

INSPECTION REPORT

KIRKSTEAD JUNIOR SCHOOL

PINXTON

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112608

Headteacher: Martin Hughes

Reporting inspector: Michael Best
10413

Dates of inspection: 15th - 18th April 2002

Inspection number: 242925

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kirkstead Road Pinxton Derbyshire
Postcode:	NG16 6NA
Telephone number:	01773 810337
Fax number:	01773 811955
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Russell Hill
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Dr Michael Best 10413	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education	Characteristics of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
Mrs Pat Edwards 10965	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
Mrs Trudy Cotton 3751	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language	
Mrs Katherine Spencer 21317	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Music Equality of opportunity	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils

The inspection contractor was:

TWA *Inspections* Ltd
5 Lakeside
Werrington
Peterborough
PE4 6QZ

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kirkstead Junior School is an average sized school situated in the village of Pinxton in north-east Derbyshire. The village is a former mining community with a mixture of private and rented homes. Many parents have part-time jobs in service industries. Travelling show people have their winter quarters in the community and 10 pupils (4 per cent) attend the school during the autumn and spring terms. All pupils speak English as their first language. Currently, there are 263 pupils on roll, 139 boys and 124 girls. Forty-five pupils (17 per cent) receive free school meals, but the school believes that the number eligible is higher. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs¹ (21 per cent) is similar to the national average. Thirteen pupils (5 per cent) have Statements of Special Educational Need. This is significantly higher than the national average. Pupils have a wide range of needs.

Pupils join the school at the age of seven from one of the two infant schools in the village. Attainment on entry varies from year to year. The attainment of the present Year 3 was similar to that found nationally when they joined the school last September. At 11, pupils move to the nearby high school. The five schools in Pinxton are involved in the 'Pinxton Project', initially funded by the local education authority, which works to raise standards of achievement in the area. At the time of the inspection, two of the eight teaching staff were on maternity leave and another teacher was absent following surgery.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school that is successfully addressing its shortcomings. The committed leadership of the new headteacher, together with the support of the governors and the hard work of the staff, is moving this school forward. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the education provided for pupils is sound. Standards are rising and now compare favourably to similar schools. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides clear direction and committed leadership for the development of the school.
- Teachers are working hard to raise standards in the school.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their skills in mathematics.
- The provision for pupils with statements of special educational need is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school's links with the Pinxton Project are having positive effects on pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, information and communication technology, art and design, and design and technology.
- Inconsistencies in teaching and learning.
- The role of subject and other co-ordinators.
- Inadequacies in the accommodation that affect pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.

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 April 1997. A number of weaknesses were identified in the leadership and management of the school. In 1999, the local education authority identified the school as giving 'cause for concern'. In 2000, the then headteacher retired and an experienced headteacher was seconded from another school in the county. He subsequently became the permanent headteacher in September 2001. The school has made considerable progress latterly in addressing the weaknesses identified in the

¹ Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

previous report. Standards in teaching are much improved and results in the national tests in English, mathematics and science by pupils at the end of Year 6 have risen substantially from the low of 1999. The new headteacher has drawn up short and long-term plans for school improvement and is actively implementing these. The school recognises that there are still some shortcomings and has appropriate plans in place. Taking into account changes in staffing; the progress made in raising standards of teaching and learning, attainment and progress; and the impact of the ongoing support from the local education authority, the school is now improving at a good pace.

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	C	D	C	Well above average A Above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E
Mathematics	D	C	B	A	
Science	E	D	C	B	

In 2001, Year 6 pupils' results were above the national average in mathematics, similar to the national average in science and below the national average in English. Compared with similar schools, results were well above average in mathematics, above average in science and average in English. Over time, results have risen and progress is now in line with the national trend. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels has increased significantly from the low of 1999. The school has set challenging but realistic targets for pupils to achieve in the forthcoming national tests.

Standards in the present Year 6 classes are similar to those found nationally in mathematics and science. In English, overall standards are just below the national average. Pupils' listening skills are good and reading is satisfactory, although a number of pupils do not read widely. Pupils do not write for a wide enough range of audiences both in English and across the curriculum. Although they are keen to answer questions, many pupils have a limited vocabulary and lack the confidence to expand and develop their ideas. The development of pupils' spelling and handwriting has not been systematic. Pupils make good progress in the development of their numeracy skills. In science, pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of their investigative skills, although this does vary from class to class.

In art and design, design and technology and Information and communication technology, standards by the end of Year 6 are below those expected nationally. Pupils' skills have not been systematically developed as they move through the school. The school has introduced new schemes of work to address this and progress is now satisfactory. In geography, history, music and physical education, standards of work seen in Year 6 are similar to those expected nationally. In religious education, progress is satisfactory. Standards are similar to those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils listen carefully and concentrate well in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Behaviour in the playground is satisfactory.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils have good relationships with each other and adults, which support learning well.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils arrive punctually.

There were 11 exclusions in the last reporting period, all of which were for fixed periods. The number of exclusions is falling. Standards of behaviour are improving significantly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching was good in half the lessons seen during the inspection. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Temporary staff made an important contribution to the quality of teaching observed. Teachers' management of pupils is good. Pupils are keen to learn and they listen carefully to instructions. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning for those pupils with statements of special educational need.

Scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning confirms that there are inconsistencies in teaching and learning in the school. These are particularly evident in teachers' use of assessment information to inform planning; their provision for the differing needs of pupils; their application of the school's marking policy; and the opportunities provided for pupils to develop independent learning and research skills across the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Teachers plan an interesting range of activities for all pupils. New schemes of work are only just in place and have yet to fully impact on pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with statements make good progress because of the support they receive. Other pupils make satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Collective worship makes a positive contribution to pupils' development. The significant improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour since the last inspection reflect this enhanced provision.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is good provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety. Child protection procedures are good. There are sound procedures for finding out what pupils know and can do, but teachers do not yet use these fully to target different groups of pupils.

The school's partnership with parents is good. Parents are pleased about recent changes.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future development of the school. He has worked very hard to bring about change and improvement. The deputy headteacher gives good support. Staff are working hard to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body is very supportive of the school and is working hard to develop its role as the school's critical friend. The chair of governors visits the school regularly and makes a valuable contribution to the process of improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher's analysis of the school's strengths and shortcomings is detailed and perceptive. Staff and governors are becoming more familiar as to how to use this information to raise standards in the school.
The strategic use of resources	Spending decisions are closely linked with the school improvement plan. The school's application of the principles of 'best value' to its spending is satisfactory.

Staffing is adequate. Many co-ordinator responsibilities have recently changed. The role of co-ordinators has rightly been identified by the school as an area for development. The management of special educational needs requires more rigour to identify and support pupils who have difficulties, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

The accommodation is cramped. It is unsatisfactory for the delivery of the curriculum, particularly for art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education. Learning resources are adequate overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Ninety-nine parents (38 per cent) returned questionnaires. Fourteen (five per cent) attended a meeting with inspectors before the inspection. Parents spoke to inspectors during the inspection.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
Behaviour is good. The school is well led. Children like school. They are welcome in school.	The provision made for extra-curricular activities. Inconsistencies between classes in the setting of homework and the support for pupils with special educational needs.

Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views. The school has an 'open door' policy and parents are welcome to discuss any concerns they may have with the headteacher or staff. The school's extra-curricular provision includes boys' and girls' football teams, netball, athletics, chess and a residential visit for older pupils. The school acknowledges that these mainly involve older pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The inspection took place at the very beginning of the summer term. Inspectors looked at the information collected by teachers when pupils enter the school in Year 3 and the results of statutory National Curriculum tests and assessments taken by pupils at the age of 11 years. They also looked at the results of non-statutory tests and the school's analyses of and predictions for pupils' attainment. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and talked with them to help them judge what pupils know and can do.
2. Pupils' results in the National Curriculum statutory tests in English, mathematics and science taken at the end of Year 6 have risen significantly in the last two years. In the 2001 tests, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4² or higher was above the national average in mathematics, similar to the national average in science and below the national average in English. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5³ was below the national average in English and similar to the national average in mathematics and science. Taking into account the context of the school, pupils' results were well above average in mathematics, above average in science and average in English when compared with similar schools⁴. There is an appropriate match between teacher assessments and test results in English and mathematics, and a good match in science.
3. Inspection evidence does not reveal any significant differences in the standards or progress of boys and girls. In the National Curriculum test results over the past three years, there is little difference in attainment between boys and girls in English, mathematics and science. This represents an improvement since the time of the last inspection when girls were performing better than boys in English and science.
4. Based on the work seen during the inspection, standards at the end of Year 6 are similar to the national average in mathematics and science. Standards in English are below the national average. Pupils' listening skills are above average. In reading, standards are broadly average, but pupils' speaking skills and writing are below average. This reflects the 2001 test results. The difference between last year's results in mathematics and standards seen during the inspection are to do with differences between year groups.
5. Progress in these core subjects ranges from satisfactory to good. For example, good development of pupils' listening skills is helping them to improve the quality of their work across the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils make good progress in developing their understanding of mathematics.
6. The proportion of higher attaining pupils in the school varies from year to year. Overall, it is lower than that found in many schools and the proportion of lower attaining pupils is significantly higher. One of the reasons for this is the high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need compared with other primary schools.
7. Management and staffing issues delayed the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy in the school. However, the benefits of these approaches are starting to come through and standards are rising. Numeracy skills are average. They are improving due to the emphasis on developing pupils' mental mathematics and problem-solving skills. In literacy, overall standards are just below average. The emphasis on

² The National Curriculum is written on the basis that pupils are, by the end of Key Stage 1 when pupils are age 11, expected to reach Level 4.

³ If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

⁴ The comparison is based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's benchmark information designed to compare end of key stage tests and assessments with those of similar schools nationally. Inspectors are able to vary this by one grade to reflect more accurately the particular circumstances of the school.

developing pupils' listening skills has raised standards significantly since the last inspection and reading and writing skills are on the up. Some improvements are now required in the way in which literacy lessons are organised and taught in the school in order to develop pupils' skills further.

8. Pupils' application of basic skills across the curriculum, particularly in literacy, is not yet systematic. They do not have sufficient opportunities to practise and develop their newly acquired skills. Teachers are starting to do something about this. They are, for example, asking more questions that require pupils to think about what they are going to say in response, rather than having to give a 'yes' or 'no' answer. Pupils feel much more confident to 'have a go' at explaining what they think. This is helping them make progress. However, not all teachers actively promote these basic skills across the curriculum. This shortcoming is recognised by the school as an area for development.
9. Pupils learn skills in information and communication technology in subject lessons, but there are few opportunities planned for them to apply these skills across the curriculum. Staff are still undergoing training for this. The cramped accommodation in the school is a serious impediment to the more rapid development of pupils' skills. In many classes, teachers have to move furniture and disrupt the work of other pupils in order to give individuals access to the class computer. The library has recently been re-organised. However, pupils are not able to develop research skills because, in the absence of teaching space, visiting teachers and support staff use the library area for teaching.
10. Overall, standards in the non-core subjects⁵ of geography, history, music and physical education are similar to those expected of pupils at the age of 11 years. In religious education, standards are similar to those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. In art and design, design and technology, and information and communication technology, standards are below those expected of pupils at this age. The reason for these standards being unsatisfactory is that, over time, pupils have not had the opportunity to develop systematically their skills and understanding in all parts of these subjects. Problems with the accommodation are particularly challenging in practical subjects where pupils need space to work with equipment and resources. These have contributed to the lower standards. There are still gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding that affect their achievement and staff often have to make good these deficiencies before introducing new learning.
11. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in all the non-core subjects and religious education. The reason for this is that the school has introduced new schemes of work that ensure that new learning builds upon secure foundations. These are starting to be effective and improvement is evident, although in some areas, such as control technology, pupils have yet to cover all aspects of learning. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the rate of progress is uneven between some classes and year groups. One reason for this is that, in some classes, teachers give pupils similar work, regardless of their needs. Another reason is that, again in some classes, there is too much use of worksheets that do not encourage pupils to develop their own ideas and thinking skills.
12. Pupils with statements of special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans because of the consistent, high quality support they receive in lessons. The arrangements to include pupils in whole-class sessions enable them to make good progress in their learning. There is specific support, involving a high level of expertise, readily available from outside experts who work with pupils and help guide teachers' planning. This clear, planned provision is helping pupils to achieve their best.

⁵ The non-core subjects are art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education.

13. Pupils who are on the lower stages of the special educational needs register make mixed progress. Not all teachers consistently track the progress individuals and groups of pupils make from lesson to lesson. Consequently, they do not consistently identify and meet specific needs, particularly for those pupils who have difficulty with literacy and numeracy. Targets for learning in pupils' individual education plans are not always clear. These targets do not regularly feature in teachers' planning so learning is not always well focused. The deputy headteacher provides a good model for other staff in planning for the differing needs of pupils and there is clear evidence of improvement where teachers are following her advice and using her ideas.
14. The school is aware that higher attaining pupils may also have specific needs. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in the statutory tests is now much higher than in earlier years because teachers pay better attention to challenging these pupils. This is not, however, consistent across the school and some more able pupils are not necessarily achieving their best. The school does not yet maintain a formal register of gifted and talented pupils, but has made a start in Year 6 to promote their development.
15. The headteacher makes detailed analyses of the school's results, for example, by gender, free school meal entitlement and prior attainment. He compares results over time and measures improvements in relation to current improvement strategies. He is using this information to set targets for future years. He is sharing this information with staff and governors and identifying areas for development. This is new ground for many of those involved and there is still much work to do. This is, however, helping to focus the school's long-term plans.
16. The school is working to improve individual pupils' achievement. Pupils have individual targets in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is buying books that particularly appeal to boys to improve their reading skills. Staff are looking at different ways of teaching to improve boys' achievement.
17. The school has a small turnover of pupils from year to year. During the last academic year, 11 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of admission and 10 pupils left before the end of Year 6. During the autumn and spring terms, 10 pupils from travelling show families attend the school whilst they are at their winter quarters. During the show season, these pupils travel around the country with their families. The school provides study packs for pupils to work on during their absence and maintains contact with them.
18. Although these pupils were not in school at the time of the inspection, inspectors met many of their parents at the pre-inspection meeting and looked at their work in school. Pupils make similar progress to others. Parents are supportive of their children's work and provide good encouragement. A shortcoming in the school's provision has been that travelling pupils have generally missed the statutory and non-statutory assessments undertaken by the school in the summer term. This is something that the school is addressing and staff from the travellers' education service are administering tests this term. This will ensure that the school has appropriate information about pupils in order to set personal and year group targets.
19. The school has addressed the issues identified in the last report concerning unsatisfactory standards in science and is taking positive action to improve standards in design and technology, and information and communication technology. Although standards in art were judged satisfactory at the time of the last inspection, the lack of provision for pupils' individual experimentation and spontaneous creativity was commented upon. This is something the school is now addressing.

20. Standards in other subjects are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. However, standards dropped in the period following the last inspection, reaching a low in 1999 when very few pupils reached the higher levels. The school was identified by the local education authority as giving 'cause for concern'. A number of changes in staffing have taken place, including the appointment of a new headteacher. Standards are now rising. In their responses to the questionnaires and in their comments to inspectors before the inspection, many parents expressed some concern about the uneven progress their children made in the school. However, they also highlighted the improvements in standards and progress since the arrival of the new headteacher and voiced their full confidence in his efforts to address these issues.
21. In conjunction with the local education authority, the school sets targets for pupils to achieve in the Year 6 statutory tests in English and mathematics. These are challenging, but evidence from the inspection indicates that they are achievable. The 2001 results exceeded the school's target in mathematics. In English, the school met its target. The school's results are improving in line with the national average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

22. Throughout the school, the attitudes, values and personal development of most pupils are good. The positive aspects highlighted in the previous report have been maintained and others improved, particularly pupils' behaviour in lessons. Parents are happy with their children's attitudes to school and feel pupils are encouraged to behave well and grow in maturity,
23. Pupils enjoy coming to school and talk about their work with enthusiasm. The majority of pupils respond well and show interest in the activities provided. They sustain good levels of concentration and listen carefully. Most work hard in lessons and try to do their best, as seen in a Year 3 class learning new spelling techniques.
24. During the inspection, the behaviour of pupils in lessons was good. Pupils' behaviour at playtime and lunchtime in the playground was satisfactory, if sometimes boisterous. Staff dealt promptly and effectively with the small number of incidents of unacceptable behaviour observed.
25. Most pupils actively support and accept the school's revised rewards and sanctions. All the schools in Pinxton have agreed a common policy and this leads to consistency between schools. The strict application of this policy has successfully reduced the number of incidents of intimidation in the school. Inspectors did not see any evidence of sexism or racism during the inspection. Pupils care well for one another, their belongings and school property. Pupils willingly offer support and encouragement to those with special educational needs.
26. There were 11 fixed period exclusions in the last reporting year, involving seven pupils. The headteacher and chair of governors have discussed the particular circumstances surrounding this high incidence of exclusions with inspectors. The significantly improved behaviour of pupils evident during the inspection is directly attributable to the consistent and systematic application of the school's behaviour policy. This has the full backing of parents and pupils. The local education authority supports this with guidance and help for pupils identified, sometimes belatedly, as having emotional and behavioural difficulties.
27. Relationships are open and friendly. Pupils feel comfortable when chatting to teachers about their work and personal issues. There are high levels of mutual respect and regard for the views and feelings of others. Pupils are honest and trustworthy and they are willing to accept responsibility. There is a school council with two elected members from classes in Years 3 to 5 and three elected members from classes in Year 6. The council meets

weekly. It has recently been involved in playground improvements and is currently discussing bullying. Pupils act as classroom helpers throughout the school. It is mainly through homework that pupils have opportunities to use their initiative and take responsibility for their own learning.

28. Attendance is broadly similar to the national average. The amount of unauthorised absence is above the national average. Most pupils arrive punctually for school allowing lessons to start on time and continue without interruption.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

29. Taking into account all the available evidence, the overall quality of teaching and learning in the school is satisfactory. These judgements draw upon a wide range of evidence gathered during the inspection from the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, as well as inspectors' classroom observations.
30. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory in 44 per cent of the lessons seen, good in 47 per cent and very good in 9 per cent of lessons. No excellent, unsatisfactory, poor or very poor teaching was seen during the inspection. These statistics compare well with the last inspection when a significant amount of teaching was unsatisfactory. At that time, 33 per cent of lessons were good, but 18 per cent were unsatisfactory. Inspectors commented that teachers spent too much time on behavioural issues and used a restricted range of teaching strategies. The school has addressed these deficiencies well. Inspectors also commented that teachers did not make the best use of assessment information or match activities well to pupils' needs. Evidence from this inspection indicates that there is still some improvement to make in these areas.
31. Teachers' management of pupils is good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, firmly based on trust and mutual respect. Pupils respond well; they maintain their concentration and want to learn new things. They enjoy practical work and try hard to link their previous learning to what they are doing. All this has a positive effect on raising standards. The high quality of relationships evident between all members of the school community underlies this. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to learn to co-operate and collaborate with each other. This helps them to understand what they are learning and how important it is to take account of the views and findings of others. This was well illustrated in a geography lesson where pupils were discussing the siting of a waste tip in the area.
32. At the time of the inspection, temporary staff, all of whom were in their first week in the school, were teaching three of the eight classes in the school. The lessons observed in these classes made a good contribution to the overall quality of teaching in the school; teachers and pupils were working well together.
33. The overall quality of teaching in literacy is good. There has been a particular focus on improving and developing writing, which is starting to bear fruit. In most classes, teachers and learning support staff are providing pupils with good quality help that is helping to raise standards. However, it is evident that some teachers do not provide work that meets the needs of pupils of different levels of ability. They are not assessing pupils carefully enough to focus on the areas that need attention, especially for those who are having difficulty with reading.
34. The quality of teaching in numeracy is good overall. Teachers are working hard to develop pupils' mental mathematics and problem-solving skills. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils well and the standard of teachers' questioning is high. A weakness with teachers' numeracy planning is that some teachers take insufficient account of the differing needs of pupils.

35. The teaching of basic skills is satisfactory. Staff have worked hard to improve pupils' listening skills and standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection. Efforts to improve pupils' speaking skills have not had the same impact. Teachers try to involve all pupils in responding to questions, not just those who volunteer an answer. Teachers are aware of the importance of promoting regular opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills in all aspects of the curriculum. However, the lack of space in the school limits opportunities for drama, where pupils can develop their skills and confidence in speaking aloud. Most teachers use questions well to engage pupils' interest and develop their thinking skills. This was well illustrated in a Year 6 science lesson where the prompting and encouragement of the teacher successfully encouraged pupils to sequence correctly the different steps in their investigation.
36. Teachers are aware of the importance of developing pupils' skills in information and communication skills across the curriculum. Appropriate equipment and programs are only relatively recently in place and constraints on space in classrooms means that desks and chairs have to be moved in order for pupils to have access to the class computer. Staff are not yet planning for pupils to use these skills as a regular part of their everyday learning across the curriculum. That said, some good application of data handling was observed in science lessons in Years 4 and 6. In addition, specific skills were being taught to pupils in one of the Year 5 classes in order that, over time, they could support their learning in other subjects.
37. In the best lessons seen, such as a writing lesson in Year 6 and a history lesson in Year 4, teachers really capture pupils' interest and imagination. They use time well, giving sufficient explanation and instructions before letting pupils get down to their own work. This careful balance of teacher input and pupil activity works well. Teachers regularly bring pupils back together to check that they are working on the right lines or to hear about the next step in learning. This successfully maintains the momentum of the lesson and challenges pupils to work well. This was well illustrated in a science lesson in Year 3 where pupils were surprised to find that a 2p piece – which they thought was made of copper – was actually steel based and therefore magnetic. The timely intervention of the teacher focused pupils' thinking well and helped them to explain what they had not expected.
38. Overall, the pace of learning in lessons is satisfactory. Lesson introductions usually have a clear focus and teachers make pupils aware of what they are going to achieve by the end of the lesson. There are times, however, when teachers spend too much time explaining what pupils are going to do. Although most teachers use questions successfully to check pupils' understanding, sometimes they provide too much information in one go and pupils become confused or forget what they originally heard. End-of-lesson review sessions, when staff and pupils share what they have achieved, are sometimes too brief.
39. There are a number of inconsistencies in teaching and learning both within and between year groups. Teachers' use of assessment information to inform planning varies from good to unsatisfactory. In Year 3, there is a good emphasis on planning the next steps in learning on what pupils know and can do. However, in an older class, assessment is not sharp enough to identify what pupils need to practise and develop in order to improve their reading. Teachers' assessment of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are usually more precise because these pupils have individual education plans and support staff monitor progress individually.
40. A number of statemented pupils receive help from visiting teachers. The quality of this teaching and the guidance they provide is very good. This help motivates pupils and boosts their confidence. This spurs them on to try their best.

41. The application of the school's marking policy is uneven. In the best practice, teachers make constructive comments that help pupils to improve their work; in some instances, work is not marked. The school's cramped accommodation limits opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning and research skills across the curriculum, but some teachers make better provision than others to develop pupils' skills within these confines.
42. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are satisfactory. Individual teachers have particular subject strengths and use these to good effect. Teachers' performance management programmes successfully identify areas for personal development. Their knowledge and understanding are improving due to the provision of in-service training, notably in literacy and numeracy. All staff are in the process of acquiring the skills to help them develop pupils' skills in information and communication technology. This makes an important contribution to the push to raise standards of learning.
43. Teachers' planning is sound. The school has reviewed and revised its yearly and termly plans. These provide a much more consistent approach for the development of skills across the curriculum because schemes of work are now in place to guide staff. However, much is only recently in place and teachers are conscious of gaps in pupils' previous learning. In art and design, design and technology, and information and communication technology, this lack of a systematic approach to the development of skills means that standards are below those expected for older pupils in the school. As a result, teachers need to alter their weekly plans to take account of these omissions. In some instances, teachers do not make such adjustments and there is a mismatch between what pupils need to learn and what teachers provide for them.
44. In the majority of lessons, teachers set clear learning objectives and share these intentions with pupils. This is good practice as it helps pupils to understand what they are learning. However, not all teachers clearly identify who has achieved, exceeded or not achieved what they expected in a lesson. This is particularly the case for the nearly average attaining pupils.
45. Subject co-ordinators are starting to build up collections of pupils' work. This is a positive move to help teachers know about what pupils can achieve and thus set pupils more accurate targets for improvement.
46. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. Pupils' statements of special educational need specify the nature and extent of the support provided. Teachers involve support staff in the planning of activities and they explain and interpret the teacher's instructions carefully. This ensures that all pupils participate fully in lessons. The help of the learning support staff (ECOs) helps pupils to make positive gains in their learning.
47. The school is in the process of regularising its homework arrangements. Parents, many of whom are concerned about the inconsistencies between classes and year groups, welcome this. Reading and spellings are regular features of homework. Pupils say that they like to do work at home and parents want to help their children to make progress.

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

48. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum. The school meets statutory requirements for all subjects with the exception of information and communication technology, where control technology has yet to be developed. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for the teaching of religious education. The school regularly reviews its policies for each subject. The governing body has agreed a policy for the teaching of sex education.
49. The previous inspection found that there was no overall policy for curriculum planning. This meant that there was an imbalance in the amount of time spent on each subject. The school has corrected this and now gives an appropriate emphasis to all subjects, with the exception of information and communication technology. The school is in the process of equipping a computer suite. However, this is unlikely to have a positive impact on raising standards or delivering the whole curriculum as it is far too small. The use of information and communication technology does not impact greatly on other curriculum subjects due to its limited availability.
50. Like most schools nationally, schemes of work for many subjects have been adapted from materials recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. A weakness in the planning, however, is that teachers do not systematically plan for the needs of different groups of pupils, particularly higher and lower attaining pupils. The recently introduced schemes of work for art and design and design and technology now take account of the previous gaps in pupils' learning. These build systematically on pupils' previous learning. The impact of these plans has yet to have an effect on standards in these subjects.
51. The school works hard to involve all pupils in its work. Recent purchases of reading materials include books that specifically appeal to boys. Staff are starting to adapt their lessons to take account of the different ways in which boys and girls learn. Boys and girls work well together, particularly in science investigations. For the most part, pupils who receive extra help do so in the classroom. On those occasions when they work outside the classroom with support staff, they undertake similar work and join the whole class for the introductory and concluding parts of the lesson. A few pupils sometimes miss collective worship either to attend the school council's meeting or to receive additional mathematics teaching.
52. The school provides well for pupils with statements for special educational needs. Most work takes place in the classroom and pupils have full access to the curriculum. The provision for pupils on the lower stages of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice is more mixed because teachers do not consistently plan for pupils' differing needs.
53. The school has not yet formally identified gifted or talented pupils, but very able pupils in Year 6 receive an extra lesson in mathematics each week. This is to prepare them for the additional paper in the end-of-year National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds.
54. The school is successfully implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and the steady rise in standards is evidence of this. The use of mathematics in subjects such as science and geography is evident. However, there remain insufficient opportunities for pupils to carry out more investigative and independent tasks to apply their knowledge and understanding.
55. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has not yet impacted positively enough on standards of attainment in English. Planning for different abilities and opportunities to write for a variety of purposes are weaknesses in the subject. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to carry out independent research or use the library.

The emphasis the school has quite rightly placed on writing is beginning to have a positive effect in other curriculum areas, for example in religious education, geography and history. However, a scrutiny of work during the inspection noted that a large proportion of pupils' writing in these subjects was identical, indicating that pupils have copied from books, worksheets or the board.

56. The school has improved its arrangements for developing pupils' personal, social and health education since the previous inspection. Teachers have undergone training in this area and use 'Circle time'⁶ effectively during the week in every class. This provides a good opportunity for pupils to discuss issues of a sensitive and moral nature. At present, there is no specific scheme of work for this area of the curriculum. The school already covers many aspects of personal, social and health education, including sex education, in religious education and science lessons. Pupils in Year 6 receive talks on sex education and personal hygiene from the school nurse. Those in Year 5 receive a talk from local police officers about the use and abuse of drugs.
57. Only a limited range of activities takes place outside lessons at present due to the recent changes in staffing. The school has traditionally offered a number of sporting and musical activities. A range of visits to places of interest, and a number of visitors to the school, enhances the learning of all pupils. For example, pupils in Year 4 visit a museum to re-enact the sights and feelings of people during The Blitz. Pupils in Year 5 have an 'Egyptian' day where they dress up as Ancient Egyptians. They carry out drama and role-play activities, which add to the authenticity of their topic about lives of people in ancient civilisations.
58. The school is involved in a community project called the '*Pinxton Project*'. The five local nursery, infant, junior and secondary schools work successfully together towards raising standards and opportunities within their schools. Headteachers and subject co-ordinators meet on a regular basis and the impact of their work has been extremely positive. For example, in mathematics, parents have been encouraged to participate in open days to guide them in the different ways that they can help and encourage their children at home. Science and physical education teachers from the high school work with Year 6 pupils during the summer term. The sharing of resources and expertise across these schools benefits pupils. It means that when they transfer from the infant schools or move on to secondary school pupils are well prepared because of the common vision shared by all the schools within the project.
59. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has improved since the previous inspection. The provision for the spiritual development of pupils is good. Arrangements for collective worship, found lacking in the previous report, now meet statutory requirements and provide good opportunities for reflection and prayer. Assemblies allow pupils to gain knowledge and insight into the values and beliefs of other world religions.
60. Staff encourage pupils to stand back and reflect on their place in the world. Dramatised stories from African and Indian cultures give different perspectives on 'The Creation' and 'good and evil'. They act as a reminder of the need to live together in harmony. Pupils develop this knowledge of other religions, such as Hinduism and Judaism, effectively through religious education lessons. They are encouraged to be aware of themselves and their feelings. During personal relationship lessons, pupils reflect upon their lives and the lives of others, and have time for quiet thought. This was well demonstrated in a Year 6 lesson on how they saw themselves and the image they projected to others.

⁶ During 'Circle Time' pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

61. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school places a high priority on equipping pupils with a clear set of moral values. A consistent approach, fostering good behaviour, ensures that teaching and support staff have high expectations of pupils. The adults in the school present good role models of behaviour. Pupils learn, by good adult example, that it is important to value and respect people and the environment. This was clearly illustrated in a Year 6 lesson when pupils were looking at the arguments for and against the siting of a landfill site in the area. Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong and the majority demonstrate this in their daily activities. They respond well to the 'Star of the Day' initiative and are eager to be included in the 'Gold Book'. They understand and respect the red card sanction. The school has a strong caring ethos based on mutual respect and concern for one another.
62. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Teachers clearly demonstrate respect for pupils and take every opportunity to encourage self-esteem. In the school council, pupils discuss playground improvements, bullying and the provision of a friendship wall. Assemblies celebrate achievement and contribute effectively to the pupils' social development. They are a source of enjoyment and promote a sense of community and partnership. Appropriate use is made of a residential experience to build good relationships. Pupils co-operate in learning activities, such as learning to work as a relay team in a Year 4 physical education lesson. The school provides effective opportunities for pupils to think of others when raising sums of money for charities such as the Blue Peter Appeal.
63. The school makes good provision for the development of pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures through subjects such as literacy, art, history, music and religious education. Pupils visit places of interest such as Eden Camp and the theatre. Staff promote pupils' multi-cultural understanding through learning about festivals such as Eid, Holi, Christmas and Easter.
64. The school interacts positively with the local community through links with the church, Warburton's Bakery and Nottingham Forest Football Club. Visitors to the school, such as the History Diversion Group and local senior citizens, further enhance pupils' cultural development and enable them to gain an understanding of life in the past.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

65. The school provides good support for its pupils. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. It provides a caring environment where teachers know their pupils well and value them as individuals. The majority of parents are happy with the family atmosphere, the care and the guidance offered to their children. They feel that their children are happy in school and able to concentrate on their work.
66. Staff reward pupils in assemblies for their personal effort and achievement both in work and behaviour. Pupils' increased confidence and self-esteem motivates them well.
67. The staff apply the agreed, well thought out, behaviour policy evenly and consistently. This revised policy clearly defines standards and expectations with an effective range of rewards and sanctions. The school wants all children to have the opportunity and develop the confidence to learn without hindrance. Rapid and effective response to all allegations of bullying, sexism and racism are key elements of the school's approach. The school carefully monitors issues relating to bullying and unacceptable behaviour through the behaviour book and 'Circle Time'. Reported incidents are falling in number and exclusions are less and involve fewer pupils. Parents agree that staff deal with any reported incidents of bullying swiftly and effectively.

68. The school has good procedures in place for monitoring attendance. Teachers call the registers at the beginning of every session. The school regularly reminds parents of the need for punctuality and good attendance. Staff follow up any unexplained absence on the third day. The education social worker visits regularly and works closely with the school where there is perceived to be a problem with attendance.
69. The school has an effective child protection policy. Procedures comply with those of the area child protection committee and all staff are fully aware of these procedures. Training is regularly undertaken.
70. The arrangements for first aid, including the recording of accidents and informing parents, are good. Outside agencies successfully support lessons on sex education and drug awareness. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy. The school regularly carries out appropriate checks and makes regular risk assessments. However, the attention of the school has been drawn to a number of minor health and safety issues that were apparent during the inspection.
71. The school has sound procedures for finding out what pupils can do. The clear policy means that all teachers know what forms of assessment to carry out and a useful timeline allows them to plan accurately for these. The headteacher provides a detailed analysis of the statutory and non-statutory National Curriculum tests carried out by the school. This gives teachers a clear indication of how the standards of work within the school compare with standards both locally and nationally. The information is also useful to teachers to trace the progress rate of different groups of pupils within the school, for example, how boys and girls compare. The exception to this is the lack of information about the pupils who belong to the travelling population of the school, who usually miss the end of year tests that form the basis of this analysis. This year, the school has arranged for traveller pupils to return to school for the tests or for them to complete the tests at the earliest opportunity.
72. The quality of day-to-day assessments made by teachers is sound. Teachers use questions at the beginning and end of lessons well to find out what pupils have learned. They record this information on their planning sheets in preparation for the next lesson. In mathematics, teachers appropriately record key objectives from the National Numeracy Strategy for each pupil. End of unit assessments are also made and the results of these inform teachers of where the strengths and weaknesses lie.
73. The use of assessment information was a key issue in the previous inspection. The school has begun to address this by analysing the outcomes of pupils work, but has yet to complete it by making better use of what they find to plan the next stages of learning. Teachers do not yet use the information from assessments effectively enough to plan future work for pupils. Quite often the same task is set for pupils of very differing abilities, which means that teachers have not taken into account pupils' prior attainment when planning work.
74. Teachers have agreed levels of attainment in English and mathematics when analysing samples of pupils' work. These samples of work are not always formally kept, which means there is no reference point for new teachers to the school in terms of what standard of work matches the National Curriculum levels of attainment. Teachers carry out useful assessment of each pupil's writing every half term. Targets for writing are set for individuals based upon this and reviewed periodically. The school does not yet have targets for other areas of the curriculum.
75. The school uses computer-based software to track the progress of individual pupils. National Curriculum target levels for the end of the following year are appropriately set, although these are not yet sufficiently reviewed to take account of the different rates at

which pupils learn. For example, targets set in May of one year for the same time the following year are not necessarily adjusted to take account of pupils making greater or lesser rates of progress than expected during the course of the year. Teachers collate and keep the samples of pupils' writing so that they can trace the rate of each pupil's progress from the time they enter the school to the time that they leave. At present, teachers do not keep examples of pupils' work in other curriculum areas. Therefore, a total picture of a pupil's achievements is not yet complete.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

76. The school's partnership with parents has improved since the previous inspection. The majority of parents indicate that they are pleased with what the school provides and achieves.
77. The quality of information provided by the school is good. Parents feel that the school's regular newsletters keep them well informed about developments. The school holds termly consultation meetings, including one specifically for the travelling families, for parents to discuss their children's progress. Parents receive details of the curriculum planned for each half term and the school prospectus provides a useful practical guide.
78. Annual progress reports contain information on work covered, progress made by their children and levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science. However, information on other subjects is more general and areas for development are not always sufficiently precise. Staff and parents discuss the home/school agreement at the induction day for new pupils and their parents. Parents positively support the school's homework and behaviour policies.
79. The school encourages parents of pupils with special educational needs to attend review meetings. On parents' evening, the school provides specific time for parents of all pupils to share targets and progress.
80. Parental involvement in their children's learning is actively encouraged through events such as the mathematics activity day and the training provided for reading partners. Parents feel welcome in the school and are encouraged to help whenever they are able. A small, but regular, number of parents assist in classes and around the school. Staff much appreciate parents' help in refurbishing the library. The recently formed Friends of Kirkstead has held a number of fund-raising events, including a disco and Easter Fair, to help resource the school and support pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

81. A number of weaknesses were identified in the leadership and management of the school when it was last inspected in 1997. The local education authority identified the school as giving 'cause for concern' in 1999. The present headteacher was initially seconded to the school in September 2000 and was appointed to the permanent position from September 2001. He leads the school well. He has rightly identified where the most pressing priorities lie. He has worked very hard to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, the behaviour of pupils and the school environment. These strategies are working well. Their success is evident in the rising standards and the support openly voiced by parents and pupils alike for the improvements achieved. There is still much to do, but the school has turned the corner and is making good progress on the road to improvement.
82. The deputy headteacher gives good support to the headteacher. Her classroom practice is a good model for other staff and she works hard to help colleagues develop their teaching and learning styles. Due to changes in staffing, many co-ordinators are newly in

place. The school recognises that the role of co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility needs to develop and has plans to address this.

83. A strength of the headteacher's leadership of the school is the way in which he analyses and evaluates information about pupils' results, and the way in which the school is moving forward. This helps him to identify where priorities lie and gives him time to consider various options to follow. Through planning documents and meetings with staff and governors, the headteacher is successfully sharing and developing his clear vision for the future of the school. He listens carefully to the views of pupils, expressed through the recently established school council, parents and governors. Given his committed leadership and the good quality support provided by the local education authority, the school's capacity to improve is good and there is a growing commitment from staff to bring about improvement. Nevertheless, some members of staff have found these changes to be challenging and the school recognises that they may need help and support in building up their confidence to move forward.
84. The school improvement plan is a detailed document that sets out what the school plans to do during the current school year to address its identified shortcomings and maintain its existing good practice. The plan is very much a working document that provides a good basis to help the school meet its targets. It successfully identifies timescales, responsibilities and costs, and the arrangements for monitoring the progress made. This is the first year that the school has used this format to help it plan ahead; staff are becoming familiar with the structure and the way in which it can help them achieve their aims. The headteacher regularly reports to governors as to the progress the school is making. This is the first year the school has set itself an improvement plan and governors have not yet had the opportunity to evaluate the impact of the plan on school improvement.
85. One of the school's priorities in the last 18 months has been to raise standards of teaching and learning. The headteacher monitors lessons and teachers' planning. The deputy headteacher works with colleagues to share and develop good practice. As a result, there is a much more unified approach to planning and to teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. There is, however, still work to do in order that pupils can systematically build on their earlier learning as they move through the school.
86. Subject co-ordinators have worked hard to put new schemes of work in place. They are successfully monitoring the implementation of these programmes and are making adjustments where necessary. They look at pupils' work and have access to teachers' planning but, with changes in staffing, their work in monitoring teaching is at an early stage of development. Co-ordinators are enthusiastic about their subjects and are keen to develop their leadership skills.
87. Staff have a growing understanding of how to use profitably pupils' test and assessment results to identify where to make improvements in learning and which pupils require specific help and support. Teachers successfully work with groups of pupils to help them revise and reinforce their earlier learning. The effective identification of, and support for, pupils who are capable of reaching the higher levels in the statutory tests at the end of Year 6 has helped to raise standards. More attention now needs to be given to moving on those pupils who are on the cusp of achieving the standards expected of pupils at the age of eleven.
88. Although pupils with statements of special educational need receive quality support, and make good progress, the identification of, and support for, other pupils is not good enough. The targets in these pupils' individual education plans are not sharp enough. Teachers do not have sufficient guidance about how to plan for the differing needs of pupils. There is insufficient monitoring and evaluation of what the school provides for pupils and how well

they make progress. The school agrees that it has not always been rigorous enough in identifying pupils who may have special needs.

89. The governors and staff have recently reviewed the school's aims and values. A positive ethos is developing where good relationships between all members of the school community and full equality of opportunity for all pupils are central to the school's work. The school's commitment to the inclusion of all pupils is evident in its aims, the home/school agreement, the prospectus and the revised policy documents. Standards are rising because pupils are happy to come to school and value the opportunity to learn. Staff work hard to raise and maintain pupils' self-esteem.
90. The marked improvements in the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is doing much to move the school forward as a community. A significant factor in this is that the headteacher applies the school's behaviour policy firmly and does not shrink from using the sanction of exclusion where necessary. The number of exclusions in the last reporting period was much higher than found in most primary schools. In the present period, it is falling. The school has become much more active in identifying pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and the local education authority now provides specialist help and support for pupils who have particular needs.
91. The work of the governing body is sound. Governors take their responsibilities seriously. The school meets statutory requirements with one exception; control technology. The school is aware of this and intends to address the issue. A number of governors have joined the school since the last inspection and some are recently appointed. Governors are welcomed into school. They feel increasingly involved in its work and, as a result, are becoming more effective in their work. The chair of governors and the headteacher meet every week to discuss the work of the school and the way forward. This is a very valuable practice, which the headteacher much appreciates. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are starting to develop their role as the school's critical friend. They are becoming more involved in determining the future direction of the school and more confident in monitoring its progress. An appropriate committee structure is in place. Governors receive reports from staff about subject development and the provision for special educational needs.
92. The school has good links with the local authority. Advice and guidance from officers has been pivotal in helping the school address its weaknesses. The governing body and senior management have benefited from the regular reviews and visits undertaken by advisory staff. Pupils also benefit from the support the local education authority provides for those with learning and behavioural difficulties.
93. Good arrangements for the performance management of teachers are in place and the cycle of reviews established. The headteacher reports that the process has been extremely helpful in identifying teachers' strengths as well as areas for improvement. The school identifies professional development needs and makes appropriate provision to address these. The school works hard to match training for its corporate needs with the professional needs of individual teachers. Performance management is making a positive contribution to raising standards in the school.
94. The day-to-day management of the school is sound. Routines are established and the school runs smoothly. Careful financial planning supports the school's priorities for development. The school applies specific funds correctly and for the direct benefit of pupils. Appropriate financial procedures are in place and the school makes satisfactory use of new technology to support its administration. The school reports that it is implementing the recommendations of the most recent audit report.

95. The school receives less funding per pupil than the majority of schools in England. The school has carried forward just under 5 per cent of its budget for the last financial year. This is in line with national guidelines. In the previous financial year, the carry forward was nearly twice the recommended level. The school has used these funds to improve significantly the quality of learning resources. The school takes appropriate account of the principles of 'best value' in making its purchases. Governors are aware that, when they come to evaluate the outcomes of the current school improvement plan, they will need to consider the impact of their plans and spending decisions on standards. Taking into account the progress made, as well as the areas that still need to be improved, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
96. The school makes appropriate arrangements for the induction of new staff. It does not currently provide training for new teachers, but now has the potential so to do. Staffing levels are adequate, although turnover of staff is quite high for a number of reasons beyond the control of the school. Teachers are appropriately qualified and most are satisfactorily deployed in relation to their responsibilities. The school does not experience undue difficulties in attracting applicants for teaching posts.
97. As found at the time of the previous inspection, the number of hours for support staff is below that usually found nationally. However, support assistants are effectively deployed and familiar with their responsibilities. They work well with class teachers to the benefit of pupils. Effective training arrangements are in place for all staff. Teachers are currently receiving training in the use of information and communication technology to support their teaching and their personal use of new technologies in the school.
98. Although pupils benefit from recent improvements to the heating and ventilation of the school, the quality of the school's accommodation is unsatisfactory for the delivery of the curriculum. Classrooms, the hall and the computer suite are too small for the number of pupils in classes. At present, the majority of classes exceed 30 and one Year 6 class has 39 pupils in it.
99. Only one of the classrooms has a sink or running water. This makes for considerable difficulties in meeting the demands of the curriculum. These cramped conditions impose constraints particularly on the delivery of art, design, physical education and information and communication technology. In many of the lessons observed, desks and chairs had to be moved to enable pupils to gain access to the computer. Visiting teachers and specialist support staff invariably work with pupils in corridors because there is nowhere else for them to go. These thoroughfares do not provide the quiet and private areas necessary, for example, when working with pupils with hearing impairments.
100. The outdoor environment is much improved. There is an attractive planted area, a well marked out hard surface and pupils have access to a fenced tennis court to use for ball play. The school has made a great effort to secure the site in the light of regular vandalism and the recent provision of security fencing has proved very worthwhile. The hard working caretaking and cleaning staff keep the building and play area clean and tidy.
101. Overall, resources are satisfactory to support the implementation of the National Curriculum. Recently the school has made significant purchases to support information and computer technology. Resources are used effectively, but limited storage space causes difficulties with access. With the help of parents, the school has refurbished the library and this now provides a suitable place for independent research and study. However, the lack of teaching space means that the library is often unavailable because visiting teachers and support staff use it to work with individual or small groups of pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

102. The governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

(1) raise standards in English by:

- planning more opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills in English and other subjects;
- developing pupils' interest in, and enjoyment of, reading;
- ensuring that work in guided groups in literacy meets the needs of different ability groups in the class;
- widening the range of pupils' writing and the opportunities to write in other subjects of the curriculum;
- providing a more consistent programme to develop pupils' independent spelling skills;
- improving the quality of handwriting and presentation of work;

(paragraphs 103-120)

(2) raise standards in information and communication technology, art and design and design and technology by:

- fully implementing the school's scheme of work for information and communication technology and ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to apply their newly acquired skills across the curriculum;
- ensuring that the new schemes of work in art and design and in design and technology are fully implemented so that pupils' skills are built on and developed year on year across a range of experiences;

(paragraphs 146-153, 154-160, 174-183)

(3) improve teaching and learning by addressing inconsistencies in:

- teachers' planning for the differing needs of pupils, particularly for those who learn at slower and faster rates;
- the use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning;
- the application of the school's marking policy to ensure that marking moves learning on;
- the identification of pupils who have difficulties in literacy and numeracy, the setting of targets for their improvement, and the provision of the support they need;
- the opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning and research skills across the curriculum;

(paragraphs 13-14, 33-47, 55, 73, 88, 101, 110, 116, 119, 128-131, 135, 141, 143)

(4) develop the role of curriculum co-ordinators in leading and managing their subjects throughout the school by providing training and support in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, the analysis of assessment information and the tracking of pupils' progress as they move through the school.

(paragraphs 15, 73-75, 75-78)

In addition, the governing body should, in consultation with the local education authority, resolve inadequacies in the accommodation that are affecting the delivery of the curriculum, particularly in regard to art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, drama and physical education.

(paragraphs 35, 98-99, 112, 146-7, 160, 176, 180, 196-7)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

45

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	4	20	19	0	0	0
Percentage	0	9	47	44	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points. In two of the lesson observations, pupils were working independently and thus no teaching grade was given.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

Y3 – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

263

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

45

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

Y3 – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

13

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

54

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

11

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

10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	33	28	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	19	27	28
	Girls	21	22	24
	Total	40	49	52
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	66 (83)	80 (80)	85 (91)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	20	24	27
	Girls	22	22	25
	Total	42	46	52
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	69 (82)	75 (68)	85 (80)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	260
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	11	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: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	33

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	155

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	521,195
Total expenditure	542,109
Expenditure per pupil	2,061
Balance brought forward from previous year	44,333
Balance carried forward to next year	23,419

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
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)	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 37.6%

Number of questionnaires sent out	263
Number of questionnaires returned	99

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	45	6	3	1
My child is making good progress in school.	41	55	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	66	8	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	52	13	2	0
The teaching is good.	52	45	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	41	6	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	26	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	34	53	9	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	51	40	1	3	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	56	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	40	33	12	6

Other issues raised by parents

- The provision made for extra-curricular activities.
- Inconsistencies between classes in the setting of homework and the support for pupils with special educational needs.

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

ENGLISH

103. Over time, standards in the national tests in English for 11-year-olds have been below those found nationally. The exception was a rise in attainment in 2000, when results were average. In 2001, pupils' test results were below the national average but, when compared with similar schools, they were broadly average.
104. The findings of this inspection show that by the end of Year 6, standards in writing are below the national average, whilst attainment in reading is close to average. Pupils lack confidence and clarity when speaking and are still gaining competence as speakers, particularly when talking to the whole class. Listening skills are good and because pupils listen carefully to what is being said, learning moves on at a steady pace.
105. Teachers have worked hard to improve standards in writing and this is beginning to pay dividends. In each year group, teachers plan extra time for extended writing, where skills of sentence construction, structuring stories and non-fictional writing are developing well. This clear focus has helped to provide greater continuity with the development of writing year on year - an aspect identified as a weakness in the previous inspection. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills and to write for a range of different purposes in other subjects.
106. Since the last inspection the quantity and range of fiction books has improved. Readers in Year 6 suggest that a greater choice of interesting books in reading boxes is helping them to find books, at an appropriate level, more easily. Progress with the development of the school library as a learning resource has been slower. Less capable readers, in particular, are unsure of how to use the school's classification system.
107. The school is inclusive and provides the opportunity for all school groups to learn and work together successfully. A high number of pupils have statements of special educational needs. They make good progress because the school meets their specific needs well. Other pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, but targets set for their learning are not sharp enough or used consistently to guide work in lessons. There is no longer the marked difference between the achievement of boys and girls reported at the time of the last inspection, although girls still reach slightly higher levels with their reading and writing. The school has no pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
108. Although there were no pupils from the Travelling Community present during the inspection, discussions with parents show that pupils feel welcome in school. A minority of parents felt that their children's learning lacked challenge and progression, but that distance learning packs were helping to provide greater continuity with work at home and in school.
109. Teachers are using the class lesson and plenary sessions (feedback time) in the literacy hour to teach basic skills and work with grammar and punctuation well. Class lessons in Year 3 and Year 5 show that teachers build pupils' learning in a more consistent way. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress as they learn how to expand simple sentences, whilst in Year 5, pupils move on a step further as they identify clauses and the role of connecting words in their written work.
110. In the guided group work in the literacy hour, progress is not so steady. This is because teachers do not always match work closely enough to the needs of the different ability groups within the class. Provision for average pupils and those capable of reaching higher levels is similar and so there is a lack of challenge for some higher attaining pupils. In

classes where group work is effective, teachers effectively use support staff to focus on specific learning groups and use the targets set in pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) in lessons.

111. Throughout the school listening skills are good. Pupils listen carefully in lessons, follow instructions and join in appropriately with others. For example, Year 6 pupils listened intently to the points of view of others and then made their own relevant contributions in a debate about proposed landfill sites.
112. By the end of Year 6 pupils' speaking skills are below average. The majority of pupils lack confidence and clarity when speaking to others, either as a whole class or in large groups. Their limited vocabulary does not help pupils to express their ideas and feelings succinctly. Teachers encourage all class groups to join in lessons, but it is the more articulate minority that takes the lead. The main thrust for developing talk is through teachers' questioning, which encourages pupils to respond in sentences and to explain their ideas clearly. However, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills in a variety of different ways in English and in other subjects. Teachers make insufficient use of drama and class presentations to improve pupils' speaking.
113. By the age of 11 years, standards in reading are close to the national average. The majority of pupils start junior school with better skills in reading than writing. Over time, progress in reading is satisfactory. Most pupils in Year 3 can recall words by sight and link letters with their sounds. By Year 4, more capable readers use the whole sentence to make 'good guesses' at unknown words and by the end of Year 6, more able pupils read with deeper meaning and understanding.
114. However, throughout the school, a significant number of pupils are not turning readily to reading for pleasure. Both younger and older pupils state they would like to hear more stories read to them in class. In most classes, small groups of pupils belong to the local library and enjoy listening to tapes and stories at home. These pupils are keen to discuss their books. One pupil in Year 3 explained why she had chosen *'Badger boy'*: *'I haven't really seen badgers and wanted to find more about them. They seem such calm and nice animals.'* However, reading for a significant minority of pupils does not hold such interest.
115. Despite standards in writing falling below average by Year 6, an emphasis on providing a purpose for writing and a chance to experiment with different forms is helping to improve progress. In Year 4, pupils reflect the language of traditional and mythical stories in their own original work. This is evident in the work of more capable writers, *'Long ago in Ancient Greece, evil was becoming mortal and pain and sorrow were spreading world wide'*. In Year 6, pupils use an informal, conversational style for their diaries and are mindful of keeping the reader's interest. Effective teaching ensures that pupils can think their ideas through and make improvements when writing longer pieces of work. The good standard of discursive writing in Year 6 is an example; pupils brainstormed ideas and then argued their point of view clearly in a letter of complaint to the local council.
116. The presentation of work in pupils' books is sometimes untidy, with work crossed out and pieces left unfinished. Standards in spelling also are below average. Although teachers include spelling rules and skills in their lesson plans, the school does not have a consistent programme to improve pupils' independent spelling skills. Pupils have limited opportunity to use information and communication technology to draft, edit and produce a finished copy of their work.
117. Pupils behave well in literacy lessons. They have good listening skills and concentrate well. A lack of confidence when speaking sometimes gives the wrong impression that pupils lack initiative.

118. Teaching in English is generally good and this is helping to improve achievement. Teachers are hard working, have good subject knowledge and manage their classes well. Teachers and learning support assistants (ECOs) work well together and this enhances the support provided in class.
119. The use of assessment provides a mixed picture. Marking is inconsistent. At best, work is regularly marked, gives a positive response and moves skills on. Although teachers use analyses of national reading test results to help track progress, they have a less clear picture of how individual readers read. At present, the use of assessment information is not effective enough to guide targets for learning and focus support for pupils having difficulty with their reading. Some good use is made of assessments of writing, enabling teachers to identify what they need to teach next.
120. The English co-ordinator has worked hard to put into place a structure for improving and developing writing. Teachers have benefited from the training this has entailed and are committed to raising standards. Further challenges, linked to the development of pupils' speaking skills and fostering a greater enjoyment of books, will also demand time and focused commitment.

MATHEMATICS

121. Standards of attainment in mathematics in Year 6 are in line with the national average. The principal reason for the difference in standards this year is the different group of pupils currently in Year 6. Following the last inspection, standards in mathematics declined. However, there has been a steady improvement in standards over the past three years. This is due to the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.
122. The majority of boys and girls, including those who have statements of special educational need, make good progress in developing their understanding of mathematics. Some lower attaining pupils, and those on the lower stages of the special educational needs register, only make sound progress. The reason why the rate of progress is not so great for these pupils is that they do not always receive the support that they need to further their understanding of mathematical concepts. Individual education plans rarely contain targets relating to mathematics and yet many pupils have difficulties in this area. In lessons, teachers do not always adapt work to take account of their slower rate of learning.
123. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed a good standard of computation and confidently manipulate and calculate numbers mentally. The great importance placed on the first part of the daily mathematics lesson is one of the reasons for this. Pupils are actively involved in most lessons in the oral and mental starter questions. They use white boards to write their answers or show their workings as well as showing answers on digit cards. Pupils quickly let their teachers know they have calculated an answer. Teachers use these responses to assess which pupils have or have not understood the question. A strong emphasis on number is apparent in all classes. Weekly mental arithmetic tests encourage pupils to learn times tables and number bonds. In Years 5 and 6, pupils try to beat their previous times and scores each week, which keeps their skills sharp.
124. Teachers' planning for numeracy lessons is broad and balanced and covers a wide range of mathematical concepts. Pupils in Year 3 learn how to recognise 2-dimensional shapes and describe their properties through a variety of strategies. Pupils in Year 4 develop their understanding of horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines in preparation for their work on co-ordinates. Good use is made of the outside environment for this type of activity. Physically moving along the different rows and columns on the grid reinforced the learning for many pupils. Pupils in Year 5 begin to make choices about strategies that are best suited to solve problems. They learn to carry out informal methods of calculating long multiplication by applying approximation to decide on the reasonableness of an answer. In

one particular lesson, the pupils made such good progress in developing their ability to calculate mentally, that they had worked out solutions to problems before they had tried their strategy out on paper.

125. Mathematics appropriately supports work in other areas of the curriculum. In geography, Year 5 pupils use bar graphs and pie charts to show the outcomes of a traffic survey. In Year 6, pupils use line graphs to show the different amount of water that is used in the home. In science, pupils in Year 4 use tables, charts, graphs and negative numbers to compare temperatures in different places around the school. Pupils are starting to use information and communication technology to handle and present this data.
126. Pupils respond positively to their mathematics lessons and they behave well. They are keen to learn and are eager to contribute their answers. They work co-operatively when required to do so, although opportunities for this type of group work are more limited. The previous inspection found that most of the work pupils were required to do was based on text book or worksheet exercises on an individual basis. This is still the case in most lessons. Whilst this method of teaching is appropriate to consolidate and reinforce learning, it does not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to investigate mathematics, to work together or to independently solve problems. The school recognises this and understands the need for pupils, particularly higher attaining pupils, to apply the skills they have learned to further their understanding.
127. The quality of teaching is good overall. A good feature of the lessons observed is the way teachers make clear to pupils at the beginning of the lesson what they want them to learn. In the very best practice, teachers refer to these objectives throughout their lessons and particularly during the summary (plenary) when they review them. In doing so, teachers and pupils measure what they have understood and what they need to practise further. Another good feature of teaching is the way teachers involve all the pupils in their questioning. Some teachers target individual pupils for particular questions and do not rely on the answers coming from just the pupils who volunteer. Pupils in Year 3 turn to their *'talking partner'* to share ideas, which means all pupils have had the opportunity to say something. Good lessons move at a reasonable pace, which keeps pupils interested the whole time. A good example of this was in Year 5. Pupils were 'kept on their toes' during the introduction of the lesson by the teacher setting them challenging activities and allowing them a time limit to work them out.
128. Where teaching is not as effective, the timing of lessons is not rigorous enough. Teachers spend too much time during the first part of the lessons explaining concepts. This means that pupils do not have sufficient time to consolidate these ideas by trying them out themselves. In a small number of lessons, some pupils did not get beyond the first question because of lack of time. Teachers often rush the last part of the lesson that pulls all the learning together and there is not enough time available to clarify sufficiently ideas and misconceptions. A particular weakness in teaching in the majority of classes is the way in which all pupils in the same year group have the same work set for them. Pupils throughout the school are taught in two ability sets within their year groups. However, in some year groups the work for each set is identical, which means that higher and lower attaining pupils are attempting the same activities.
129. A good example of where activities do match the ability of the pupils is in Year 3. Within the lower ability set of Year 3 the teacher has correctly identified a further three levels of ability within the class. A scrutiny of pupils' books during the inspection noted that work in this teaching group is regularly adapted to take account of the different levels of attainment of these pupils. Accordingly, pupils in the higher ability set in Year 3 appropriately carry out more challenging activities.

130. The school has made adequate provision for a small group of very able pupils in Year 6. They receive extra teaching once a week to prepare them for the additional mathematics paper in this year's National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds.
131. The majority of teachers successfully use the introduction to a lesson to question pupils on their previous work. In the plenary, they use this information to tell them what pupils have remembered. In the best lessons, teachers use this information to gauge the focus of the next lesson and adapt their plans. The headteacher and the mathematics co-ordinator have carried out some useful data analysis about the attainment of different groups of pupils. Class teachers carry out regular assessments that pinpoint the strengths and weakness of individual pupils. However, there is an over-reliance on the school's chosen published scheme of work. Teachers do not always use the information gathered from assessments to target accurately work for pupils of different abilities.

SCIENCE

132. Standards in science at the end of Year 6 are similar to the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was below average and pupils made insufficient progress. National Curriculum test results in science show that standards fell further in the following year. Although improved in subsequent years, standards have been below average until 2001, when results were similar to the national average.
133. There are two contributory factors to this improvement. Firstly, teachers' expectations of what pupils, particularly the more able, can achieve are much higher. Secondly, the school has adopted national guidelines for teaching science to ensure that pupils systematically build up their skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. The school's scheme of work provides for pupils to study a wide range of science including materials and their properties, living things, and electricity, light and sound.
134. Teachers develop pupils' learning in science through investigative and experimental work. Most pupils readily volunteer that an investigation has no scientific worth unless it is a 'fair test'. Pupils know they must only alter one variable at a time to keep the investigation valid. This practical approach to science appeals to pupils and they enjoy practical, investigative work. In the previous inspection, pupils were not sufficiently aware of how to adapt and improve their experiments and there was too much use of worksheets.
135. Overall, progress is satisfactory as pupils move through the school. Boys and girls make similar progress and attain similar standards of work. In the lessons seen, many pupils made good progress. There is, however, some uneven progress between classes and between year groups. Although the quality of pupils' learning has moved on since the last inspection, shortcomings are still evident in some classes. In these classes, there remains too much dependence on worksheets. Teachers do not plan sufficiently for the differing needs of pupils, particularly those who have difficulties with reading and writing, and those who have the capacity to achieve higher standards of work. As a result, some older pupils do not have sufficient confidence to think and work independently. In a number of classes, there are gaps in pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. This is something teachers have to address before giving their planned lessons.
136. One of the reasons why test results have improved is that most teachers now recognise and address these issues. In one lesson seen, in Year 6, the class teacher's careful preparation and encouragement enabled pupils to overcome these stumbling blocks. By presenting the investigation as a 'real life' situation and guiding the pupils through their preparatory work, the teacher successfully drew out pupils' thoughts and ideas. She ensured support for pupils with learning difficulties and, with pertinent questions, challenged the more able members of the class to take their thinking forward. Many

pupils, including some more able pupils, do not find it easy to put their ideas into words. They often find it hard to come up with the right phrases or words to describe what they mean. Their apparent reticence masks the often good quality of their thinking.

137. In the Year 6 lesson observed, pupils had received a request to investigate the speed at which artificial sweeteners dissolve when placed in water at different temperatures. As a class, they discussed their ideas and possible ways in which they could test for this. A helpful proforma prepared by the class teacher guided pupils' thinking and ensured that they took small steps in planning. Good questioning by the class teacher, and focused support from staff for those who needed particular help, demonstrated that pupils were actively thinking about what they needed to do in order to move their investigation forward. In making their predictions, pupils successfully explored what they already knew to help shape their ideas.
138. Similar structured support helped pupils in a Year 3 lesson to set up an investigation to test whether various objects were magnetic or non-magnetic. They worked successfully in small groups to identify whether a pull force was exerted by the magnet on the object in question. With careful prompting from their teacher, pupils drew upon their previous experience of forces to help them organise their investigation and this contributed well to the outcome.
139. In the lesson seen in Year 4, pupils tested the insulating properties of a range of different materials. In a previous lesson, they had decided how they would conduct their investigation. They approached their work sensibly and with good regard for health and safety. They collaborated well with each other to read and record the temperatures of the different containers at regular intervals. Given the very cramped conditions in the classroom, the investigation went very smoothly. In this, the help of an adult volunteer was most valuable. Pupils quickly improved their accuracy in reading thermometers and made good efforts to interpret and draw conclusions from their results. Importantly, at the end of the lesson, they revisited their original predictions and compared these with their findings.
140. Pupils enjoy science. Most pupils work well together. They share ideas and swap information readily. For example, in Year 3 they showed considerable interest in the discovery that some 2p coins are magnetic although predicted to be non-magnetic. In Year 4, pupils shared information openly. In Year 6, groups exchanged their views and listened carefully to others. Throughout the school, girls and boys have similar opportunities to participate in science lessons. Staff effectively guide and advise pupils with special educational needs, particularly in practical work, enabling them to make similar progress to others.
141. Teaching in the lessons observed was predominantly good. The quality of discussion and practicality of the questioning used by teachers is good. Clear instructions and attention to the purpose of the lesson help to focus pupils' thinking on exactly what they have to do. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the scrutiny of younger pupils' work, it is evident that, in some classes, there is insufficient planning for the differing learning needs of pupils. There is too much reliance on the completion of worksheets that do not require pupils to apply their thinking to explain, not only what has happened in their experiments, but why. Marking is often cursory and some work is unmarked. In these classes, pupils do not sufficiently develop such skills as they move through the school. This is particularly important as the school has an above average number of pupils with special educational needs. It also means that those with the capacity to reach the higher levels do not have the grounding they need.
142. Most teachers are successfully addressing these issues. For example, in one of the Year 5 classes, the teacher now plans for the different needs of pupils in the class and adapts

worksheets and planning guides to meet these. Whereas at one point, some pupils rarely managed to complete their writing, they now have work that is challenging but achievable. Their teacher is focussing their efforts on recording their predictions and results in their own particular way so as to develop their investigative and thinking skills. This good practice is helping to raise standards and improve the progress of those who learn at different rates.

143. Teachers are starting to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication skills in science, but this practice is not yet firmly embedded in their planning. Nevertheless, their good use of questions is helping to encourage pupils to listen more carefully. Numeracy skills are evident in the use of graphs and pupils are starting to use information and communication technology successfully to handle and present the data they collect for these. There is little evidence of the development of library skills in science, but older pupils access the Internet to research topics. The sharing of learning objectives at the start of each lesson, together with a plenary session where learning is consolidated and the next steps flagged up, both help to strengthen pupils' understanding of what they are doing.
144. The co-ordinator is in the process of introducing a series of commercially available assessment tasks that match the school's new scheme of work. The school is keen to improve its ongoing assessment of the progress pupils make in science and, in conjunction with the local authority adviser, has given much thought to the introduction of such arrangements. Science resources are adequate. Recent purchases have made good significant deficiencies. However, the co-ordinator is aware of areas for further development.
145. The school has good links with the receiving high school. Year 6 pupils start a topic in the summer term that is then developed in the autumn term at their new school. This provides a good bridge in learning between the two schools and encourages pupils in their work.

ART AND DESIGN

146. At the end of Year 6, standards in art and design are below national expectations. This is because, over time, teachers have not systematically developed pupils' skills in art. Progress has been uneven and there are significant gaps in pupils' learning.
147. Standards have fallen since the previous inspection, when they were average. However, progress is now satisfactory. New guidelines for art and design are in place. These provide teachers with a clear structure for the coverage of a wider range of experiences and the development of skills in each year. The lack of water in classrooms is still causing considerable inconvenience. This contributes to the limited range of experiences teachers provide in lessons.
148. Teachers continue to use successfully the study of famous artists as a stimulus for pupils' work. Imaginative paintings, reflecting the surreal images of Dali's work, provide evidence that standards are beginning to improve. There is also some interesting work with pattern in Year 3, where pupils experiment with line and shape as they use stencils and printing techniques to produce repeating images.
149. Younger pupils look at the composition of figure groups and enjoy acting as models for others to sketch. They work hard at achieving their best work and concentrate well on more difficult tasks. In Year 6, pupils explore expressions and feelings through art and begin to reflect '*the jagged shapes of anger*' and '*soft shapes of laughter*' in their observational drawings. This contributes well to the development of their literacy skills, particularly their language skills. Effective teaching in the use of line and tone and the development of proportion enables pupils to improve the quality of their figure drawing. In

the lessons observed in art, work focused on observational drawing. However, the range of materials used in both lessons was limited and this affected pupils' choice and experimentation.

150. By Year 6, standards in drawing are close to average, with drawings becoming finer, more accurate and detailed. Pupils are beginning to stand back and improve their work, but there is little experimentation in sketchbooks. Most work represents the final, finished piece. There is, at present, little use by pupils of information and communication technology.
151. Behaviour in lessons is good and so learning moves on at a steady pace. Boys and girls work well together and so lessons are enjoyable. Staff and their fellow pupils help those with special educational needs to take a full part in lessons. They make similar progress to other pupils in the class.
152. Teaching in art is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan lessons with the new guidelines in mind. Pupils make better progress because new skills now build on earlier learning. Teachers are enthusiastic in lessons and encourage pupils to do their best. However, lesson introductions and teachers' explanations are sometimes too lengthy and this takes away the opportunity for pupils to create something new by themselves. Assessment tasks vary and teachers do not use these consistently to make judgements about standards and progress.
153. The co-ordinator is successfully managing the subject. She has plans to monitor progress and assess how effectively the new guidelines are working. At present, there is little use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning in art. Pupils' research skills, whether using books or the Internet, are underdeveloped.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

154. By the end of Year 6, standards in design and technology are below the national average. Over time, progress in the subject has been uneven because skills have not been built upon and developed in a continuous way, year-on-year.
155. Present inspection findings are similar to the previous report, which also judged standards to be below average. However, there have been improvements and now pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in lessons. An example is the way in which pupils now consistently plan their designs step-by-step and evaluate their work. Boys and girls make similar progress and achieve similar standards in their work.
156. In Year 5, work in designing and making musical instruments shows good results. Pupils make choices about materials, test and modify their designs, and comment on how well they achieved their original plans. There are other pockets of effective work throughout the school, where pupils are working at an appropriate level and make steady progress. In food technology, for instance, Year 3 pupils make and test different types of bread with the help of experts from a local bakery.
157. Other classes have worked with clay and produced slab pots. Pupils have also designed and made attractive hanging wall textiles. However, because pupils have not consistently built upon their earlier skills and learning, the levels reached in some aspects of design and technology are lower than expected. Areas of experience, such as the use of mechanisms and control technology, have had less focus in the curriculum and so there are gaps in pupils' skills and learning. Information and communication technology is not widely used by pupils at present.

158. In the limited number of lessons observed, pupils were very keen to share their achievement with others and eagerly answered questions about planning and making during whole-class evaluation sessions. Although not always specifically planned for, numeracy and literary skills are evident in pupils' plans and descriptions. Pupils work hard and concentrate well and this effort is helping them to make steady progress.
159. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers find the new guidelines helpful and use them consistently. Teachers manage lessons well and teach skills in planning and evaluating well. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to generate their own ideas and select from a variety of materials and components. There is limited evidence of pupils using the library or Internet to research information for their plans.
160. The co-ordinator has established new guidelines for the subject. Learning resources are satisfactory, but a lack of space and access to water in classrooms affects the quality and range of experiences provided.

GEOGRAPHY

161. Standards of attainment in geography by the end of Year 6 are as expected nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
162. Pupils in Year 6 accurately describe the process in the water cycle through '*condensation*', '*precipitation*' and '*evaporation*'. They use the correct geographical vocabulary to describe the formation of a river, such as '*source*', '*tributary*' and '*mouth*'. They apply their skills in mathematics to draw graphs to record the amount of water used in the home. Pupils work co-operatively, when required. Some have recently worked in small groups to research information about the River Severn in order to produce a class book. However, as their skills of researching from different sources are rather limited, much of the information comes directly from books or printed from Internet sites.
163. Pupils in Year 5 offer their opinions about the local environment. They debate whether the main road should be closed to traffic. In taking on the role of different people within the community, one pupil (representing the shopkeepers) wrote, '*We think the High Street shouldn't be closed. I mean, really think of us. We need money our jobs depend on Wharf Road*'. They write about ways in which they can improve their local environment. '*I feel it is a good place to be but it needs to be much tidier.*' '*You can improve it by putting a couple of bins on the Road also a park and a petrol station on it.*'
164. As they move through the school, pupils develop their ideas about different places. Pupils in Year 5 visit Scarborough for a residential trip to compare and contrast that environment with their own. In Year 4, they study how life in India is very different from their local area. In thinking about why people move from the deserts to the towns, one pupil wrote, '*Because they can't get jobs, there is more food and water and it is much cooler*'.
165. Teachers plan for a good range of topics. The quality of teaching is sound overall. Pupils listen carefully and respond to teachers' questions. Teachers encourage pupils to use correct geographical terminology. They make learning intentions clear at the beginning of lessons and in the most effective lessons, refer to these at the end as a measure of success. Pupils use literacy and numeracy skills appropriately for presenting information. There is limited opportunity for them to use their information and communication technology skills other than for data handling. Pupils' use of the library for research is limited.
166. The quality of marking is considerably varied. In the best examples, teachers refer to the objective of the lesson so the pupils know how well they have achieved. However, a

scrutiny of pupils' work reveals that there are many occasions where pupils' work has not been marked.

167. Pupils participate well in lessons, particularly during practical activities. Pupils in Year 3 work together to give directions to each other on a map by using the points of a compass. They understand the necessity for a key and one said, *'If you didn't know what something meant on a map you could look it up and find out'*. Homework is used to good effect, for example, when pupils plot their route to school.

HISTORY

168. Standards of attainment in history by the end of Year 6 are as expected nationally. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils have adequate opportunities to develop their skills at interpreting sources of evidence and developing a sense of chronology. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress.
169. The curriculum for history is broad and covers a number of historical periods. Pupils in Year 3 begin their journey back in time through the study of *'Invaders and Settlers'*. They use correct vocabulary to describe *'invade'* and *'settle'*. They compare the lives of Anglo Saxons and use pictures of historical evidence to interpret how the lives of these people were different from their own. One pupil wrote, *'In Anglo-Saxon times, Pinxton was different to now. Most of the houses were made of wood and had a thatched roof'*. Another pupil wrote about the invasion, *'I rowed across the North Sea. We landed on a beautiful land. The land was Britain. We attacked the people in Briton. Some people ran away because they were too scared we captured some people and turned them into slaves. We said we were going to take over the land'*.
170. Very good teaching brings history alive for pupils in Year 4. Pupils listened with awe and wonder to their teacher explaining about The Blitz. The sights and sounds were recreated through the appropriate use of a video and, later, an air raid warning siren. A Morrison Shelter was recreated in the classroom to provide pupils with the perfect opportunity to experience the fear and excitement of an air raid.
171. Teachers' planning successfully includes all aspects of the history curriculum. It includes the development of pupils' skills in interpreting evidence. The school's adequate range of resources is suitably used. Teachers use visitors and visits to places of interest well to support pupils' learning. For example, in Year 5 pupils experience an 'Egyptian day' where they have the opportunity to dress up in authentic costumes and act out scenes which tell the story of life in Ancient Egypt. A visit to a World War 2 museum allowed pupils in Year 4 to examine a range of artefacts and experience the sounds and smells of an air raid shelter.
172. A weakness in the teaching of history is that, too often, tasks do not match to the abilities of the pupils. A good example of where work is suitable for different pupils is in Year 5. In studying the Ancient Greeks, the pupils have been learning about the Battle of Marathon. The teacher arranged three different levels of question sheets for the pupils. Lower attaining pupils were required to read the information and simple questions guided their answers. More able pupils were required to interpret the evidence provided and give opinions in more detail. In some classes, pupils do not have the opportunity to find out information for themselves. Their skills at researching are not particularly well developed. Pupils' use of information and communication technology is limited.
173. Older pupils have insufficient opportunities to write from personal viewpoints and describe the impact of developments in technology on lives today; for example, the invention of the steam engine when studying the Victorians. Nearly all pupils in one class have identical

work in their books. This indicates that they have copied from a book, worksheet or the board. The newly appointed co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the teaching and learning of history across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

174. Standards in information and communication technology are below average at the end of Year 6. Pupils do not have the full range of skills, understanding and knowledge expected for their ages. There are two contributory reasons for this. Firstly, skills have not been systematically taught in previous years. Secondly, hardware and software have been inadequate.
175. The school has addressed both of these issues by adopting a scheme of work that systematically builds up skills and investing in new computers and software. In addition, teachers are currently undertaking in-service training to help them develop and teach the skills necessary to meet the National Curriculum requirements. Much is only just in place, but the school is moving in the right direction.
176. As a result of these efforts, boys and girls now make satisfactory progress and achieve similar standards in their work. This includes pupils who have special educational needs, who particularly benefit from the help provided by support staff. At present, much of the teaching aims to provide pupils with skills and the opportunity to practise these by applying them to a realistic situation. Pupils do not, however, have sufficient opportunities to widen and develop their use of information and communication technology. This is because of the difficulties in gaining access to computers in cramped classrooms. This impedes better progress, particularly for those more able pupils who have the capacity to develop and extend their learning.
177. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils used data handling programs to gather and present, in different forms, information from science investigations on the insulating properties of different materials. With adult help, they successfully sorted out the information they required and followed the on-screen instructions to display and print the results. Data handling was also seen in Year 6. A group of lower attaining pupils were working with their class teacher on producing different types of graph from the information they had entered into the computer. They looked at the different options available; for example, a pie chart, straight-line or block graph. With prompting, they discussed then chose the most appropriate one for their purpose. Their confidence grew and, through questioning and demonstration, they showed positive gains in learning.
178. In Year 5, pupils were learning about the application of spreadsheets. A whole-class introduction was observed where the teacher explained how to set up a spreadsheet, enter information and enable various features, such as the 'auto-calculate', in order to process information. Working in pairs, pupils then practised these new skills. Good preparation and step-by-step explanations made a valuable contribution to this lesson. As a result, pupils were able to make good progress with the acquisition of these skills. Support staff provided good help and guidance in this lesson for pupils with statements of special educational need to ensure that they fully understood the teacher's instructions and explanations.
179. Pupils are enthusiastic about the use of information and communication technology. Some have computers at home and access the Internet on a regular basis. Others have access to computer-based games. However, discussions with pupils show that they have a wide range of experience and understanding.
180. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is improving through the current programme of in-service training and they are gaining confidence.

Some good skills in teaching are evident in the school but, as yet, there is insufficient planning for pupils to develop across the curriculum. The furniture moving that is needed in some classes for pupils to gain access to the computer is disruptive. Additionally, issues out of the school's control – such as the access to the Internet – act as a damper to teachers' more active efforts. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that there is insufficient application of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

181. The school's new scheme of work gives comprehensive coverage of the National Curriculum requirements. However, at the moment, few pupils are familiar with control technology skills and they do not apply these in such areas as science and design and technology. Assessment procedures are at a very early stage of development.
182. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' experience of computer usage was inconsistent. Keyboard skills were not appropriately developed and few pupils knew how to save or print their work. When the present headteacher took up his post, he found that the situation had deteriorated.
183. The quality of resources in the school is good, but problems with pupils' access to computers now limits further progress in developing the subject and its application across the curriculum. The headteacher and governors have already committed significant funds to the purchase of resources and are keen to address the outstanding problems they face. Recent refurbishment in the main building provides some helpful short-term solutions to some of these issues.

MUSIC

184. Standards of attainment in music at the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The newly appointed co-ordinator, in collaboration with the previous co-ordinator for music, has begun to develop the confidence of teachers to teach music through the introduction of a published scheme to guide their planning. Development of the music curriculum is not a priority within the school at present. Teachers have yet to have help and advice in implementing the ideas contained in the scheme of work.
185. Only two lessons were timetabled during the inspection. Additional evidence has been gathered from discussions with teachers and pupils and a thorough analysis of teachers' planning documents. Due to changes in staffing, recorder and choir activities no longer take place.
186. Pupils in Year 4 use a variety of body percussion sounds to investigate ways to recreate different timbres and dynamics. They sing enthusiastically and listen appreciatively to music that creates different moods. They work co-operatively together to compose the introduction to a piece of music that represents the sea. They study different pictures of the sea and use words such as '*calm*' and '*angry*' to describe the music they have created. There is a good link between this work and their work in literacy. Pupils in Year 5 develop their musical vocabulary by using the words '*ostinato*', '*timbre*', '*crescendo*' and '*diminuendo*' correctly to describe the way different sounds are put together. They concentrate well and support each other when composing in small groups. In assemblies pupils sing enthusiastically and tunefully.
187. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. Planning is adequately detailed to allow the development of skills across the school. In lessons, teachers make learning intentions clear. Their high expectations of behaviour mean that lessons run smoothly and at a good pace. Teachers plan a range of activities for pupils during lessons to reinforce the skills they have been learning over time. This keeps pupils interested and motivated.

188. A hindrance to pupils' learning is the way in which teachers plan for pupils to compose in the classroom all at the same time. The limited space means that, on occasions, the volume becomes overbearing and pupils are unable to discuss or try out their ideas. Teachers use resources well to stimulate pupils' imaginations and ideas but, as yet, there is limited use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

189. Standards at the end of Year 6 are similar to those expected of pupils at the age of 11 years. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, made satisfactory progress. The school reports that the majority of pupils meet the national requirements in swimming by the end of Year 6.
190. Year 6 pupils demonstrate good attack and passing skills in hockey. They collaborate well with each other and draw well on their earlier learning to improve and develop their technique. Defence skills are not quite as refined. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of regular exercise. However, in the lesson seen the warm-up exercises lacked pace and were not sufficiently related to the main focus of the lesson. As a result, the main part of the lesson was not long enough for pupils to develop and consolidate their work. They had too little time to observe and improve their own performance.
191. Year 4 pupils understand the effect of exercise on the heart. In the lesson seen, they were investigating strategies for long and short distance running. During this lesson, pupils measured their pulse rate at regular intervals. They recognised the increases that took place after a mild warm-up and then after a burst of fast running. Pupils recorded further increases as they practised relay running and baton changes. This initial work successfully prepared pupils for running longer distances. By the end of the lesson, they knew that they needed to pace themselves and work as a team. The lesson rounded off well when pupils compared their pulse rates before and after the cool-down activity and appreciated what had contributed to the slow down in their pulse rate.
192. Pupils apply literacy and numeracy skills incidentally in physical education lessons. Good use was made of numeracy skills in the Year 4 lesson in taking and recording pulse rates. At present, there is limited use of information and communication technology in the subject.
193. Pupils enjoy physical activities. They work well with each other. Pupils with special educational needs have good support and encouragement from staff and fellow pupils. As a result, they are able to take a full part in all activities. The school actively promotes pupils' participation in team events both in and out of school.
194. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection when some teaching was unsatisfactory. Class management is good and teachers plan lessons carefully. In the Year 6 lesson, the delivery of the lesson did not do justice to the teacher's preparations. This was essentially because the lesson did not get off to a fast enough start. In the Year 4 lesson, the teacher made good use of time from the outset.
195. The co-ordinator has developed a comprehensive scheme of work, which enables pupils to develop skills across a range of activities. The co-ordinator has identified dance as an area for further development. Recently, there has been a focus on multi-cultural dance in Year 3, which has included work arising from a visiting performance of Indian dance. The co-ordinator is working with colleagues from other schools in the area to develop an assessment policy. This includes staff from the receiving high school, who also work with Year 6 pupils in the summer term.

196. Resources are satisfactory. The school is short of storage space. Access to equipment is adequate overall. The co-ordinator has recently renewed many of the small games equipment. The school has recently applied for funding to provide coaching and equipment in basketball.
197. The school hall is too small for dance and gymnastic activity. In one Year 6 class, there are 38 pupils. The only way for teachers to conduct lessons safely is for half the class to sit at the side of the hall watching the others. Whilst there is some merit in pupils observing each other, they have insufficient opportunity to make use of this information to improve their own performances. There are proposals to build a community sports hall on the school site, but the school is not aware of the starting date of this work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

198. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
199. Throughout the school, progress in religious education is satisfactory, but the quality and presentation of written work is sometimes disappointing. The limited amount of writing produced in lessons does not always mirror the quality of learning and discussion that has been ongoing in lessons. Pupils make limited use of information and communication technology to support their work, for example in research or writing. Pupils have limited opportunities to use the library for research.
200. Religious education lessons feature regularly on class timetables and clear guidelines provide a structure for teachers to follow. This enables pupils to build up their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and other world religions year-on-year. For instance, younger pupils in Year 3 reflect on the importance of having rules in school and at home. In Year 4, this learning forms a bedrock for the study of rules and symbols in the Church and in other faiths.
201. Very few lessons were observed in religious education, but an evaluation of pupils' books shows that they study important celebrations and festivals such as Easter, Diwali and Hannukah in depth. There are pockets of interesting and imaginative work, which enable pupils to draw from their own experience. For instance, in Year 5, pupils write a personal account of a shared experience and then consider different interpretations. This work is linked effectively to understanding different accounts in the New Testament. In Year 4, pupils consider the wonder of the natural world as they study a painting by Rousseau and describe the strong feelings the images evoke. This learning helps pupils to empathise with others and understand what makes other people feel happy or sad.
202. Pupils listen and behave well in lessons and are interested to find out about other values and beliefs. Pupils with statements for their special educational needs are well supported by classroom support teachers (ECOs) and so make good progress.
203. In the limited number of lessons observed, teaching was sound. Lesson planning follows the agreed syllabus and teachers have good subject knowledge. In both lessons and assemblies, the contribution from teachers' own experience, such as visits to holy places and shrines in other countries, enhances pupils' learning.
204. The co-ordinator has evaluated policy and guidelines in religious education and has plans to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subject to make other improvements. At present, resources are organised in topic boxes for each year group and are appropriate to support learning.

