity and did not fully extend and challenge a small number of these pupils. A look through children's work in all classes shows that while presentation is showing some improvement on last year, there is still some way to go. Teachers' marking is also a weakness because it does

not give pupils enough information about how they can improve their work. It is often limited to just a tick at the bottom of the page.

139. The subject leader is providing good direction for the school's work in geography. He has adapted the new scheme so that it more closely meets the needs of the school and is guiding its implementation. He has also developed resources to support the scheme and gives good guidance to his colleagues. He has started to devise ways to check on children's progress in the subject and record this information in a useful way to plan the next steps in learning for children more effectively. As yet, he has not had the opportunity to check on teaching and learning.

## **HISTORY**

140. At both key stages, standards in history are average and pupils achieve at a satisfactory rate, as at the last inspection. By Year 2, pupils have developed a sound understanding of how peoples' lives have changed over time. For example, a visitor to school gave them the opportunity to play with old toys and compare them to their own. They can recall events from their own lives and talk about the lives of some famous people, such as Florence Nightingale.
141. By Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of life in Victorian times. They can describe the work of Dr Barnardo, with interest and enthusiasm, in response to a talk they have had from a visitor to the school. Most pupils have a good understanding of the lives of children in Victorian times and can confidently talk about the clothes they wore and the games they played.
142. A strength in the teaching of history is the way in which links are made with other subject areas. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils have made Egyptian masks, using their art and design technology skills well. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have used their literacy skills to produce interesting fact-files about the Aztecs. Good use has been made of the Internet in the Year 5 and 6 classes to carry out research into the Victorian period. These activities and the visitors into school deepen pupils' understanding and increase their enjoyment and interest in the subject. Visits to places of historical interest, such as the plague village of Eyam, catch pupils' imagination and help them remember what they have learned.
143. A weaker aspect of history is the pupils' understanding of how events relate to one another in time. For example, Year 6 pupils were hazy about the century in which Queen Victoria was born and how long ago the Romans invaded Britain. Also, children have had limited opportunities to use the library for their own research.
144. Teaching in history is satisfactory, overall. Teachers use resources such as photographs and books well to illustrate topics. They use questioning effectively for example, to build on what pupils already know. They have a

good knowledge of the topics they teach. They are enthusiastic about history and this communicates itself well to the pupils. Examples of work on display show that often, history activities are exciting and practical, such as making Victorian peg dolls and designing and making masks. However, in the two lessons observed, skills of historical research could have been developed more effectively. Children were carrying out research from books and information sheets which teachers had provided for them. More able pupils, in particular, could have been challenged further, for example, by focusing their research more sharply and by being expected to present the information in a variety of different ways. Marking in history throughout the school does not give pupils information about how they might improve. The presentation of pupils' work, although showing some improvement this school year, is not a strong feature, with few guidelines being given, for example as to where the date and the title should go.

145. The subject leader has only taken over the role very recently. However, he has made a strong start in analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and prioritising areas for improvement, including the development of procedures for checking on pupils' progress. He is also giving good advice to colleagues about how they can further develop the topics they teach.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

146. The standards at the end of both key stages are similar to those found in most schools. Throughout the school, pupils are keen to learn, concentrate well and handle equipment carefully. They build systematically on skills previously learned and make sound progress.
147. Skills learned in the Foundation Stage are built on and extended steadily in Key Stage 1, so that by Year 2 pupils know how to switch on, load and start programmes. They know how to draw pictures, write and amend their work by deleting. They also know how to save work to their own individual files. Most pupils can find things out, for example, by using a programme called 'The Environment' and can describe how to use the Internet. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to use the computer to control external events, for example by designing programmes to move a floor robot in different directions.
148. By Year 6, most pupils are confident in using a wide range of the functions available to them and can select what they need appropriately for the tasks they undertake. For example, they are able to make a search, find things on a web site, and import pictures and information into their own work. They can correct mistakes and are able to move pictures and text around to achieve their desired effects in layout and presentation. Most are confident in trying to find solutions when they don't achieve the desired results first time and are able to explain the usefulness of technology in modern day life. Computer skills are used, to some degree in history and geography, for example to find information from the Internet. They are also used to practice basic skills in

English. However, pupils do not use the computer frequently enough for analysing data, for example to present findings in science and maths.

149. Teachers and classroom assistants are competent to teach pupils the skills they need and teaching in the lessons seen was good. However, at present, there are too few resources for pupils to practice what they have learned, on a regular basis. An example of this was observed in a class of Year 3 and 4 pupils when the teacher was using an interactive white board to teach word processing skills. The pupils demonstrated their understanding in the answers to the teacher's questions. However, as there was only one desktop and one lap top computer in the room, they were not able to have immediate 'hands-on' experience to practise and consolidate these skills.
150. Computers are used well to support the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs. For instance, a Year 2 pupil was learning to use sign language on the computer. In Year 6, a classroom assistant was helping a group of children with special educational needs to write a poem using a specially designed framework so that they could access the same curriculum as the other pupils in the class. As a result, good progress was made.
151. The subject coordinator is leading the development of the subject well. He is very well qualified for the role and often carries out in-service training for the Local Education Authority. As a result, he is able to give good quality support to his colleagues. The subject has a high priority in the School Development Plan. A new policy was introduced earlier this term and the staff are helping to move the subject forward well by implementing a new scheme of work. Each teacher knows what should be covered in each year group. All members of staff have attended some in-service training, and more is planned. The money allocated to the subject so far has been used wisely. There is a well thought out plan to develop the subject further. There are insufficient computers currently to ensure that children have enough opportunities to use computers regularly to enhance their learning. However, additional resources will be purchased as more funds become available.

## **MUSIC**

152. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average, overall. Older junior pupils are confident in performing as singers. They develop the skills to be able to listen to a piece of music and respond to its mood in words, pictures or dance. Their abilities to play simple percussion instruments or compose music are not as high as expected at eleven. The school devotes a lot of time to singing but pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills through playing instruments. It is not possible to judge standards or achievement in Key Stage 1 as no lessons were seen in the infant classes.
153. Pupils are given good opportunities to write lyrics. In a lesson seen in Year 4/5, the children did as well as expected for their ages in starting to write the words for a 'protest' song based on a recent world event. They enjoyed the activity, which made them think about moral and social issues, and they

became increasingly absorbed in their work. They co-operated well and within one group, a melody began to emerge on which to base the song. During the Harvest Festival celebration a song was sung which two Year 6 pupils had written in a similar way. However an opportunity was lost to develop composition skills in that the school accompanist, rather than the pupils, had set the words to music.

154. As at the time of the last inspection a variety of music is played at assemblies, with the pieces chosen by teachers. This gives the children the opportunity to hear music from different styles and cultures, though now, as then, there could be more discussion about the composer or the merits of the music itself. Through the strong dance programme pupils achieve well in interpreting music through movement. Not as much small group work with instruments takes place now as was found then. For example, older pupils could recall few if any occasions when they had played instruments or used their voices to compose, record and work on making their original efforts better. This aspect needs more attention to enable pupils to reach the expected level at age 11.
155. The teaching of music seen during the inspection was satisfactory. The school accompanist, along with the class teachers led two singing lessons. In these lessons pupils showed they could sing in two or even three parts and sustain their individual lines well. Pupils were encouraged to sit correctly and ensure that the words could be heard. In both lessons the children sang with gusto but there were few quieter moments for them to be able to show sensitivity. The quality of the sound was at times spoiled by a tendency to shout above the vigorous accompaniment. Whilst the majority of the pupils joined in well, a small number of boys did not join in, nor were they encouraged to do so. Thought needs to be given to providing suitable learning challenges for all pupils on these occasions and to clearly identifying the particular skills, which are to be taught through the singing. Similar attention needs to be given to developing pupils' knowledge of musical vocabulary, which is weak. However, the information on which to base appropriate challenges for all pupils is not easily available because assessment and recording of what pupils can do is informal.
156. The achievement of some children in Years 3 to 5 is promoted through a school choir and a few learn to play the recorder or keyboard. For example, during the Harvest Festival performance, recorder players demonstrated their learning by playing key notes from some songs.
157. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Developing music has not been a school priority since the previous inspection but the scheme has been kept up to date and the subject is taught regularly.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

158. No physical education lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 and no gymnastics lessons were seen at Key Stage 2. However, standards at 11 in

games, dance and swimming are average. Achievement in the lessons seen was good.

159. Three lessons were seen in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. In each of these, pupils demonstrated their enjoyment and tried hard. In the country-dancing lesson observed in a Year 3/4 class, pupils were able to alter the rhythm, speed and directions of their movements in time with the music. When performing dances, they remembered when to change direction and activity. They were able to break away from the circle, promenade their partners and return to the circle promptly in time with the music. They listened to the teacher's instructions well and therefore learned new dances quickly and achieved well.
160. In the creative dance lesson observed in a Year 4/5 class, pupils were able to work co-operatively, invent dances and match their movements to music. One group of boys demonstrated a good awareness of their own and each other's abilities and empathised with the needs of a friend by rejecting movements in their dance that would exclude him. Once satisfied with their dance, they performed it for the class competently.
161. In the one games lesson seen, Year 5 and 6 pupils made good progress. Skills of throwing and catching for netball, and dribbling skills for hockey and football were taught skilfully by three teachers working together as a team. Pupils paid good attention to the teachers' instructions and demonstrations and tried hard to put these into practice. Teachers' time and expertise was used effectively to coach small groups. Pupils achieved well because they developed and improved their skills systematically and quickly.
162. Swimming has a high profile at Key Stage 2. Records show that in recent years, most pupils have met the nationally expected standard and a significant number have exceeded this.
163. Teaching of physical education was good in the lessons seen. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, maintain order well and intervene appropriately to move pupils' learning forward. They demonstrate a good level of subject knowledge and plan lessons well.
164. The school scheme of work ensures that skills are built on steadily throughout the school. The coordinator manages the subject well, giving good support and guidance to colleagues. All staff have recently been trained in the use of small apparatus specially designed to promote games skills. .

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

165. At both seven and eleven years pupils reach the standards set out in the Nottingham local syllabus and pupils' achievement in both key stages is satisfactory. The strong emphasis the school puts on pupils' personal development is reflected in what they know and understand. By the time they

leave, pupils have a strong understanding of the messages from religion but a weak knowledge about the facts of Christianity and of other faiths.

166. At Key Stage 1, pupils become aware of Christianity by learning about the life of Jesus, mainly through stories. For example, in Year 1 pupils showed good achievement in being able to retell the story of 'Noah's Ark' and the meaning of it. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop a deeper understanding of the meaning in stories from the Bible. For example, Year 3/4 pupils discussing the 'Good Samaritan' story knew that it was a parable and how the Jews and Samaritans had become enemies. Whilst they built up some knowledge about other religions – for example the importance of the 'Torah' in Judaism – the main aim of this very good lesson was to lead the pupils in thinking about what the story was telling them. The teacher posed meaningful questions to the children as to why Jesus told the story rather than directly answer the question put to him, what it made the listeners think about and why it is important for us today. Pupils acted out the story before working in groups to find answers to the questions. They worked well together to come up with reasoned answers; for example that in telling the story Jesus was trying to prove a point and that the story tells us that Christians should care for others. The clear moral content was drawn out well by the teacher and understood by the pupils.
167. Teaching in most of the other lessons seen was good with teachers making them interesting for the pupils. In a Year 4/5 class, the simple use of an apple and chocolate captivated the children's attention as they discussed which item they were tempted to choose and which they should choose, bearing in mind factors such as healthy eating. The teacher made strong links into the sorts of temptations pupils may often face. In the Year 6 classes, teachers made good use of role-play to help pupils get to grips with the same issue. In preparing for this, special needs pupils were supported well. For example, by having fewer options to consider and by good adult support.
168. Pupils do not achieve as much in learning facts about religions as they do about its messages, and their retention of facts is weak. This is partly because they do not record important facts well enough. Pupils' books from last year show a wide variety in the amount and quality of written work. Little recording was evident in Key Stage 1. On some occasions in Key Stage 2, worksheets were used which only required a narrow response whilst at other times thoughtful questions were posed. Assessment of pupils' progress is largely informal, so teachers are not always sure exactly where pupils are up to. This means that writing tasks are not always well matched to the pupils' abilities. Attention needs to be given to ensuring that significant facts about Christianity and other religions are recorded well. There are occasional visits to other places of worship but these have not been sufficiently regular over the past three or four years to have a significant impact on pupils learning. The same is true of visitors from other faiths and there are few artefacts available to enliven learning about other religions.



169. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Development has not been a priority since the previous inspection but standards have been sustained. Some changes have already been made to recording in both key stages but careful evaluation needs to be made to ensure that worksheets from a new support scheme do result in more effective recording and better consolidation of pupils' factual knowledge.