

INSPECTION REPORT

PROSPECT HILL JUNIOR SCHOOL

Worksop

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122730

Headteacher: Mr P Scott

Acting headteacher at the time of inspection:

Mrs A Gowan

Reporting inspector: Mr C Kessell
20695

Dates of inspection: 15th - 18th April 2002

Inspection number: 244679

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 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Maple Drive Worksop Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	S81 0LR
Telephone number:	01909 472465
Fax number:	01909 530644
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stewart Hutchinson
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20695	Mr C Kessell	Registered inspector	Mathematics Physical education	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well the pupils are taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19335	Mrs S Dixon	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22805	Ms J Greer	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Religious education Provision for pupils with special educational needs Equality of opportunity	
25623	Mr J E Cox	Team inspector	English Geography History Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	
121172	Mrs W Knight	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Prospect Hill Junior is about average in size and has 202 full-time pupils (92 boys and 110 girls) aged between seven and eleven. The school is situated on the north east of Worksop and serves an area of private and rented accommodation. The attainment of the pupils when they start school is currently well above average although year groups in the past have started school with average attainment. Nearly all of the pupils are of white ethnic heritage. Two pupils speak English as an additional language but are not at an early stage of understanding the English language. 30% of pupils are identified as having special educational needs; these figures are above average. The majority of these pupils are identified as having learning difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, at 11%, is below the national average. During the current academic year, the headteacher is on secondment with the local education authority. The deputy has been appointed as the acting-headteacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. The positive atmosphere and friendly environment is a notable feature. Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievements are very good. Teaching is good overall and the pupils learn effectively. The school is very well led and managed by the acting head in the absence of the substantive headteacher. His contribution to the success of the school has also been very good. The staff work very well as a team and are committed to maintaining the high standards achieved at the school and improving further the quality of education. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievements in these subjects are very good. Standards in art and design, geography, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are higher than found in most other schools.
- Teaching is consistently good.
- The school is very well led and managed and governors are very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Moral and social development are very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. Relationships through the school are very strong.

What could be improved

- Enhancing provision for higher attaining and gifted pupils.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and carers of children in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the previous inspection in October 1997 has been very good. The positive features identified in that inspection have been maintained and the school has addressed the issues identified by the previous report very successfully. Subject co-ordinators now undertake their roles very well and the monitoring of teaching and learning has been implemented effectively. Statutory requirements for ICT and religious education are now fulfilled and all subjects have schemes of work to support the development of the curriculum. Provision for special educational needs is now judged to be very good and there have been some improvements in the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Standards have improved in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and there have been significant improvements in ICT and religious education that were judged to be well below average at the last inspection. There have also been significant improvements in the quality of teaching.

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			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	A	A	A
Mathematics	B	A	A	A
Science	A	A	A	A

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

The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2001 indicated that standards in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average. When compared to similar schools, standards were also well above average in these three subjects. The pupils' achievements were very good in relation to their prior attainment. Since 1997, the school's trend of improvement has been above the national trend. The school's statutory targets for 2002 are challenging but show the school's commitment to maintaining high standards. Standards are currently well above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils reach the expected standards in all other subjects with the exception of art and design, geography, ICT and religious education where standards are higher than normally found.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and display high levels of enthusiasm for learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils behave consistently well both in and out of lessons.
Personal development	Very good. Pupils enthusiastically undertake a number of

and relationships	responsibilities in classrooms and at lunchtime.
Attendance	During the last academic year attendance was well below the national average. Current figures show a significant improvement although a small number of pupils still have attendance records that cause concern.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 - 6
Quality of teaching	Good

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

Teaching is judged to be good overall. Just less than 25% of lessons were very good or better and this proportion is a significant improvement on the previous inspection. Literacy and numeracy lessons were consistently good and effectively planned following the recommendations of the national strategies. Basic skills are taught very well and are often well promoted in other subjects. Lessons are generally well planned and the pupils learn effectively. They are very interested in their lessons and apply considerable effort to their work. Pupils talk confidently about current and past activities and show a good understanding of their learning. Pupils with special educational needs learn effectively. The classroom assistants make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning experiences.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and well planned. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been used effectively to raise standards. Equal opportunities are provided for all pupils. The school offers very good extra-curricular opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The management of special educational needs is very good and there is effective and well organised provision.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The pupils who speak English as an additional language are well integrated into the school and make the same progress as their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Moral and social development are strengths of the school. Pupils need to experience more non-Western art, literature and music and be given more opportunities to prepare for life in our multicultural society.
How well the school	The school provides a caring environment and very good attention

cares for its pupils	is paid to the needs of all pupils. Their academic progress is very well monitored.
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Parents support the school well and are appreciative of the education provided for their children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and managed by the acting headteacher. The substantive head can take credit for the overall effectiveness of the school and the high expectations. Teaching and non-teaching staff work very well as a team and the subject co-ordinators manage their areas of the curriculum well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The role of the governors has improved since the previous inspection. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and through their committee structure are fully involved in the development of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is always looking to improve standards and the quality of education. Good use is made of data and assessment information. A self-evaluation cycle is currently being developed.
The strategic use of resources	Staff and resources are very well deployed and the match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall, as is the school's accommodation. Careful thought is given to financial planning by the school and governors to ensure value for money is achieved and the quality of education maintained.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The friendly atmosphere and approachable staff. Teaching is good. • The high standards and good progress. • The children care about each other. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • Class sizes and vertical grouping. • Information about how children are getting on.

The views above are taken from the pre-inspection meeting, that was attended by 12 parents, and the 73 responses to the parents' questionnaire. The inspection team supports the parents' positive views. The school offers very good activities outside lessons and the information provided for parents about how their children are getting on is satisfactory overall. Vertical

grouping is a common feature in many primary schools and is well managed at Prospect Hill. Some classrooms are cramped because of large numbers but this does not detract from the quality of education provided or the effective delivery of the National Curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 The pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is well above average. However, this has not always been the case. For example, the current Year 6 started the school with average standards in reading and writing and below average attainment in mathematics. The National Curriculum test results for 2001 showed that by the time the pupils were eleven, standards were well above average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools the picture was just as positive, with well above average standards in all three subjects. The pupils' achievements were very good in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Since 1997, the school's trend of improvement in these three subjects is above the national trend. Despite a fall in the actual percentages of pupils achieving the expected level 4 or above in English and mathematics in 2001, the school has maintained well above average standards in all three subjects since 2000. This slight fall in 2001 was predicted in the school targets and was the result of a slightly weaker year group of pupils. Standards in science have been consistently high since 1998. In 2001 the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 5 was well above average in all three subjects and taking the three years 1999 to 2001 together, the pupils exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. The school's ability to raise and then maintain standards is a combination of a number of factors. Teaching and learning are consistently good and good use is made of assessment information to track pupils' progress particularly in English and mathematics. The pupils are enthusiastic about school and the whole school culture is geared towards achieving the best and continual improvement. Expectations are high and good use is made of initiatives such as 'booster' classes to ensure that pupils of different ability are put into groups that offer appropriate help and support as the pupils prepare for national tests in Year 6. The school's targets for 2002 and 2003 are challenging, but show the school's commitment to maintaining high standards.

2 Standards are currently well above average in English, mathematics and science for the pupils in Year 6. By the time they are eleven, pupils listen very carefully and successfully interpret the meaning of discussions. They speak fluently and use a wide vocabulary. The pupils read fluently and use expression to give meaning to what they read. They show enjoyment in reading and talk confidently about the wide range of books they read at home and school. Writing is of a high standard and pupils plan their work well using imaginative words and phrases to hold the reader's attention. In mathematics the pupils work quickly and effectively when challenged by mental mathematics. They develop their own strategies for problem solving and appreciate the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages. Pupils are able to find the area and perimeter of irregular shapes and accurately undertake data handling exercises. They have a well-developed scientific knowledge and are able to devise their own investigations. Pupils use the correct terminology to describe the major organs of the human body and can classify materials into solids, liquids and gases.

3 Standards in art and design, geography, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are higher than those found in most other schools. For ICT and religious education this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when

standards in these subjects were judged to be well below average. Standards in art and design and geography have been maintained. Pupils make good progress in these subjects. Standards in design and technology, history, music and physical education are similar to those found in other schools. Design and technology has improved since the previous inspection and in the other subjects, standards have been maintained. Pupils' achievements in these subjects are satisfactory overall and good in history.

4 As a result of the well organised provision and targeted support, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Two pupils speak English as an additional language but are not at early stages of English acquisition. Their achievements are similar to those of the other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

5 Pupils have very good attitudes to their work. They display high levels of enthusiasm for learning and they approach their lessons and activities with eagerness. This has a positive effect upon their learning and creates a happy and purposeful environment. Pupils respond well to stimulating questions and offer full and well considered replies. In most lessons pupils listen well to their teachers and each other and instructions are followed quickly. In a minority of lessons some pupils are less attentive and responsive. This occurs where pupils are unclear about the requirements of the lesson or are insufficiently involved. When undertaking activities and practical work, pupils are often highly industrious. They can work well alone, in pairs and small groups, for example, in a Year 3 and 4 geography lesson where pupils worked in groups to discuss various aspects of village life in India. Discussion skills are well developed and pupils offer reasoned and mature opinions. In some lessons noise carrying over from neighbouring classes has an adverse effect but despite this pupils concentrate very well and work hard throughout the day.

6 The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave consistently well, both in and out of lessons and show a good understanding of what is and is not acceptable behaviour. Rewards are accepted with pride although pupils feel that differences in the reward systems in different classes gives more encouragement to some than to others. A very small number of pupils display challenging behaviour in lessons. This is often effectively dealt with but inconsistency in the application of sanctions across the school does not always provide sufficient support for these pupils. There is no evidence of conflict or bullying at playtimes. Pupils report few problems at these times and feel that there has been recent improvement largely due to the introduction of playground mediators and increased opportunities in personal and social education lessons to learn about and respect the views of others. There has been one exclusion in the recent past. This was supported by appropriate procedures and proved effective.

7 Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils undertake a variety of responsibilities in the classrooms and at lunchtimes and have good opportunities to develop as caring citizens. They take their duties seriously and carry them out efficiently. For example, pupils serving on the school council understand the need to represent the views of their fellows rather than their own views. Personal and social education lessons provide pupils with good opportunities to share their feelings and opinions. In lessons, pupils are confident and independent. Pupils appreciate the achievements of their fellow peers. They can organise their own learning well and have good co-operative and independent learning skills. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.

8 The relationships within the school community are very good. Pupils work and play amicably together offering each other support and encouragement. Throughout the school there are many examples of pupils showing deep thought and understanding for others. This is

reflected in both their relationships and in the work that they do. The general respect that pupils show for others and their level of self-awareness is excellent. Pupils themselves feel that they have gained much in their ability to understand and get on well with their classmates with the introduction of the class councils and increased opportunities to express themselves and listen to others.

9 During the last academic year levels of attendance were below the national average and were unsatisfactory. The school has worked hard to improve attendance and figures for the current academic year show considerable improvement. Absences are largely due to childhood illness. However a significant number of families still take holidays in term time and for these pupils in particular this has a detrimental effect upon their learning. There are a small number of pupils that have attendance records that cause concern. The school is very well supported by the education welfare service when needed. Most pupils arrive at school on time although a small number do not. Registrations are conducted efficiently at the start of the school day and there is a prompt start to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

10 The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Twenty-four per cent of lessons were very good or better compared with 4% previously and 98% of lessons were satisfactory or better compared with 80% last time. One lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory because a significant minority of pupils were not engaged in the lesson. This compares with 17% at the previous inspection. Two lessons observed were judged to be excellent. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There have also been improvements in the teaching of history, ICT and religious education that were described as having weaknesses previously. These findings would support the parents' response to the pre-inspection questionnaire when 96% agreed that teaching was good in the school.

11 Through the national strategies in literacy and numeracy, basic skills are taught very well. These lessons are well planned following the strategy recommendations and good emphasis is placed on developing the skills of literacy and numeracy in other lessons. For example, pupils' speaking and listening skills were very well promoted in a Year 3 and 4 science lesson where pupils were expected to devise their own experiments about whether plants need leaves to grow. Measuring skills were developed as part of a Year 5 science lesson focusing on the skeleton and the size of bones. Pupils are consistently required to research topics, developing their higher reading skills and producing different styles of writing for subjects such as history, religious education and geography. The teachers have very high expectations of the pupils in terms of academic achievement and behaviour. Lessons are well managed and the majority of classes have a positive learning atmosphere where pupils are prepared to work hard and put considerable effort into their work. There is a good pace of working and pupils cover a good range of work in all subjects. Despite the high expectations, some lessons could be organised more effectively with a greater emphasis placed on ensuring that the range of abilities found in all classes and groups are effectively challenged. On some occasions more could be provided for the higher attaining pupils in terms of extension activities or providing time targets for work. This approach is becoming increasingly more important for the school as attainment on entry rises. In the very good or excellent lessons observed all pupils were challenged effectively and able to work to their full potential.

12 The teachers know their pupils well and their obvious enthusiasm rubs off on the pupils who are interested and excited by their lessons. They talk enthusiastically about their current or past work. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and to think for themselves. This was observed in a number of lessons. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 geography lesson, pupils worked in groups of four 'brainstorming' what they thought it was like to live in an Indian village using their own knowledge and understanding and evidence from a

class display. Year 4 pupils had to think and make decisions for themselves as they compiled a database in ICT and in a Year 5 and 6 lesson where pupils were simultaneously undertaking art and design, design and technology and history activities, they showed good independence and a mature attitude to learning. Conversely, some of the teachers' marking does not involve the pupils enough. Although work is marked regularly and features positive comments, there is inconsistent use of information that enables pupils to move on to the next stage of learning independently or provide them with extra challenge.

13 Excellent teaching was observed in a Year 6 ICT lesson and a Year 3 and 4 literacy session. Both these lessons featured excellent introductions by the class teachers that enabled pupils to have a very clear understanding of what to do and how to do it. Both teachers were very confident in the subjects that they were teaching and the strong relationships that pervaded both lessons also contributed to the outstanding learning that occurred. The pupils settled quickly and enthusiastically to their activities and produced work of a high standard. In both lessons, no time was wasted.

14 Pupils with special educational needs learn very well because of the carefully planned tasks. These are derived from their individual education plans. There is close co-operation between class teachers, classroom assistants and outside agencies to ensure that they take part in normal class lessons. In some English lessons, pupils are withdrawn in small groups to concentrate on specific tasks, such as phonic awareness. In other lessons, classroom assistants sit with pupils ensuring that they understand what is being taught and respond appropriately either orally or in writing. Teachers make good use of practical resources and computer software. Pupils with more severe needs are particularly well catered for with special equipment or additional support. Pupils make very good progress because of the quality of support they receive.

15 The majority of lessons are properly planned and organised. Time is used well, as are support staff and resources. The classroom assistants make an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning. They possess the qualities observed in good teachers and organise the support they give in literacy and numeracy very well. Resources are used effectively to support lessons; for example Year 5 and 6 pupils listened to a tape of people talking about being evacuated as part of their work in history. At the pre-inspection meeting with parents, some concerns were raised about homework. Inspection evidence would indicate that homework is used well to support the school curriculum and a number of examples of homework being used effectively were observed. Year 5 pupils had prepared work on measuring bones for size and growth and Year 6 pupils were expected to find out if any relatives were involved in evacuation. A high quality Year 3 and 4 display about the Romans was completed through homework. Pupils were expected to use the Internet or local library for research.

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

16 The curriculum is broad and balanced and well planned to thoroughly cover all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. The shortcomings identified in the previous inspection report have been eliminated. The minimum recommended teaching time is now scheduled, there is appropriate time allocated to mathematics and religious education, and both the ICT and religious education curricula are thoroughly covered. All subjects have suitable schemes of work to ensure that essential progression is provided and similar work is taught to pupils in classes containing the same age group. Indeed, planning has been carefully considered so that where classes contain two age groups, pupils are still taught subjects in a logical order. All co-ordinators now methodically monitor provision and provide feedback on identified areas for development or aspects that are less satisfactorily covered so that these can be improved. Beyond the basic requirements there are many cross-curricular links to

enable pupils to see the relevance of what they are learning. In Year 5, for instance, there are links between literacy, history, art and personal, health and social education in the current work on *The Patchwork Quilt* story. In Year 3, pupils practise compass points in a song during a music lesson.

17 Staff expertise is used very well to provide best possible arrangements for all pupils in literacy and numeracy. By judicious timetabling of the resources for initiatives such as Additional Literacy Strategy, Additional Numeracy Strategy and 'booster' classes, pupils are currently in ability 'sets' for these sessions. Part-time teachers are effectively used to organise pupils into single year groups for science and ICT in Years 5 and 6. These arrangements and the good use of National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have contributed significantly to improved standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT.

18 Although the scheme of work for personal, health and social education is still in draft form, provision is in practice good. Where appropriate, support is brought in from external sources. A police officer, for instance, taught a session of the DARE (drugs awareness) programme to Year 6 during the inspection, and the school nurse regularly supports the sex education sessions. A regular 'circle time'¹ lesson has been timetabled for this academic year for each class to enhance provision.

19 Equal opportunities are provided for all pupils. Any withdrawal for special educational needs support is carefully arranged so that pupils do not regularly miss the same lessons, and on pupils' return their class teachers ensure they are able to catch up with work missed.

20 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. All these pupils have access to the full National Curriculum. Additional support is provided in some lessons by teaching assistants and sometimes by withdrawal in small groups. The groups are reassessed each half term to match the support to their changing needs. Tasks are derived from pupils' individual education plans and matched to the appropriate level for each target set.

21 The school offers very good extra-curricular opportunities to enrich provision. Frequent visits and visitors are used to support the curriculum, including recent trips to Southwell Minster for religious education and Perlethorpe village for history (on the Victorians). Many of these are organised annually as part of the planned work, but the school is also quick to take one-off opportunities for workshops and visitors too. Pupils have a useful opportunity to go on residential trips. A wide range of extra-curricular clubs is provided including gardening, art, chess, computer, sports and recorder groups. These sometimes provide additional opportunities to take part in music and sporting competitions. Parents, pupils and non-teaching staff as well as teachers often run them. Good quality violin and keyboard lessons are also offered by visiting teachers. All pupils have access to all school activities, including after school clubs, out-of-school and residential visits.

22 The school has appropriate links with the adjacent infant school and is involved in a 'pyramid' of local schools working on a joint project involving the secondary school which provides a 'bridge' between the work in Years 6 and 7. Involvement with the local community supports the curriculum when appropriate, such as work on the local shopping centre in geography.

23 Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. All curriculum policies include a statement on how that subject can promote these aspects of

¹ Lessons in which pupils discuss feelings and ways of dealing with the situations in which they find themselves.

pupils' development. There have been good improvements since the previous inspection, especially in promoting pupils' spiritual development. Almost all parents are pleased with the way the school is helping their children become mature and responsible.

24 Evidence from pupils' written work shows that they are encouraged to reflect on what they see, hear and read. Older pupils write poems recalling the Christmas visitation to shepherds from a sheepdog's viewpoint, recognising the wonder and mystery of the occasion. Pupils' become aware of concepts such as harmony and interdependence when discussing different styles of art. Younger pupils express wonder in the way a spring flower emerges from a forgotten bulb planted in the autumn. Year 6 pupils understand that many people need to hold a belief but that people in different cultures hold different beliefs all of which they need to respect. Several very able pupils discuss such issues with great maturity and insight, in one case showing courage in revealing personal religious disbelief. Whilst the school makes good provision for spiritual development, much of this is only expressed through written work rather than opportunities provided by in-depth discussion and debate that help pupils develop their thinking skills and insight still further. During collective worship some teachers inspire a positive atmosphere for quiet reflection, others find this more difficult, so the period of prayerful reflection is limited. Requirements for a daily act of collective worship are met.

25 Promotion of pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils have a very clear understanding of right from wrong. They understand the effect of their actions on others. Through geographical and environmental issues they learn to make reasoned judgements. The most able older pupils raise pertinent questions such as, "Why do people with a religious belief in peace engage in war?" Year 6 pupils learn strategies for saying 'No' through the police led drugs awareness programme.

26 The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. There are good opportunities in many lessons for group co-operation and independent decision making. Pupils undertake independent research during lessons and as homework tasks, such as finding out about aspects of the Second World War for a computer presentation. Younger pupils discuss and set up their own investigation into plant growth. They are allowed to make their own decisions and sometimes discover that these decisions were inappropriate for the task. Other pupils work together, to create a large-scale group sculpture. Year 6 pupils are trained as playground mediators, though they say they are rarely needed. Pupils are given many responsibilities such as acting as mentors to new pupils, manning the outside door at break times, managing the music player for assemblies and helping at lunch time. Two classes are piloting a pupil council before a full school council is introduced in the next academic year.

27 Provision for cultural development is satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. There are good opportunities through a number of subjects to learn about Western culture. Visits to historic houses, the art gallery, museums and other places of interest promote appreciation well. There are too few opportunities to prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society. They learn about other faiths in religious education lessons, but experience very little non-Western art, literature or music. The school invites parents and pupils from other cultures to talk about their lifestyle but the opportunities to do so are very limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28 The school provides a caring environment where all are equally valued. All in school are very well supported by the very good relationships that exist. Very good attention is paid to the needs of all pupils. The school has satisfactory arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils. Health and safety arrangements are satisfactory and these are well supported by a range of suitable policies. A small number of health and safety concerns have been raised with

the headteacher and governing body. Pupils are encouraged to consider their own safety and that of others very well with recent work on road safety and parking problems and for older pupils with their participation in the DARE drugs education programme. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory overall and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. All adults in school are made aware of the action to take should they have any concerns. However the school still lacks adequate and specific written guidance about the formal procedures to follow that would ensure all adults in school are fully informed.

29 The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Weekly staff meetings and accompanying records allow the school to monitor pupils' personal progress well and to swiftly identify any difficulties that pupils may have either as individuals or in general. For example, the school felt that some pupils were not sufficiently confident in expressing themselves or contributing to class discussion and, as result, the provision for personal and social education has been enhanced with circle times, a pupil council and playground mediators. Although only recently introduced, improvement has occurred. In particular pupils feel that quieter pupils are now more confident in speaking in front of others and that they are all now better listeners.

30 The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good as are those for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Records are maintained with regard to whole school and lunchtime behaviour and individual behaviour is also monitored closely. Where necessary, individual schemes are developed and whole school issues tackled well. In response to some issues regarding behaviour at lunchtimes, playground mediators were introduced and these have proved effective in resolving conflict and supporting younger and less confident pupils. In the school as a whole there is a well understood code of conduct.

31 The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Administrative arrangements are efficient and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Attendance is closely monitored and swift action is taken to investigate absences. The advice and assistance of the education welfare officer is sought whenever attendance gives cause for concern. Punctuality is also monitored closely and the school pursues the reasons for lateness effectively. The close attention given to monitoring attendance has brought about considerable improvement. The school and education welfare service hopes to work with parents to further improve the levels of attendance and punctuality.

32 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. The school has been checking pupils' progress in English and mathematics for a number of years so that it can build a picture of how each pupil is progressing. The results of tests taken at the end of Key Stage 1 form the basis of predictions made about the likely levels of attainment for each pupil at the end of Year 3 and Year 6. Further checks are made when pupils take optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. These checks, combined with the tracking of pupils carried out by the local authority, give the school a very clear view of the progress of pupils and enable it to meet the needs of individual pupils. Because of this, procedures for checking and supporting pupils' academic progress in English and mathematics are very good although the same rigour is not applied to analysing results in science. To improve standards in writing, a system of giving pupils individual targets has recently been introduced and this will be extended to mathematics in the near future. There are still no formal assessment procedures for subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Teachers have improved their use of assessment information to identify which pupils need additional support, including those with special educational needs.

33 Statutory reviews for pupils with special educational needs are undertaken as recommended by the national Code of Practice. Interim reviews of individual education plan

targets are undertaken regularly. Progress is assessed using strategies that identify very small steps. This is very closely monitored. New targets are set. Targets may be academic, behavioural or both. Advice is sought from outside agencies when required. The local liaison officer visits regularly to discuss issues concerning individual pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34 The parents' views of the school are good. Parents support the school well and are appreciative of the education provided for their children. In particular they feel that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible citizens. They are pleased with the good progress that their children make and the high expectations that the school has for them. Parents also feel that the school presents a welcoming and supportive environment for both them and their children. Some parents are unhappy with the way the school works with parents and with the information that they receive about their children's progress. Some also feel that the range of activities provided outside lessons is insufficient and that their children do not receive the right amount of homework. The inspection findings support the positive views of parents. Parents' concerns about some aspects of the partnership between them and the school are in part justified and have already been identified by the school for development. The range of activities provided outside lessons is very good. There are a very good number of extra-curricular clubs after school and at lunchtimes and a variety of visits are made to places of interest to support class work. However, parents are not fully informed about the range of opportunities offered to their children. The provision of homework is good. It is well used to support learning but again parents are not fully informed about homework expectations and requirements.

35 The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. There are good relationships between parents and the school. Parents find the staff to be approachable and responsive. Parents are invited to popular seasonal events but at present have few opportunities to gain insight into their children's learning. Parents are not invited to class or celebration assemblies although, in part, the accommodation provided by the school hall hinders this. There are no open lessons but workshop events have been held. The school has good plans to extend these and generally improve the level of communication with parents.

36 The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. A good number of parents are able to provide regular help in school or on school outings and this has a very positive effect upon pupils' learning. Parents support the school parent teacher association very well and respond enthusiastically to the various fundraising and social events offered. The school is appreciative of the very good support it receives from parents.

37 Parents are kept fully informed about the progress of children with special educational needs. The local family of schools has produced a very informative leaflet explaining identification, provision, who to contact in the school and their own role in helping their child. Parents are invited to regular reviews and provided with new individual education plan after that meeting. If they are unable to attend, copies are sent to them. Pupils are included in the review and their views on their progress is sought.

38 The quality of the information provided for parents is satisfactory. Parents are well informed about everyday life in school through useful newsletters. The school brochure and governors' annual report provide some additional information but the content is generally too brief. For example, parents have indicated a wish for more information about extra-curricular clubs and the work that their children do. Information about pupils' work and progress is conveyed in informative annual written reports and with consultation events at the start and close of the school year. Parents have indicated a desire for more information about their children's progress, areas of difficulty and targets for improvement between these events in

order to provide more effective support at home. For the same reason, parents have said they would like more information about the curriculum and work to come in the term ahead.

39 The parents' contribution to learning at home and school is good. Homework is well supported and this has a beneficial effect upon pupils' learning. Homework diaries inform pupils and parents about the homework that has been set and also offer a communication route. They do not provide detailed information about the curriculum or how parents may help to support their children's learning at home. Parents feel that the school has high expectations for their children and most parents are clearly committed to supporting this. However the significant number of holidays taken in term time shows that not all share this same commitment.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40 The school is very well led and managed. Ninety-seven per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school is well led and managed and inspection evidence would support this view. Concerns offered in the previous inspection about leadership and management are no longer an issue. The teaching and non-teaching staff work exceptionally well as a team and the positive atmosphere and purposeful learning environment that is noticeable on entering the school is a credit to all concerned. There are high expectations both in terms of academic performance and the personal development of the pupils. The development of the school focuses very much on maintaining the very high standards achieved and continually improving the quality of education provided for the pupils. All of this is undertaken in a relaxed atmosphere, where pupils feel comfortable with what they are doing and all feel valued. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents commented that although expectations are high, the pupils did not feel pressured. The acting headteacher is energetic, well informed and popular with the parents, pupils and staff. She is held in high regard and one can see why the governors were able to agree to the substantive headteacher undertaking a local education authority secondment because the school was left in good hands. She has maintained the very good work started by the substantive headteacher whose very significant contribution to putting the school where it is, should not be forgotten. Through the school, there is a shared commitment to improvement. Staff are keen and receptive to discuss new ideas on how to improve their practice and by the end of the current academic year, the acting head will have produced a whole school self-evaluation plan. The previous inspection described 'a lack of clear educational direction for the school'. This is no longer the case.

41 The previous inspection also criticised the teachers' expertise as co-ordinators. The role of the co-ordinator has developed significantly and the majority provide good leadership for their subjects. Much of this is due to the school's monitoring cycle that allows co-ordinators to undertake classroom observations, monitor teachers' planning and analyse work. Consequently, they have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. This also enables them to produce an audit report of their subject that contributes to the school development plan. This is a useful and fluid document that is reviewed at the end of each year with priorities changing according to school priorities and subject audits. In the main, the school development plan focuses on raising and maintaining standards and improving the quality of education. For example, the school recognises that, with the improvement in attainment on entry, more emphasis will be needed on the achievements of higher attaining and gifted pupils. The school governors constantly discuss elements of the school development plan and agree the plan when it is received in draft form. The governors would acknowledge they should be more involved in the drafting. However, the role of the governors has improved overall since the previous inspection. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, despite their limited role in drafting the school development plan, are actively involved in shaping the direction of the school particularly through their clearly defined committee structure. For example, the school and governors are

currently deciding on whether to have seven or eight classes for the next academic year. All the issues involved in this decision are being carefully judged. As well as identifying the budget implications governors are considering whether they can sustain such an arrangement in future years and recruit staff in the current climate. The overall issue for the governors is the impact on the quality of education. The governors now fulfil statutory requirements, which was not the case at the previous inspection.

42 As regards financial planning, the school puts together a draft budget for consideration by the governors. They are provided with good and regular financial information by the school so they can monitor the use and development of the budget through the Finance and General Purposes committee. Although educational priorities are generally well supported through the school's financial planning it is unclear why all subjects are given the same nominal sum of money to spend when subject co-ordinators have considerable information about their subjects and could prioritise spending on an annual basis. Grant funding is used well for its designated purposes. A good example of this is the use of 'booster' classes which enables the school to 'set' in English and mathematics in Year 6 for part of the academic year. This enables different ability groups to have particular support and expertise and is contributing to the high standards in the school. The school and governors apply the principles of best value effectively. Parents have been consulted about a proposed amalgamation with the feeder infant school and parents and local residents have been involved in issues related to the school entrance and local parking. The governors recognise the importance of setting challenging targets for improvement in English and mathematics. They have been rigorously involved in the setting of the school's statutory targets. They carefully analyse the standards achieved by the school and compare them with national standards and similar and local schools. Comparing school costs with other schools is underdeveloped. The school and governors appreciate the need to obtain best value in purchasing resources and services.

43 The special educational needs co-ordinator is very experienced. She has a good working knowledge of the new national Code of Practice. The requirements are now fully in place. She is very effective in co-ordinating support for pupils with special needs and has adequate non-contact time to undertake her duties. The co-ordinator liaises well with individual class teachers and classroom assistants to ensure that work is properly matched to targets on pupils' individual education plans. She provides support and resources when needed and maintains a suitable supply of teaching aids and resources, including software for computers and special equipment for more severely disadvantaged pupils. Assessment procedures are very thorough using systems that identify very small steps so pupils' progress can be properly acknowledged.

44 The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. The classroom assistants provide very good quality support that contributes very well to the quality of education provided by the school. Likewise, the school office manager and clerical assistant contribute effectively to the very good day-to-day management of the school and the management of financial resources. The school is committed to staff development and this is appropriately linked to the school's strategy for performance management and the school development plan. The governors produced a confidential questionnaire for staff to judge the impact of performance management and this good practice enabled them to gain a good insight into its effectiveness and overall contribution to school development. The school accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the National Curriculum although some classrooms are cramped and the open-plan nature of the school means that useful work being carried out in one class, for example a class discussion, can have a negative effect on another class. Good quality displays support and encourage the learning environment and the school caretaker and his staff keep the school immaculately clean and tidy. Additional quiet areas are useful for withdrawal groups and general group work. The school has its own computer suite but this can also be cramped and stuffy. The school hall is not helpful for physical education.

Although its innovative design might be of use for group work, neither its shape nor the three different surfaces found on the floor lend themselves to gymnastics or dance lessons. Supporting pillars provide potential health and safety risks and the ceiling is too low for older pupils to undertake 'box work' in gymnastics. Conversely, the outside environment is good. The school is set in pleasant grounds containing an environmental area, a field for sports and games, a reasonably sized playground and 'sunken' areas where pupils can sit or play.

45 The school has a satisfactory range of learning resources overall. Resources for English and ICT, in terms of hardware, are good. Although the school library is small it is well stocked and pupils use it regularly, particularly to research work.

46 With the very good standards and achievements of the pupils, the very good leadership and management, the good teaching and the very good attitudes and personal development of the pupils, the school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

47 The inspection recognises the school's continual drive to raise standards and the quality of education. In addition to the very good work already undertaken and in recognition of the changing attainment on entry and the school's own success, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

Enhance the provision for higher attaining and gifted pupils by: *

- Greater precision in formal and day-to-day assessment;
- More specific and deliberate curriculum planning for these pupils;
- Further development of problem solving, the use of thinking skills, independent learning and other associated areas of learning.

(Paragraphs 11, 32, 41, 54, 55, 59, 63, 64, 80, 81, 85, 88 and 90)

* The key issue has also been recognised by the school as part of the school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	10	23	13	1	0	0
Percentage	4	20	47	27	2	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.

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)	202
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	61

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	21	38	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	21
	Girls	32	34	37
	Total	50	52	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (92)	88 (96)	98 (96)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	20
	Girls	31	33	35
	Total	49	51	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (85)	86 (92)	93 (89)
	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	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	195
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	33.8

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	47

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	437,943
Total expenditure	434,788
Expenditure per pupil	2152
Balance brought forward from previous year	-1003
Balance carried forward to next year	2152

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	1.2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	202
Number of questionnaires returned	73
Percentage of questionnaires returned	36

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	36	5	4	1
My child is making good progress in school.	51	48	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	53	4	3	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	53	11	0	0
The teaching is good.	56	40	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	38	15	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	32	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	26	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	43	12	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	58	39	0	3	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	54	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	44	18	7	4

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

ENGLISH

48 Standards are well above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing by the time pupils are eleven. This indicates an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be above average. There have been year-on-year improvements in the number of pupils reaching the expected levels in national tests until 2001, when standards remained well above average even though there was a slight dip in the results. The school's results are improving at a faster rate than the national trend. This is because teachers have high expectations of pupils and the school makes very good use of its analysis of national test results to improve pupils' standards. Pupils make very good progress in English.

49 Pupils speaking and listening skills are well above average. This marks an improvement since the previous inspection. This is because pupils are given many opportunities to join in discussions. They are expected to make choices, give opinions and to justify their answers with clear explanations. So well introduced is this that, by Year 4, pupils listen to what other people say before forming their own opinions. They respond to the teacher's assertion that Roald Dahl is the greatest author ever by reasoning that, as his books are read in many countries, he must at least be a popular author. Pupils in the same age group use language maturely in ICT lessons when they use words such as 'options' in carrying out tasks. By the age of eleven, almost all pupils listen carefully to what is said and interpret the meaning in discussions succinctly. For example, following a discussion about different types of writing, one pupil said that a letter to a friend differed from explanatory writing because "a letter is personal". Pupils speak fluently, without rehearsal, and use a wide vocabulary. Teachers build pupils' confidence to speak when they show that they value what pupils say. This was seen when a teacher asked the class what they had found difficult in a lesson. She listened carefully to what they said and altered the following day's lesson to take account of pupils' comments.

50 Standards in reading have improved since the previous inspection and, by the age of eleven, are well above those normally expected. Pupils make very good progress. Higher attaining and some average attaining pupils read very fluently. They pay attention to punctuation and use expressive voices to give full meaning to what they read. These pupils show a delight in what they read, talk about books they have at home and borrow from the library. The pleasure they get from reading shows when a pupil says she enjoys reading because "It's a break from the real world and you can go anywhere in a book." Pupils respond well to hearing stories read by adults. One pupil has started reading J. R. R. Tolkien's trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings* after she was read extracts by her father. They become more discerning in what they read. Although many pupils enjoy the books of Roald Dahl, one pupil says she has "*left him behind*" and gone on to read the Harry Potter stories and books by Jenny Oldfield and Ann Martin. Most pupils have books at home and a significant number borrow books from the local library. Many higher and average attaining pupils have good sight vocabularies. They use their knowledge of letter sounds and split words into syllables when they come across unknown words. However, lower attaining pupils often find working out new words difficult. Some stumble over the words, often do not recognise mistakes and do not realise that what they read does not make sense. Although they use letter sounds to try to pronounce the words, they cannot use the sense of the story to help work out the words. However, good reading habits and very good development of reading skills extend to the youngest pupils in the school, where higher attaining pupils enjoy reading the Harry Potter books and recognise techniques used by authors such as alliteration. Good teaching of the National Literacy Strategy and its very effective use means that pupils understand terms such

as 'author' and 'glossary', and how to find information using the contents and index pages. Most pupils know how to use the simple library classification system to help them find books and pupils as young as eight are developing the ability to skim and scan when carrying out research. Although teachers keep detailed records of how well pupils read during the regular guided reading sessions in the literacy hour, there is no formal system of recording what pupils read. Some classes have reading diaries, in which parents write comments about how well pupils read and this forms a useful dialogue between the school and home. In other classes, pupils write their own list of the books they read. This means that the teacher cannot be sure if the books chosen are suitable. Some pupils choose books that are too easy or too difficult.

51 Standards in writing are well above average and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Most pupils make very good progress. They plan their work well, revising what they write before producing a finished piece of work. The most able eleven-year-olds write very well. Pupils maintain the reader's interest when using imaginative words. For example, a Year 6 pupil, wrote "I was tricked, that scoundrel. Whoever heard of an invisible suit?" said the conned king' when retelling the well-known story of *The Emperor's Suit of Clothes*. This builds on very good work in earlier classes, where pupils are encouraged to think carefully about the words they use. This enabled a higher achieving eight-year-old pupil to develop suspense when she wrote, 'Jo crept along to Grandma's room. She edged the door open and peeped inside.' However, some average and lower achieving pupils use the same word too often, using 'I' too many times in the fight scene from *David Copperfield* for example. Pupils plan their work well, and higher and most average attaining pupils use punctuation skilfully. This enables them to use complex sentences to give greater meaning and create atmosphere in their writing. A nine-year-old pupil described the boredom of a detective, writing, 'He was still awake, drinking tea and trying to work out his last case of murder.' Lower achieving pupils, although using the basic punctuation for sentences correctly, are less confident when they use question marks and punctuation to show speech. Pupils write effectively in a variety of styles, composing letters of complaint to newspapers, compiling lists of instructions and explaining how to make objects. By the age of eleven, most pupils separate their work into paragraphs. Pupils use their skills to enliven work in other subjects. In geography, they write passionately to a council about the danger posed to a colony of bats if some trees are cut down and, in religious education, describe the feelings of a sheepdog on a hillside on Christmas Eve. Pupils use computers to display their work, for example, in the form of a newspaper report. The high quality of work produced by some pupils was recognised recently when a poem written by one pupil was chosen from over seventy-two thousand entries to be included in an anthology.

52 All pupils are encouraged to join their handwriting and they regularly practise forming the letters correctly. By the age of eleven, many are developing a fluent and legible style and take care to present their work neatly. This maintains the standards reported at the previous inspection.

53 Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support, which enables them to make very good progress. Teachers make very good use of the support teacher and classroom assistants to take pupils in small groups. Together they plan work that matches very well the needs of these pupils and that ensure the requirements of the individual education plans are met. When classroom assistants work with pupils in normal lessons, they ensure that the pupils keep their minds on the tasks in hand, sensitively but firmly guiding them in what they should be doing. Groups of pupils whose attainment is slightly below the expected level receive extra help. The quality of the help they receive is seen when a pupil is able to write a poem entitled *Spring Flower* containing lines such as:

'Round a purple flower its green leaves opened wide
As if it were opening hands to show a present.'

54 Teaching is good overall, with some very good and excellent teaching. The quality of teaching results in pupils making very good progress and is reflected in the high standards in national test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in recent years. An excellent lesson was characterised by thoughtful planning which allowed pupils to accumulate knowledge in small steps as the lesson progressed because the explanations given by the teacher were very clear. Relationships during the lesson were excellent and the teacher used humour and praise very well to create a situation where pupils had the confidence to voice an opinion. All teachers have good subject knowledge and use questions well to assess how well pupils are learning. In a very good lesson with Year 3 and 4 pupils, this gave the teacher the confidence to amend the lesson as it went along to build on the pupils' enthusiasm. Clear expectations of behaviour were established and the teacher insisted on neat handwriting, frequently checking to see that pupils formed letters correctly. There was no unsatisfactory teaching but lessons were less successful when teachers missed opportunities to make pupils think hard enough. Teachers mark work regularly but the quality of marking is inconsistent. Although marking often tells pupils they have worked well, they are not told often enough what is good about their work or how to improve it. The best marking identifies parts of the writing that are good, says why this is so and makes suggestions for improving other parts.

55 The management of the subject is very good. The school has looked closely at test results for several years and worked out what has been needed to raise standards. The high standards achieved by pupils show that this approach is bearing dividends. There is a desire to improve standards further and the school is looking at ways of getting more pupils to higher levels in writing. The school has just started setting pupils individual targets and there are signs that this is raising standards. Teaching and pupils' work are checked and this has enabled the school to identify the need to improve the quality of marking and further improve standards in writing so that more pupils achieve higher levels. Resources for English are satisfactory. The library is small but well stocked. It is difficult to use without disturbing another class but pupils carry out research in their classroom using books from the library and small groups work with volunteer parents to use the computers in the library.

MATHEMATICS

56 The pupils in Year 6 attain standards that are well above average. This is a similar picture to the 2001 national test results and a significant improvement on the previous inspection when standards were judged to be average. Since 1997 standards have improved year on year with the exception of 2001 when they were slightly lower than the year before. In relation to their prior attainment, pupils' achievements are very good. The current Year 6 pupils came into the school with standards that were below average. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and make very good progress.

57 By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils work calculations out in their heads quickly. Higher attaining pupils accurately subtract decimals from 10 during the mental mathematics session of their lesson. Pupils develop their own strategies for solving number problems. Importantly, they carefully identify and obtain the relevant information when presented with problems written in words. The pupils have a very good understanding of place value and understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. They accurately divide whole numbers and decimals by 10 and 100. Pupils understand and use probability, successfully interpret data such as pie charts and identify the different properties of two-dimensional shapes such as lines of symmetry. The majority of pupils are able to use a well-developed mathematical language and confidently explain reasons for answers because teachers through the school encourage everyone to contribute. This was seen to good effect in a Year 6 numeracy session when the classteacher asked "Who hasn't answered yet?" when

discussing an activity on problem solving. Pupils were encouraged to use a range of methods and enjoyed explaining their solutions to each other.

58 The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall, although during the inspection lessons ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. The National Numeracy Strategy is used to good effect and is one of the factors in raising standards since the previous inspection. When teaching is very good, the strategy is seen at its best. No time is wasted as the mental mathematics session is quickly explained and pupils begin. Year 3 and 4 pupils played bingo as they tested their recall of the 3 and 4 times tables. They enjoyed themselves and were enthusiastic about their learning. Once this session was over, the classteacher rapidly moved the pupils on to their main activity with a clear and precise introduction. A good discussion developed about the skills of estimation and the pupils answered questions about the reasonableness of estimated answers. As they began their activities, pupils undertook work that had been clearly organised for the different abilities in the class. The teacher imposed time limits on work and all pupils had a very clear understanding of what was expected of them by the end of the lesson. Whilst the pupils were completing their work, the classteacher interacted well with them to ensure their understanding of the task and to offer support to lower attaining pupils. This very good lesson ended with a well organised plenary session where pupils were provided with good opportunities to discuss their work. In this lesson teaching was stimulating and imaginative. The pupils were challenged and the teacher showed very high expectations. This had a positive effect, with pupils of all abilities very keen to learn. This was well illustrated towards the end of the lesson when the teacher reappraised the planning and asked the pupils to complete fewer mathematical problems. The pupils showed their disappointment. The same qualities were also observed in the other Year 3 and 4 class as pupils used number facts and their understanding of place value to add and subtract two-digit numbers.

59 In some lessons, not all the positive features above are included. There are occasions when lessons are not planned rigorously enough to provide relevant and challenging work for all the pupils in classes or groups. On other occasions, although extension activities had been planned for pupils who completed their work, insufficient demands were made on them to actually start or complete them. On these occasions, teachers' expectations are not so high. Day-to-day assessment of pupils is inconsistent. Some teachers adjust their numeracy sessions daily as a result of daily assessments identifying, for example, pupils who need extra help to understand a particular piece of work but this process is not frequent enough. Classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning in mathematics, whether it is through in-class support, leading a small numeracy group of their own or managing extra numeracy support after school. Their support is of a very high standard. The unsatisfactory teaching identified was a result of a significant minority of pupils not being involved in the lesson because of inappropriate behaviour. This was not typical of other mathematics lessons.

60 A Year 5 lesson about the properties of numbers showed how ICT could be used effectively to support numeracy. However less use is made of ICT than one would normally expect, although a scrutiny of displays of pupils' work indicates that it does happen on occasion. For example, Year 4 pupils had produced graphs indicating different birds that had been seen in gardens. In some lessons, literacy skills are reinforced, particularly reading skills, as pupils studied written problems carefully.

61 The subject is very well managed by the subject co-ordinator. She has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development through monitoring planning, classroom observations and work analysis. She is also a very good role model as a teacher. The school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection. The high standards found in the subject are the result of a number of factors. Teaching has improved. It

was judged satisfactory during the last inspection. As previously stated, the National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented and good use is made of classroom assistants. Good analysis is undertaken of formal assessment results to track and target pupils and the school has made very good use of initiatives to improve standards in mathematics such as 'booster' classes. This for example, enables the school to put the Year 6 pupils into three ability groups for about a term and give more focus to their teaching. Finally, the pupils have very positive attitudes towards the subject and are keen to learn. Much of this is due to the high expectations that many of the teachers have. Resources to support the delivery of the subject are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

62 Standards are currently well above average, as indicated by the 2001 national test results, and have been for several years. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when attainment was judged satisfactory. Nearly all pupils have the knowledge, skills and understanding expected of eleven-year-olds, and many go beyond these.

63 Pupils' knowledge is extensive, which enables them to draw on previous experiences when encountering new work. In Year 6, for example, pupils studying the conditions in which micro-organisms grow already know about pasteurisation and fungi. They are aware that micro-organisms can be harmful through their work on plaque in tooth decay, but that they can also be useful as in yeast used in bread making. They are able to apply this knowledge confidently to predict the conditions under which mould will grow on bread. Pupils are aware of the need for a fair test when deciding on how to investigate these factors and some are able to discuss whether to place the bread in the refrigerator or the freezer before making their choice. Higher attaining pupils decide independently to devise a chart as their preferred method for recording results. The decision to do so is theirs rather than one planned by the teacher to challenge their thinking.

64 Pupils in Year 5 confidently use technical terms for bones and can apply knowledge to their learning - having been told the spine was made of vertebrae, for instance, they quickly understood why animals without backbones are known as invertebrates. Having been given information about the skeleton, they asked pertinent questions such as why the pelvis has two other large holes as well as the central one. Some pupils quickly see a likely relationship between ulna length and height when shown relevant data that had been collected as a homework task. In Years 3 and 4, pupils studying whether plants need leaves to grow well already know the need for conditions to be kept the same when setting up their investigations, such as the amount of light and water. They take account of existing knowledge of plant growth when deciding what to do and are aware of the need to observe and record the range of effects on the plant once the investigation has been set up. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the class teacher and peers within groups so that they make as good progress as other pupils. Pupils have regular opportunities to measure, draw and interpret graphs and record results in tables and charts as well as designing their own investigations. However, skills in using these are not always as well developed as their scientific knowledge. The school has identified this relative weakness through analysis of test answers and identified it as a priority for development. Lack of systematic assessment arrangements contributes to this relative underdevelopment and to the missed opportunities to challenge higher attainers. Without precise knowledge of pupils' investigative skills, teachers cannot plan tasks that advance any skills needed for the next stage of learning.

65 Science is well taught overall, and sometimes very well taught, which is also an improvement since the previous inspection when it was sometimes judged to be less than satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons well so pupils have the chance to make choices and take decisions, with high expectations of their abilities to apply previous knowledge. As a result,

pupils take responsibility for their own learning, think carefully through what they should do including taking account of each others' ideas and learn from their mistakes. They also present their work neatly, including producing good scientific diagrams, which prepares them well for secondary school science work. Questioning is effective not only in promoting knowledge acquisition, but also in stimulating further lines of enquiry and giving reasons for what is observed. Occasionally teachers omit, though, to promote the use of existing knowledge when predicting likely outcomes such as the expected time for the bread to go mouldy in Year 6. Lessons usually proceed at a brisk pace, so pupils are able to complete a great deal of work. Teachers are alert to which groups or individuals are functioning well and make timely interventions where pupils are struggling or not making enough effort. However, where pupils are organised and systematic in their work, they are seldom used as examples of good scientific practice for the future. Marking of work is conscientious, but it rarely directs pupils towards areas for development so that they know what to improve, although in Year 4 their significant achievements are sometimes recorded. Literacy skills are promoted through accounts of investigations in Years 4 and 5, but less so in Year 6. Year 6 work is often recorded on worksheets, which limit the responses of pupils who are competent in both science and literacy. ICT is beginning to be used for efficient handling of scientific data as in the Year 6 graphs of mass and Newtons, but the co-ordinator has rightly identified this as an area for further development. Moreover, the ICT co-ordinator is aware of the relative weakness in pupils' use of control programs.

66 Since the previous inspection the school has adopted an effective scheme of work which ensures pupils have covered the National Curriculum Key Stage 2 Programmes of Study by the end of Year 5 so that consolidation and extension can be undertaken in Year 6. It incorporates skills and understanding as well as knowledge acquisition through the regular investigative work and can accommodate classes that contain two year groups. This is not used for a schoolwide assessment system and current arrangements are only adequate. The co-ordinator monitors provision systematically and is fully aware of the strengths, but alert for developments that would further improve provision. The curriculum is enhanced by trips and visitors including participation in National Science Week and by the opportunity to join a gardening club.

ART AND DESIGN

67 Standards in art are higher than normally expected. Very little teaching was seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on teachers' planning, work displayed around the school and discussion with pupils. The good standards noted at the previous inspection have been maintained. Pupils' achievements are good.

68 Teachers plan sequences of lessons on specific themes so that pupils through the school learn to distinguish differences in artists' styles. They learn to discriminate between works of art, to say which pleases them and to explain why. In the same way they evaluate their own and their school friends' work making constructive criticism. Younger pupils appreciate different forms of sculpture from illustrations, such as work by Andy Goldsworth, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore. They create their own individual sculptural work inspired by this. The imaginative creativity and detail is of a high standard. Two pupils were so inspired they persuaded their parents to visit the nearby sculpture park during the holiday.

69 There are many good examples around the school of two-dimensional work inspired by different artists, such as landscapes inspired by David Hockney, townscapes inspired by Lowry and decorated containers in the style of Clarice Cliff. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the different styles.

70 Pupils are taught how to achieve different effects such as techniques for pencil shading, blending pastels and colour mixing and matching. They learn skills for mixing media, such as using paint and pastel together and how to use different sized paintbrushes so their work is detailed and pleasing to the eye. Pupils learn to observe closely so that their drawing skills are well developed. Older pupils achieve well in the difficult task of drawing figures in active sporting and athletic poses. They use pastels and crayons to produce good still life studies of fruit and groups of coloured bottles.

71 Pupils enjoy art lessons and get satisfaction from producing good quality results. Older pupils discussed a set of picture reproductions noting the differences in style, the mood generated through the use of colour, form, composition, facial expression and posture. Similarly, when discussing examples of sculpture, they explained how their response to pieces was influenced by the way the sculptor had used materials, shapes, surfaces and spaces.

72 Art lessons contribute well to pupils' spiritual development through reflection on style and beauty. Whilst art contributes well to pupils' understanding of Western culture, very little experience of non-Western work is included in the curriculum. The recently appointed co-ordinator is revising the scheme of work to improve this. The co-ordinator is very skilled and knowledgeable and provides good support for other teachers. There are good links with other subjects. Pupils made and decorated papier mâché pots when studying life in Ancient Greece. There is a good range of media for practical work but insufficient good sized reproductions of artists' work and too few art books in the library.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

73 Standards in design and technology are satisfactory. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. No lessons were observed during the current inspection. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' designs and finished products, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator.

74 Curriculum opportunities have improved significantly so that the demands of the National Curriculum are now met. Teachers' confidence, knowledge and understanding have also improved, although further training is planned for some elements of the subject. Pupils are taught to use an appropriate range of tools and materials. Younger pupils examined different money containers before designing, planning and making their own purses. On completion they evaluated their product and suggested ways in which it might be improved. More able pupils recorded changes made during the process to improve their design or overcome difficulties. The purses were well finished with generally neat stitching. Pupils exercised choices in decoration and fastenings used - Velcro, button and buttonhole or press-studs. More elaborate purses included several pockets.

75 In food technology Year 5 and 6 pupils sample different commercial bread products before planning their own recipes, making and tasting the bread and delivering a verdict. They learn how to market a product by designing and producing advertising and a product wrapper. The evaluations are well considered and the marketing designs effective. Older pupils learn about different mechanisms and incorporate these when designing and making a mechanical toy using a cam and turning mechanism. These involve wood, saws and a glue gun. Pupils investigate strong and weak structures before designing and making shelters from art straws and card although more care is needed when measuring and cutting to ensure that pieces always fit together neatly.

76 There is limited use of computers for designing. This is an underdeveloped aspect. Improvements have been made in resources for materials and equipment which are now

satisfactory. The scheme of work has been effectively revised and adapted to meet the school's particular needs. Consideration is being given to a skills assessment procedure, but this is not yet in place. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are given good extra support when they need it and make the same progress as their peers.

GEOGRAPHY

77 Attainment in geography is better than that normally expected of eleven-year-olds. This means that standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

78 In Years 5 and 6, pupils make good progress in learning about the effect that people have had on the environment. The work is based on the study of Agenda 21 arising from the 1992 Earth Summit Conference in Rio de Janeiro. Pupils study the key themes of transport, energy production, water, air pollution, management of waste, the protection of wildlife and the landscape. Higher attaining pupils give clear explanations of the use of alternative sources of energy. They point to the production of alcohol from sugar cane to fuel cars and the use of industrial waste such as sawdust, made into briquettes, to heat boilers. Pupils understand that even renewable sources of power are not available to everyone and sometimes come with a price. They describe how solar heating panels are expensive to produce, putting them out of the reach of people in developing countries, and the dams required for hydro electric schemes destroy the environment on which many people, animals and plants depend. Average and lower attaining pupils are less clear of these factors but are able to say that demands on natural resources can be reduced and energy saved if people use energy saving light bulbs and remember to turn off electrical appliances. Pupils carry out surveys that show that a significant number of journeys they make are made by car. They compare this with cities such as Erlangen in Germany, where the authorities actively encourage people to cycle in order to reduce air pollution. Pupils learn about the formation of rivers. They describe how small streams come together to form larger rivers. Pupils understand that streams and rivers travel quickly through hilly country and that this enables them to carry large amounts of material, which is deposited as the river slows in lowland areas. They are less certain how rivers erode their banks to form meanders and ox-bow lakes.

79 Year 3 and 4 pupils learn about life in a small village in south-west India. They use their understanding of life in hot countries to make intelligent suggestions about the way of life that the villagers might lead. They understand that they can find out more about life in the village from primary evidence such as photographs and everyday items such as an Indian dress in the classroom display. Pupils show good understanding and give reasoned arguments for what they say. For example, one pupil suggested that all the people in the village could be classed as builders if they built their own houses. Pupils study communities in rural Devon and Suffolk and in small towns and cities such as Leeds. They begin to understand that there are arguments for and against living in different places, contrasting the peace of the countryside with isolation from the facilities available in towns. Pupils learn to draw maps and include descriptive keys when they plan the use of land in an imaginary town.

80 Too few lessons were seen to be able to make judgements about the quality of teaching. Judging from the work in books, discussion with pupils and the one lesson seen, it is likely that teaching is good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. In the one lesson seen, teaching was very good. The teacher's enthusiasm at the start of the lesson when she showed a collection of material she had received from the Indian Embassy, encouraged pupils to listen carefully to what she said. The pace of the lesson was maintained by setting time limits for discussion. All pupils were expected to take part in discussions and the teacher improved pupils' speaking and listening skills when she insisted on them justifying what they said. Pupils were encouraged to give their opinion and gained confidence when they

were assured that everyone was entitled to their own opinion. The pupils found the work challenging. However, their very good response to the support and help given showed that they had gained in confidence. Teachers make good links with other subjects. Discussions develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and literacy skills are improved when pupils write newspaper articles about Agenda 21. Mathematical skills are practised when pupils carry out surveys and draw graphs showing how many journeys are made by road. Teachers try to ensure that all pupils benefit from lessons by providing work that matches their needs. This ensures that lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. However, teachers do not use marking well enough. Almost all work is marked with a tick or comment such as 'Well done' but teachers' comments do not show pupils how well they have understood their work or what they need to do to improve it. Not enough use is made of ICT. The school is aware of this and has included increased use of ICT in the school development plan.

81 The management and leadership of the subject are good. Resources are adequate and are easily accessible. The scheme of work is sound. The quality of teaching and learning is checked. However, apart from the use of questions during lessons, there is no formal assessment of how well pupils are progressing and what standards they achieve. Good use is made of visits to places such as Carlton in Lindrick, and of visits by a theatre company in connection with work on the environment.

HISTORY

82 Attainment in history is typical of that expected of eleven-year-olds. This means that standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. However, pupils often make good progress in history in some lessons. There has been a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

83 Year 5 and 6 pupils make good progress in lessons when they learn about the evacuation of children during the Second World War. They listen to recordings of people talking about their experiences of being evacuated and from these, they develop an idea of the emotions felt by the evacuees. Pupils show sympathy with the evacuees. They give an idea of their understanding of what might happen when families are separated when they ask questions such as "What happened to the evacuees if their parents died?" Although the topic has only just started, pupils have a clear understanding of the causes of the war and understand that the United Kingdom entered the war following the invasion of Poland. They know the names of some of the important characters of the war, such as Neville Chamberlain, Winston Churchill and Adolf Hitler. They learn why the Germans bombed steel works and ports. Pupils work with volunteer helpers to use the library and computers to carry out research about the war. Pupils also have a sound understanding of life in Victorian times. Visits to places such as Perlethorpe Victorian Village and Kelham Island Industrial Museum give them an understanding of how both poor and rich people lived. They learn about the dangers from unguarded machinery faced by young children working in wool and cotton mills and show their disgust of how some industrial processes, such as the use of phosphorous in making matches, disfigured workers. Pupils enjoyed the experience of dressing as Victorian children and working in a typical classroom but were less keen on the tedious task of making oakum to plug leaks in ships. Through carrying out research, higher attaining pupils discover how Charles Dickens used his childhood experiences when he wrote his books. Average attaining pupils gain an insight into Victorian attitudes when they learn that children were not allowed to play with toys on Sunday. Year 3 and 4 pupils develop a sound understanding of the relative values of primary and secondary sources of information when they compare the information gained from studying historical objects and old buildings with opinions expressed in books. They draw maps showing where people who have invaded the British Isles have come from and say that some came to settle while others took slaves. Pupils make sound progress

when they learn about the way of life of the Romans in Britain. Pupils use the Internet to carry out research on Roman towns, finding out what it was like to live in a villa. They learn about the uprising led by Boudicca and that she poisoned herself to avoid capture.

84 Teaching in history is satisfactory but, during the inspection, some good teaching was observed. This marks an improvement since the previous inspection. In a new topic about the Second World War, teachers knew the subject well. This enabled the teachers to make connections between a previous lesson about German bombing raids and the decision to evacuate children from large cities. Teachers made good use of tape recordings when people who were evacuated talked about their experiences. The resulting discussion developed pupils' speaking and listening skills while giving them a clearer idea of how the evacuees felt. Teachers provide work to match pupils' abilities. In a good lesson, the teacher used questions skilfully to find out what pupils knew about evacuation and worked closely with a group of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs, encouraging them to search for information in the material provided. This ensured that these pupils made the same good progress as other pupils. Teaching is less successful, but nonetheless satisfactory, when the teacher does not make full use of the information provided. For example, not enough emphasis was placed on the health and hygiene of some of the evacuees and the effect that this had on the attitudes of receiving families when they discovered that some of their guests suffered from scabies and had head lice. Teachers assemble good collections of historical objects. Newspapers show how the war was reported and ration books give pupils an idea of the difficulties faced by ordinary people. Teachers make good use of visits to places of historical interest. They use homework well to extend pupils' learning particularly in Years 3 and 4 when pupils carried out research into life in Roman Britain using the library and the Internet. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but do not always show pupils how to improve.

85 The management of the subject is good. Resources are satisfactory but teachers go to great efforts to borrow historical objects to provide better experiences for pupils. There is a sound scheme of work. The quality of teaching and learning is checked but there is no formal assessment of the progress made by pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

86 Pupils' attainment in ICT is above average overall. This is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below average and skills limited. All pupils are confident about using computers and many have appropriate strategies for overcoming any problems before seeking help from a teacher. Nearly all pupils throughout the school are confident in the basic skills of logging on and off, accessing the program and file they need, saving their work and selecting menus and icons as required. Pupils throughout the school are often inefficient at keyboard skills, though. At worst, one Year 6 pupil cannot locate a hyphen. This slows the input of data and detracts from concentration on ICT skills.

87 In Year 6, although they are learning new procedures for using 'PowerPoint' to produce a slide show on the Second World War, pupils confidently customise their individual screen displays by changing the type, style and colour of the font, and the background effects including shading and pattern. Many respond to screen indicators that show grammatical or spelling errors, including instructions to ignore unrecognised names. Higher attaining pupils change the way that the new slide appears on the screen, and select and insert graphics independently. Year 5 pupils use 'screen Roamer'² confidently to try to draw their initials. They change their strategies and instead of giving a series of instructions, they change to giving one

² A program which enables pupils to plot a track using commands for direction and turn and draw the resultant diagram on screen.

at a time when the screen drawing is not what they want, and carefully observe what went wrong in order to make amendments. In Years 3 and 4, pupils study the structure of a database. While Year 4 pupils decide on some appropriate fields for the individual records that will go in a file, Year 3 pupils identify the fields given and answer questions to create a personal record. Year 4 pupils tackle the formulation of questions to produce a questionnaire suitable for their peers in other classes and Year 3 identify the possibilities for word, numerical or yes/no responses to questions. Although higher attainers often challenge themselves by choosing to use a wider or more complex range of options when tackling the work, their planned development is not catered for in set tasks, which are usually identical for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs usually make good progress because a partner supports them although this sometimes frustrates the more competent peer. When doing work that supports their individual education plans, pupils with special educational needs use ICT confidently, though, and have much useful practice at skills. This is another improvement since the previous inspection when pupils with special educational needs made limited progress in ICT.

88 Teachers all teach ICT satisfactorily, but those who are more confident are often even better. Training has enabled all teachers to tackle skills teaching effectively, but not all teachers automatically consider the power of ICT in their day-to-day work and there is relatively little planning for pupils of differing ability. Opportunities to use the computer for repetitive tasks, to produce worksheets and support the curriculum are missed. However, teachers do regularly discuss the use of ICT in everyday situations and make comparisons between ICT and other methods, such as electronic and paper records. Teaching of specific skills is well done using demonstrations and explanations which introduce or reiterate procedures so that pupils acquire and practise new skills quickly. Teachers produce useful prompt sheets of procedures which they expect pupils to follow so that they are as independent as possible. They are alert to pupils' needs and intervene accordingly if pairs are experiencing difficulty, while encouraging pupils to assist each other - which they do sensibly. Teachers are not so quick, though, at picking up pupils who could be working harder or faster. Teachers are also good at explaining to pupils where the work being done fits in to what they have done previously and what it will lead on to so that they know what they are learning and why.

89 Provision for ICT has improved considerably since the previous inspection. This has been achieved by converting shower rooms to make an ICT suite containing 15 computers. This conversion has created limited space, though, so it is not possible for a whole class to sit at the computers simultaneously and there is insufficient room for more than a small group to work in the middle. This results in one of each pair standing behind the partner working at the computer. While the pairs do change over at regular intervals, the passive partner often becomes restless and unproductive because the conditions make it hard to sustain concentration. At best, the passive partner is given a properly defined role such as recording changes made or procedures used but this is rarely planned for a whole lesson. Sometimes, pupils themselves take the initiative to include partners, for instance by dictating input. Strategies such as leaving a group in the classroom using laptop computers are sometimes used effectively. The co-ordinator is aware of the problems and is keen to find ways of using the facilities most efficiently.

90 Through monitoring, the co-ordinator has identified the need for ICT to be used across the curriculum. It is beginning to be used in other subjects and instances were seen during the inspection of examples in literacy and numeracy. Word processing was done in English and a graphics program was used to design a logo in design and technology but in relatively few lessons were computers used. The digital camera is used by pupils to record trips and visits, and graphics programs have been used to create pictures in the style of Seurat. A system of assessment has recently been introduced and is beginning to produce information on pupils' skills, but is not yet being used to ensure tasks are set to match pupils' specific needs or to

challenge higher attainers. The curriculum is enhanced by the opportunity to attend a computer club.

MUSIC

91 The school has maintained the average standards since the previous inspection. Pupils continue to sing tunefully, keep the pulse reliably and perform confidently when asked to do so. They are less confident, though, about composing. In Year 5, for instance, pupils use pitched and unpitched percussion instruments, piano and keyboard to create 'space' music with a contrast between a spacecraft taking off and drifting in space. Pupils are aware of suitable instruments to give the desired contrasts and create appropriate graphic notation to guide their playing. Their use of structures and layering of instruments for effect are less well developed, and the outcome is often a group of pupils playing their individual instruments rather than an ensemble playing together. Because pupils' skills are less well developed in terms of listening to each other as they perform, they do not always play effectively together even when this is their intention. Pupils are, however, better at listening to each other's contributions and making pertinent comments about the effectiveness of pupils' choices of instruments. They are able to suggest improvements and to appreciate good elements, such as the effectiveness of a pupil's use of low notes on the keyboard to simulate take-off. Year 4 pupils show similar abilities to listen and copy, confidently picking up and singing simple pentatonic³ tunes created by peers, but when two pupils attempt to play these note sequences simultaneously, they find it difficult to play together even with the rest of the class keeping the pulse. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 know what a pentatonic scale is and enjoy performing songs using them - in Year 3 this includes a French song. Year 3 pupils are confident performers, eager to sing in small groups or even alone. Pupils are also confident about playing their pentatonic scales solo for the class to copy. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into groups or well supported during activities and make steady progress.

92 Music is soundly taught with teachers sometimes relying on their general teaching skills to enable them to effectively tackle a subject in which they do not feel confident. They are effective in giving pupils relevant information, providing and organising a range of useful resources including instruments for performing. They praise and encourage pupils regularly so that they engender a feeling of enjoyment and enthusiasm. The more confident teachers set a good example by leading the singing, which provides a model for pupils to emulate, and all teachers plan opportunities for pupils to make choices and be responsible for their own learning. As a result, pupils acquire new information and experiment confidently. However, teachers' lack of confidence does have an effect on progress. Timing of lessons does not always provide sufficient opportunities to enable pupils to practise and improve, and comments given as feedback are not always precise enough to help pupils know what needs to be refined. Thus learning is steady, but limited by the elements which individual teachers are able to identify and promote.

93 Since the previous inspection thorough systems for monitoring provision have been established which means that the co-ordinator has a clear view of music in the school. The need for training for teachers to increase their confidence in music has been identified as a priority, but other subjects have been considered more important to date. With improved standards in tested subjects, this priority can now be addressed. There is also no system for assessing pupils, and, as a result, teachers are not fully aware of the development of musical skills and cannot reliably identify the needs of higher attaining pupils so that they can provide suitable extension or challenge for them. ICT is occasionally used to support the subject, such as examples displayed in recording changes in pitch, but it still has to be fully utilised. Although the curriculum covers music from other countries during certain topics, currently the use of

³ Scale using first, second, third, fifth and sixth notes of a standard scale.

pentatonic scales in Asian music, and does include different styles and periods, its contribution to awareness of a diversity of cultures is relatively underdeveloped. The curriculum is enhanced by relevant trips and visitors, by extra-curricular recordings, and by violin and keyboard lessons taken by visiting teachers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

94 Standards in physical education are similar to those found in the majority of schools. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be average. All pupils make satisfactory progress. Although only games activities were observed during the current inspection, analysis of teachers' planning and the school's scheme of work and discussions with the subject co-ordinator and pupils support the above judgement. In previous years the school's provision for swimming has been good with all pupils being provided with an opportunity to swim during the academic year. This has been more restricted recently because of the closure of the local swimming pool although lessons will resume later this term. However, the majority of pupils exceeded last year the expectations identified in the National Curriculum for swimming by the time they left the school. Discussions with teachers identified weaknesses in the provision for gymnastics activities particularly for the older pupils due to limited resources and of the limitations of the school's accommodation.

95 The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. It was judged satisfactory in 1997 and is now good. Year 3 pupils successfully developed their cricket skills in a well-planned lesson conducted outside on the games field. Pupils were very attentive as they warmed-up by stretching and running gently. They identified the importance of warming-up and maintained their concentration and effort as they practised and developed their throwing, catching and fielding skills. Similarly Year 5 and 6 pupils showed enthusiasm and enjoyment as they were acquainted with the necessary skills required to pass and receive a rugby ball. A good feature of this lesson was the importance that the class teacher placed on doing warm-up activities that were relevant to the activity that the pupils were going to undertake. This lesson developed well with the pupils beginning to understand the necessary tactics for rugby as the skills of 'dodging' were introduced. In both of these lessons, pupils who were not participating because of illness and injuries were expected to develop their literacy skills by writing reports about the lessons. This is good practice. In the Year 3 lesson, a classroom assistant was observed reinforcing a pupil's numeracy skills by counting with him the number of catches he made.

96 The subject has developed well since the previous inspection. Weaknesses were identified in the scheme of work that enables teachers to develop the subject progressively. These have been successfully overcome but the school still does not have any assessment procedures for physical education, which was an area for development identified previously. However, pupils' progress is commented on in reports to parents. The co-ordinator is an enthusiastic practitioner and has good subject knowledge. The school's very good procedures for subject monitoring have enabled him to have a secure overview of the subject and how it is developing in the school. He has also been actively involved in the Nottinghamshire Initiative for Promoting Sport that leads to a family and school action plan being developed for sport. A good range of extra-curricular activities such as football, rounders and cricket and competitive sports against other schools supports the development of the subject and helps the pupils' social development. In a good initiative, grant funding has been used to train a lunchtime supervisor as a playground games co-ordinator which has increased the opportunities pupils have for playing games with each other at lunchbreaks.

97 Resources for physical education are satisfactory overall. They are good for games activities but there are weaknesses in resources for gymnastics. The school hall presents a number of challenges. Its unusual shape does not allow adequate space for some of the larger

classes to run or move around the hall safely and several supporting pillars are not appropriately protected. The ceiling is low and would prevent older pupils dismounting from gymnastics equipment safely. The outside accommodation is good. The school has a reasonably sized playground for games activities and its own school field. A neighbouring field is also available to the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

98 There have been significant improvements in religious education since the previous inspection. Standards are now good and better than often seen. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Judgements are also based on a scrutiny of pupils' written work and teachers' planning and discussion with pupils and the subject co-ordinator.

99 The curriculum has been completely revised to meet the requirements of the locally agreed curriculum. The scheme of work is carefully designed to cater for the changing class structure to avoid repetition. It takes account of pupils' limited background knowledge. The emphasis is on learning about Christianity and its teachings. Pupils are also taught in detail about the main beliefs and practices of Islam and Judaism and they compare some of these with other world religions such as Sikhism, Hinduism and Buddhism.

100 Pupils' written work shows a good understanding of the Bible, Christian festivals, the life of Jesus and characters from the Old Testament. Teachers provide good opportunities to use skills learned in English literacy lessons to write in different styles. Pupils' written work is of a high standard. They write prose accounts of events and stories they have learned about from the Old and New Testaments. In writing about Jesus' ride into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) pupils recall the symbolism of a dark cross on donkeys' backs. Older pupils write poems that express well their understanding of peoples' feelings such as a sheepdog's wonder when angels appeared to shepherds on the hillside at Jesus' birth. Pupils use Bible references to research why some people were antagonistic towards Jesus. Through this they learn about conflict and how to resolve it.

101 Pupils have little opportunity to visit places of worship belonging to non-Christian faiths as there are none in the locality. Good use is made of videos and artefacts to help them understand the beliefs and practices of these faiths. Pupils compare the different symbols and religious books. They understand the reasons for, and meanings behind, some practices, for instance the food laws in Judaism. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to discuss some of the practices in depth and compare them with their own lives.

102 When learning about the family meal at the beginning of the Jewish Sabbath, older pupils finished the lesson by drawing different religious objects. The time would have been better spent discussing the effect on Jewish family life of regularly sharing a special family meal with what they experience in their own lives. In discussion with pupils, it is clear that many of them are highly articulate and capable of in-depth thought and discussion. Pupils feel it is correct for them to learn about other peoples' beliefs and practices so that they can respect and follow them when they meet people or if they travel abroad. They feel it is right to have rules to live by and that cultural and religious practices are important to maintain society. It is clear that religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

103 Teachers are becoming more confident in teaching religious education. This is in part due to the structure of the new scheme and the support given by the co-ordinator. Resources have also improved considerably. There are boxes containing objects from each religion, for instance the items needed to celebrate a Jewish family Sabbath meal. There are adequate

reference books in the library and a set of suitable videos showing aspects of daily life and worship from each religion. Visits are made to various local churches as part of a link with history, and a visit to Southwell Minster to take part in their education outreach programme. These visits contribute well to pupils' general knowledge and understanding.