

INSPECTION REPORT

HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112564

Headteacher: Mrs K Neville

Reporting inspector: J White
17242

Dates of inspection: 16th to 19th June 2003

Inspection number: 247238

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Slack Lane Heath Chesterfield Derbyshire
Postcode:	S44 5RH
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J M Sanderson
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17242	Jeff White	Registered inspector	Science; art & design; design & technology; educational inclusion; English as a second language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9003	Brian Findley	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?
17454	B Aldridge	Team inspector	Mathematics; information & communication technology (ICT); physical education; special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
20891	S O'Toole	Team inspector	History; religious education; Foundation Stage	
20911	J Dawson	Team inspector	English; geography; music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is located in an area that has high potential for educational disadvantage. Pupils are almost all white; only three are of minority ethnic background. Eligibility for free school meals is above average. The school roll, including the nursery, is 276. The nursery provides places for 52 part-time children and currently there are 41 attending part time. The local playgroup has closed and most children attend the nursery prior to starting in the main school. Children enter the reception either at the beginning of September or January and presently there are 33 pupils. Eighty-three pupils are identified as having special educational needs, 15 of whom have statements. These are above average figures. Attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly well below average, especially in speaking, listening and social skills. Mobility is a feature of the school population and is high in some year groups. The school has been awarded the government's School Achievement Award for the three successive years 2001-2003. It also has the Basic Skills Quality Mark and has Investors in People status.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that has improved well since its last inspection. A very good start is made to children's education in the nursery and reception year. Pupils in the rest of the school achieve well and make good progress in the majority of subjects. High standards in English in Year 2 are a particular strength. The headteacher's leadership is very effective and she is well supported by staff, governors and parents. Pupils have generally positive attitudes and they behave well. Relationships are very good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Provision in the nursery and reception year is very good
- Pupils throughout the school make at least good progress. They achieve well in English, mathematics, science and ICT because the teaching is good overall
- Standards in English are very good in Year 2 because of excellent teaching
- The headteacher's leadership is very effective and is helping the school to continue to improve

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6
- Standards and progress in history, geography, music and religious education in Year 6

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in February 1998 it has improved well. The last inspection's key issues have largely been addressed thoroughly especially in raising standards in English and science in Years 1 and 2, and in ICT throughout the school. Although the curriculum for religious education has improved and standards are better in Year 2, they remain unsatisfactory in Year 6. Other improvements have been made in the overall curriculum, assessment and the quality of pupils' learning. Parents of nursery children are now actively involved. In general, pupils' progress has improved, for example, for those who have special educational needs. Standards in the national tests have risen for Year 6 pupils since the last inspection. The current Year 6 has a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and this has contributed to a fall in standards in some subjects.

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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	B	C	A
Mathematics	B	B	D	C
Science	C	C	D	C

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

Since 1999, when Year 6 pupils' overall performance in the national tests was low, the school's results have improved at least in line with the national trend. Variations from year to year are partly the result of pupil mobility and the changing proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Year 6 pupils finishing in 2002 made good progress overall in relation to their prior attainment in Year 2 but the school did not meet its statutory targets. Boys have done better in the tests than girls. In the current Year 6, a quarter of the pupils joined the school in Years 3 to 6 and two-thirds of these have special educational needs. These factors have helped to depress standards in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils have made good progress over time and they generally achieve well. In Year 6 standards are satisfactory in ICT, physical education, art and design, and design and technology, and unsatisfactory in the remainder of non-core subjects.

In the national tests for pupils in Year 2, standards over time have risen considerably and they were high across the board in 2002. Compared with the performance of similar schools results in reading and writing were within the range of the top five percent. The high standards in English are being maintained in the current Year 2. Standards are good in science and satisfactory in mathematics. Year 2 pupils have made at least good progress. Good or better progress has been made in ICT and standards are good in Year 2. Standards in other non-core subjects in Year 2 are good in geography and satisfactory in the remainder.

In most subjects pupils with special educational needs, and the most able, achieve well. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress and are on course to achieve the early learning goals in most of the areas of learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good for the vast majority of pupils. Children in the Foundation Stage and infant pupils are particularly enthusiastic. A few of the oldest pupils are reluctant learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in classrooms and very good elsewhere
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility; for example, the school's "buddy" system works effectively.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory but improving. Punctuality has improved recently

The school council is a very positive initiative and is enabling pupils to air their views.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is good overall but very good in the Foundation Stage. Some excellent teaching was seen throughout the school and only a few lessons were unsatisfactory. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught thoroughly and this has helped the school to make good progress over time in the national test results. All aspects of English are taught well in Years 1 and 2. The oldest pupils are not given enough opportunities to write creatively and girls could be encouraged to participate more in discussions. Teaching in mathematics is good overall but not consistently good. Pupils, especially in the upper juniors, are not encouraged enough to explain their mathematical thinking. The vast majority of lessons are suitably planned and have clear objectives for learning. Strengths in the teaching include well-focused questions, high expectations and good management of pupils. The range of pupils' abilities is catered for well in the main although there is scope, on occasion, to challenge the most able more, for example, in science. Teaching is weakest in much of the work in geography, history, music and religious education in the upper juniors.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good in the Foundation Stage, good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. History, geography and religious education are not taught often enough in Years 3 to 6. Relationships with partner institutions are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good throughout the school and very good for pupils with statements.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall but good in moral and social development. Pupils are not given sufficient encouragement to understand the diverse cultures in Britain today.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage

Partnership with parents is good and improving. Parents' views of the school are very positive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's leadership is very effective and she is well supported by other key staff. Management is also very good and the school operates very smoothly.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are well informed and fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good and improving. Analysis of pupils' performance has resulted in action being taken to improve standards.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used productively and spending is efficiently linked to the school's key priorities.

Staffing, accommodation and resources are adequate overall but there are strengths in the provision for ICT and for the Foundation Stage. The headteacher has a very clear view of how to improve the school further and is increasingly successful in involving staff, governors and parents. Governors apply the principles of best value well, for example, in seeking the views of parents.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children like school and are making good progress Teaching is good and children are expected to work hard Behaviour is good The school is well led and managed and parents are comfortable about approaching the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents raise no significant concerns

The inspection team endorses parents' positive views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 The school has worked hard to raise standards in the national test results for pupils in Year 2 and has met with considerable success especially in improving pupils' writing. The overall test results in 2002 represent substantial progress over time. Efforts to raise standards in the tests for pupils in Year 6 have also been successful especially between 1999 and 2001. Although standards fell in 2002 the pupils tested that year had made good progress over time in relation to their prior attainment.
- 2 On admission to the nursery most children have well below average levels of skills, knowledge and understanding for their age. They make a very good start to school life and the very good progress made in the nursery is continued in the reception classes. The children benefit much from a very good curriculum and highly effective teaching. By the end of the reception year, most children attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional, mathematical, creative and physical development. In spite of the very good progress made in communication, language and literacy and in knowledge and understanding of the world few children attain the early learning goals in these areas of learning
- 3 Standards in English are above average in Year 2 and have risen significantly since the time of the last inspection. Pupils make very good progress in Years 1 and 2. Speaking, listening and writing are developed thoroughly across the curriculum. Reading is given a high profile and the skills of reading are taught rigorously so that pupils enjoy reading. A key feature of the success in raising standards in writing in Year 2 is that pupils know exactly what they need to do to achieve a higher level of performance. The very good progress is sustained through to Year 4 especially in writing where pupils write for a good range of purposes. Standards in Year 6 are below average overall. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented successfully throughout the school and has undoubtedly helped standards to rise. However, the strong emphasis on improving basic skills by the age of eleven has resulted in a narrowing of the English curriculum in the upper juniors. Year 6 pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills in creative writing and other subjects. Too much of their time is taken up in completing undemanding work sheets. Teachers work hard to engage the oldest pupils in discussion but many, especially girls, are reluctant speakers. They have learned basic skills in reading but many have little interest in reading for pleasure.
- 4 Standards in mathematics are average in Year 2 and similar to those found in the last inspection. However, pupils achieve well and make good progress over time because of effective teaching. Good progress is sustained in Years 3-5 and much of the pupils' work is above average in these year groups. Standards in Year 6 have fallen since the last inspection and are broadly below average. However, despite the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and the high rate of pupil mobility, pupils in Year 6 achieve well and have made good progress over time. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully and pupils have opportunities to apply their skills in other subjects such as science and information and communication technology (ICT). Year 6 pupils do not have enough opportunities to explain their thinking and thereby develop their mental alacrity. Standards in science are above average in Year 2. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection because of more effective teaching and a better rate of progress in Years 1 and 2.

Year 2 pupils are especially good at explaining their work and have particularly developed their scientific knowledge well. Standards in Year 6 have fallen but pupils have made good progress over time. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is uneven but good in Year 4, and standards are above average in this year group. Significantly, Year 4 has had the least amount of pupil turnover. Throughout the school more emphasis has been given to scientific enquiry. However, there remains scope to challenge the most able pupils further, especially in Year 6, by providing more opportunities for them to pursue their own ideas.

- 5 Standards in ICT have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now above expectations for pupils in Year 2 and in line with expectations in Year 6. Pupils throughout the school are quickly improving their rate of progress. Key reasons for the improved standards are better staff expertise, an improved curriculum, very good leadership and significantly better provision of computers. In Year 2, standards in geography have improved since the last inspection and are now above expectations. Improvements in teaching and the curriculum are significant reasons why standards have risen. Infant pupils make good progress in history and religious education and standards are as expected for pupils' ages. Pupils in Year 6 reach standards that are below expectations in geography and history and standards have fallen since the last inspection. Standards in religious education, in Year 6, remain below expectations. The key reasons for the unsatisfactory standards in the latter three subjects are that the teaching is not consistently challenging and the subjects are not taught regularly enough. Consequently pupils are not retaining important knowledge and skills. Standards in art and design and in design and technology have been maintained in Year 2 and are as expected. However, standards in art and design have fallen in Year 6. There was not enough evidence to judge standards in music in Year 2; in Year 6 standards are below expectations because pupils' knowledge and breadth of musical experiences are too limited. There is little doubt that provision for several of the non-core subjects has suffered because of the school's necessary drive to raise standards in the core subjects by the end of Year 6. In physical education, standards have been maintained and are as expected. Swimming is good in Year 4 because of effective teaching.
- 6 Pupils with SEN make good progress in most subjects but especially in English and mathematics. The staffing level means that these pupils are given a good level of assistance in most lessons and this enhances their understanding of tasks, their concentration and their progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs). Early and accurate identification combined with very effective small group support has a positive impact on pupils, enabling them to participate fully in class activities. Pupils with a statement of SEN are provided with the support that has been deemed necessary and make very good progress. Pupils of above average ability achieve well in most subjects. The school has been effective in ensuring that generally these pupils are challenged sufficiently in literacy and numeracy. The challenge is often lacking for the most able upper juniors in many of the non-core subjects. Also, there is scope to expect more of able pupils in science. The school has very few pupils of minority ethnic background. None is at an early stage of learning English and they achieve as well as their peers. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls in the infant years. However, in the upper juniors boys tend to do best. In some of the lessons seen girls were not encouraged enough to participate in discussion.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 7 Pupils' attitudes to school remain good with similar weaknesses in the approach to learning, by a few pupils, found at the time of the last inspection. Behaviour is now good overall but very good in the playground and this aspect of behaviour represents a significant improvement and is due directly to school initiatives. Personal development is now good and relationships are very good. Attendance is unsatisfactory.
- 8 Pupils look forward to school and demonstrate enjoyment in their lessons. They organise themselves well at the start of the day and leave cloakrooms tidy with little need for intervention by members of staff. Attitudes in class are good and often better, such as during a Year 4/5 lesson in ICT in which pupils were highly motivated by the enthusiasm of the teacher and the interesting work. There are a few pupils, mostly boys in Year 6, who are easily distracted from work and do not persevere with their tasks when things get hard. Outside the classroom, pupils take a full part in school events such as after-school clubs and 18 pupils attended a sports club in cricketing skills, including five girls.
- 9 Pupils respond well to the school ethos and codes of conduct that are well understood. Most pupils readily accept classroom discipline so that lessons usually run smoothly with little time wasted by teachers having to deal with problems. Behaviour in the dining hall and playgrounds is much improved since the last inspection and pupils respond very well to the wide range of play facilities that are available. Areas are generally kept clean and tidy and pupils make good use of litter bins and were seen tidying up for each other at the dinner tables. Most pupils respond positively to guidance and there is little need for sanctions of any severity. The few pupils who display poor attitudes to work often behave badly and their response to guidance is not always long lasting. These boys set poor role models for the younger pupils in their class. No pupil has been excluded from sessions for a number of years and parents consider behaviour to be good. Relationships are now very good with staff and each other. Work and play are characterised by harmonious friendships and pupils have no concerns about bullying or other forms of oppressive behaviour. They co-operate together very well in lessons and in the support of their teachers and readily join in the activities organised at play by the lunchtime supervisors and pupil buddies.
- 10 Most pupils develop well during their time in school. They soon settle into sensible activities and discipline in the classroom and take on little roles and responsibilities, as they grow older. Pupils from Year 2 upwards are learning what it is to be a good citizenship through involvement in the school council and raising funds for charities. Many recognise their individual responsibilities to help when needed, such as, spontaneously helping with spelling in a Year 3/4 lesson on personal development and a boy seen volunteering for buddy duties in the playground. The few pupils who do not respond well to schooling do not develop well and often ridicule others for being different, for example, those who are going to a different secondary school. These pupils leave the school below the level of maturity expected for their age.
- 11 Attendance rates have been well below the national average in recent years. There has been a small improvement in the current year due to the efforts of the school but the full year figure remains low. There are a few families, involving around 25 pupils, who do not give enough priority to education and make little effort to maintain regular attendance by their children. These cases are in the hands of the educational welfare service and a family was recently fined by the courts. Unauthorised absence is high and a large proportion of pupils have at least one session of unauthorised absence. A major factor in this is lateness after registration, which accounts for around 40 per cent

of all unauthorised absences. The school applies very strict criteria to the way absences are categorised and does not accept reasons for absence that are not justified. Punctuality is unsatisfactory because a significant number of pupils from uncommitted families have such a poor record, although the vast majority of pupils are in school in good time to be ready for work at the start of the day.

- 12 Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They are very well behaved and move around the school in a very orderly way. In the nursery the children quickly adapt to routines and confidently work and play alongside others. They are understanding and thoughtful and generously share toys, time and equipment. Reception children become proficient and effective learners and they love coming to school. They listen attentively and are keen to please their teachers by working hard as in a physical education lesson where their co-operate skills using a parachute were of high order. They respond very well to praise and reward and show much pleasure in their own and others' achievements. Because of the staff's friendly and positive manner the children thrive in a secure environment and develop very good relationships with adults and other children. The children show much initiative and work independently to good effect.
- 13 In lessons most pupils with SEN behave well and are fully integrated into the lessons. They co-operate effectively with their fellow pupils in lessons such as science and physical education. With the help of learning support staff, their self-confidence and ability to work on their own develop very well where they are part of the planned lesson objectives. In small groups, pupils co-operate happily and share enthusiastically the success of others. The transfer of skills, confidence and knowledge from small groups to the main classroom is very good. Some pupils have targets to improve their behaviour towards other pupils and are making satisfactory progress acquiring a sense of appropriate behaviour in different circumstances.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 14 Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage. A good proportion of the overall teaching is very good or better. Several excellent lessons were seen and only three were unsatisfactory. The overall teaching has improved since the last inspection.
- 15 In the nursery and the reception year there are excellent features in the teaching of communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical and physical development. All staff contribute effectively to the children's learning and the strong emphasis on equipping children to work independently, make decisions and take responsibility are hallmarks of the successful teaching. Staff use every opportunity to promote communication, language and literacy skills through formal and informal activities. There is very good emphasis on speaking and listening and staff expertise in this aspect is high. Early reading and writing skills are fostered through a balanced programme of story telling, learning the sounds that letters make, drama and role-play. Children respond eagerly to the opportunities to write for a variety of purposes such as writing tickets for holidays. Mathematical development is taught very well; the staff provide many practical opportunities for the children to explore shapes. Counting is made great fun through parachute games and learning rhymes and songs. Creative and physical development are used as vehicles to stimulate the children's imaginations and to extend their language. The challenging level of teachers' questioning stimulates learning. The children are avid learners; they work hard and concentrate for extended periods. Their skills in working together are developed well because the staff have high expectations of behaviour and attitudes. Another very skilful aspect of the teaching is

the way in which staff intervene at the right point to move learning on. The staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn and through well-planned sessions and accurate assessment promote successful learning.

- 16 In the lessons seen in literacy teaching was never less than good in Years 1 to 6. The school's results in the national tests in English also indicate that the teaching has been effective in raising standards. However, there has been some cost in the provision of a broad English curriculum in the upper juniors that now needs addressing, especially in providing more opportunities for pupils to write creatively. Teaching in mathematics is more variable but mainly good because basic numeracy skills have been taught thoroughly. Mathematical thinking and reasoning are not emphasised enough at the top end of the school. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall with some examples of good or better teaching. There is scope to challenge the most able pupils more. Teaching in ICT is good or better and is helping pupils to make rapid progress. Key skills are taught directly and pupils are given good opportunities to apply them on other subjects.
- 17 The vast majority of lessons are planned well and a good feature is the sharing of objectives with the pupils. In the best of the teaching pupils are reminded regularly of the objectives and, in the case of Year 2, are told precisely what they need to do to achieve the next level in their learning. More often than not, at the end of lessons, teachers discuss with pupils whether the objectives have been met. They also use these occasions to re-inforce key skills and understanding by asking well-focused questions. Effective questioning is a positive teaching strategy that is used in several subjects and in the very effective teaching keeps pupils on their toes and ensures that the learning has good pace. For the most part teachers' expectations are sufficiently high and, with the support of classroom assistants, they have worked hard to meet the range of abilities. Generally, pupils are managed well. Relationships are very positive throughout the school and pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute well to their learning. The lesson seen and the sample of pupils' work indicate that the weakest teaching is in geography, history and religious education in the classes that contain the oldest pupils. Unsuitable worksheets require little effort on the part of pupils and consequently standards, achievement and learning are unsatisfactory. Teaching in music was satisfactory during the inspection but pupils' musical experiences and knowledge have not been developed enough. There are good examples of positive marking, especially in English, which indicates clearly what pupils need to do to improve. However, marking in several other subjects is less rigorous
- 18 The teaching of pupils with SEN is good in most subjects. Teachers know pupils' targets and set work that helps them to achieve their goal. Teaching has a very good impact on the progress of pupils because they are kept busy in a purposeful and relevant way. The working relationships between teachers and learning support assistants are very useful and help pupils to learn well in lessons and small groups. The skills of learning support assistant are well developed; this knowledgeable group of workers helps pupils to make good rates of achievement.

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

- 19 The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum with very good learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage and good opportunities in Years 1 and 2. Schemes of work cover all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, the latter based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus and national guidelines. The planning for most subjects is based on national guidance. Teachers have drawn up especially good plans for English, mathematics and ICT. The latter is particularly well planned and pupils use ICT in several subjects. All pupils have good, equal access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. At the time of the last inspection learning opportunities and provision for ICT throughout the school were considered to be weaknesses. The improvement in the curriculum and ICT has been good and all subjects have relevant guidance available to teachers
- 20 Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a very good curriculum and are given a very good start to their education. The curriculum is relevant to their needs and takes very good account of their previous experience. The organisation of the curriculum contributes very effectively to the children's academic, personal, social and emotional development. Planning is thorough and well focused and very good account is taken of the results of assessment to plan work. The staff are very skilful in identifying children with SEN and provide very effective support especially in promoting speech and language development. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well because of the excitement generated in the wide-ranging activities. Staff encourage the children to care for each other and to be responsible for themselves and others. They teach moral and social values exceptionally well and this is reflected in the sensitive way in which the children work alongside others with significant SEN.
- 21 Although the curriculum is broad and relevant to pupils' needs, there is some imbalance in the time pupils in Years 1 to 6 spend on each subject. The school has increased the time spent on English and mathematics throughout the school in response to the previously low achievements in reading and writing and number. History, geography and religious education are not taught regularly enough for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in sufficient depth. Additionally, some lessons are long, lasting up to 75 minutes. This means that unless teachers plan a range of highly motivating activities, pupils become disinterested. The setting arrangements for English and mathematics have been generally successful in ensuring that pupils receive challenging work and consequently standards have risen
- 22 The school's approach to inclusion is good. The provision for pupils with SEN is good. All pupils have access to the complete curriculum and when pupils are withdrawn from the lessons to work in small groups the teachers try to ensure that they do not miss the same lesson regularly. The school places a high priority on providing support for these pupils. Pupils with emotional and social or physical difficulties, including hearing impairment, are supported very well, working both in the classroom and, when appropriate, in a quiet place with the non-teaching assistant. In literacy and numeracy, teachers plan appropriate work to ensure that pupils with SEN are working at an appropriate level. This happens to some extent in other subjects, and learning support assistants, as well as special needs support teachers, ensure that pupils make appropriate progress. Adults keep records of pupils' achievements and all pupils have IEPs related to their specific learning needs. However, the targets set by teachers for older pupils are not as specific as they should be. The very few pupils of minority ethnic background achieve as well as other pupils of their age.

- 23 The provision for basic literacy skills is good throughout the school. Teachers follow the National Literacy Strategy and place appropriate emphasis on reading and writing. A range of support groups is provided for pupils who need help to achieve appropriate standards. These intervention groups work well and ensure that pupils who learn at slower rates than other pupils make gains in their learning. Apart from the consolidation of basic skills such as grammar, handwriting and punctuation the school also livens up the content of pupils' work by providing a range of visitors to the school. However, there is considerable scope for improving the use of literacy across the curriculum in the top junior classes, in addition to providing a wider range of opportunities for creative writing. Numeracy is promoted well throughout the school and the use of number is well planned. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their strategies for solving problems especially in Years 1 to 4 pupils where pupils are encouraged to think hard in mathematics. Activities such as the school's science week, improve the number and frequency of opportunities pupils have to investigate and experiment. The weakest area of mathematics is the lack of opportunity for pupils to investigate and apply their learning in real-life situations.
- 24 A broad range of extra-curricular activities is provided to support the curriculum, including sport, choir, study clubs and activities to help older pupils manage their behaviour. All of these activities support pupils' social and educational development. Additions to these activities are planned to help pupils' literacy development and will include a writing and story club. These activities will provide opportunities for pupils, which they do not receive at home. Very good links are made with other schools in the local area and there are good links with the community. In regular meetings, the local cluster of schools comes together to plan improvements to pupils' learning opportunities. Teachers moderate work, organise lots of visits and teach in each other's schools. These opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.
- 25 At the last inspection learning opportunities and provision for ICT throughout the school were considered to be weaknesses at the time of the last inspection. The improvement in the curriculum and ICT has been good and all subjects have relevant guidance available to teachers. The programme for personal, social and health education is good, including provision for sex education and drugs education. This area of the curriculum is well managed across the school, with a co-ordinated scheme of work that is well supported by resources. Lessons are well planned for particular age groups and usually of good quality, for example a Year 3/4 lesson on safety in the home and a Year 4/5 lesson on trust and truth, in which pupils had good opportunities to discuss and reason their own views on what is safe and others to reflect on their attitude to honesty.
- 26 The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Moral and social development is promoted well. This is similar to the situation at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are given the opportunity to explore different beliefs in religious education and in assemblies. . Assemblies are frequently used very well to raise pupils' self awareness of their place in the world, particularly the contribution from outside speakers, such as the assembly taken by the local reverend on the theme of kindness and caring for others. At other times assemblies do not have the same sense of occasion for pupils and are often led by a single member of staff with all the attendant difficulties of discipline that that involves. Pupils are also given time in lessons to reflect upon what they have learned and its impact on their own values, such as seen in a Year 4/5 lesson on truth and trust. These experiences for

pupils often depend upon the quality of the teacher and are not planned for consistently enough throughout the curriculum.

- 27 Provision for moral development is good because the school consistently provides a clear moral code and a basis for behaviour that pupils can apply to their life experiences. Pupils also benefit from a secure and disciplined environment in which they recognise that societies, including the school society, can only function properly under an accepted set of codes. This was illustrated dramatically for older pupils in an assembly where a game of I-spy was conducted outside the conventional rules, which entertained the pupils and made very clear the need for common codes at the same time. Pupils experience the consequences of their behaviour through clearly set out rewards and sanctions and are recognised in achievement assemblies when they do well.
- 28 The school fosters a clear sense of school community in which the pupils are involved and have influence. Pupils are encouraged to work and play co-operatively and undertake roles and responsibilities that support school life, such as helping in the smooth running of the classroom and around the school, such as litter patrol. Pupils from the age of seven upwards can be representatives on the school council and older pupils act as buddies in the playground. Others help run the tuck shop. Correspondence by the school council with organisations outside the school helps to build awareness of the wider society. In this way all pupils see what it is to work co-operatively with others and to be a good citizen.
- 29 There are some good examples of teachers drawing on different cultures in class work, such as Chinese dance, Indian folklore and African music. The school also employs the services of a Black supply teacher, who brings in examples of Caribbean culture. Displays are used to portray the style of famous artists and to present a multi-cultural view of modern life. The school recognises the importance of this area of personal development and has already made plans to improve provision, through the Excellence in Cities Project beginning later this year, but progress with improvement in the awareness of cultural diversity has been slow since the last inspection. Provision is still not planned fully across the curriculum, particularly in subjects that lend themselves more readily to this area of study, such as English, art and design, music, history, geography and religious education. For example, the coverage of Judaism in Year 6 is too basic and lacks sufficient depth of understanding about values.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 30 Arrangements for pupils' welfare and safety are good and there are clearly set out responsibilities for staff. Medical facilities are good in each building and there is a checklist for the risk assessment of all activities. Regular site inspections are made by the health and safety committee and reported to the governing body. Child protection arrangements are rigorous and in line with locally agreed procedures.
- 31 Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The school analyses attendance data in considerable detail and is well aware of the reasons for low attendance rates and the individual families or groups of pupils involved. This is followed by targeted action, for example, the high levels of unauthorised absences by some pupils in Year 6 has been reduced from 106 in the Autumn Term to 46 as the Summer Term comes to an end. The school takes a deliberately strict line over punctuality and authorisations for absence and has virtually eliminated casual lateness so that the start of the day runs smoothly. Certificates are given for good attendance and punctuality. The school is aware of the work that still needs to be done with

families who do not give enough importance to education and is already making plans for the learning mentor role that will begin in a few months time.

- 32 The monitoring and support for pupils' behaviour are good and successfully eliminate any concerns about bullying or other forms of serious misbehaviour. The school strategy is based on an ethos of care and respect for each other, which pupils learn from a simple motto 'we listen, we care, we learn'. Rules are discussed with pupils at the beginning of each year and there is an effective range of awards for doing well, such as merits, merit badges, star of the week and golden leaf for the golden tree displayed in the hall. The overall strategy is supported by a range of individual measures of intervention to support pupils whose behaviour causes them difficulties, such as games actively supported by lunchtime supervisors. Other examples are a lunchtime club, which provides structured activities to encourage social skills, play therapy sessions from a visiting outreach worker in the area and a 'buddy' system, in which older pupils intervene in the early stages of trouble in the playground. Pupils also take some responsibility for school behaviour through the work of the school council and have improved the quality of outside play equipment. Teachers usually apply procedures consistently well and deal with most problems in the classroom but there are times when unsatisfactory behaviour is tolerated until the problem becomes larger than it should. The school has won repeated awards for its anti-bullying strategies but is not yet rigorous enough about its procedures and responsibilities in responding to potentially racially motivated behaviour.
- 33 The school offers satisfactory and effective levels of support and guidance for the personal development of pupils. Teachers take a keen interest in how pupils develop and are well informed through the positive relationships that are formed in the classroom. Progress from the age of five is monitored informally and pupils are given individual targets to improve aspects of their personality, for example, to improve on their patience.
- 34 Staff show high levels of care for children in the Foundation Stage and this creates an atmosphere in which the children thrive. They have a very good understanding of the children's physical, academic and social needs because assessment, through observation and recording, is accurate and detailed. The staff use the information very well to plan work which is matched to the children's needs. Records are detailed and manageable and the transfer of information between year groups is of high quality. This means that the teachers in the reception classes build successfully on the very good start made in the nursery
- 35 The school has good systems for assessing how well pupils are progressing in English and mathematics. Each term pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics is recorded and the assessment co-ordinator tracks their progress. Pupils who have not made enough progress and those who are doing well are identified and their teachers are informed so that they can support those who need it and challenge those who are very able. This system has been used very successfully to move pupils who would do better working with a different age group and to sort pupils into ability groups for mathematics. In addition, the teachers use statutory and voluntary Qualifications and Curriculum Authority tests to measure pupils' achievements in the core subjects from year to year in the juniors. These are used to predict the outcomes of the national tests in Year 6. Science achievements are recorded at the end of units of work and pupils' progress is recorded. The assessment procedures for these subjects have improved since the last inspection and have made a significant contribution to the school's success in raising attainment in English and mathematics.

- 36 The assessment co-ordinator analyses the results to identify any trends, for example, different rates of progress for boys and girls and the effect of pupil mobility. Pupils' performance in the tests is studied to spot any weaknesses amongst groups of pupils. This helps the teachers plan to address gaps in the curriculum or areas that need more work. There are plans to incorporate other, more diagnostic tests into the tracking system.
- 37 Ongoing assessments to track pupils' progress in ICT have been introduced. Like the core subjects, pupils' attainment is measured against National Curriculum levels to ensure that they are achieving appropriately for their age.
- 38 There are end-of-year assessments for the other subjects and for speaking and listening and some teachers assess pupils' learning at the end of a unit of work. While these give an indication of what the pupils have covered they do not show how well pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developing through the school and underachievement has not been picked up. The co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of what needs to be developed and has plans to simplify the assessment system to make it easier to see individual pupil's progress. This will also involve incorporating the assessments for the reception children into the school system, marrying the Early Learning Goals with the National Curriculum levels.
- 39 Good systems assess pupils' special educational needs and monitor their progress. As soon as problems are identified an individual programme is written and progress towards the targets is assessed. New targets are set as a result of the reviews. These target-setting sessions are chaired and managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator who leads these sessions well. However, although most targets are clearly drawn, the targets for older pupils are too blunt and cannot be used effectively to judge the rate of improvement. The provisions specified in statements of special educational needs are met in full. Links with agencies, such as social services and the school psychological service are very good and their expertise is valued.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 40 Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and expressed no significant concerns during pre-inspection consultations. Almost all parents say their child likes school and makes good progress through hard work. They feel comfortable approaching the school over any concerns or ideas. The vast majority of parents consider that teaching is good, the school is well led and managed, behaviour is good and they feel well informed about progress. The inspection findings support these positive views.
- 41 The quality of information to parents is good, especially through formal publications such as the prospectus. Newsletters continue to be frequent and informative and notice boards are used well to communicate topical information in each area of the school. The governing body's annual report to parents is detailed, especially about progress in meeting school targets. Information about progress is mostly good with detailed information about progress in reports to parents and opportunities for parents to discuss targets with the class teacher. Some reports do not have enough information about progress in non-core subjects and refer only to the attitude and effort of the pupil.
- 42 The involvement of parents in their child's education is satisfactory and good for many parents. The school is working hard to increase the confidence in parents to be involved with the school and there is already a large increase in the number of parents

who help in the classroom. There is a small group of committed parents, who organise events in support of school improvement through a home school association. These events are usually well supported by others. There is small number of parents who give too little importance to education and do not co-operate well with school arrangements. This provides a barrier to the progress their children make in both their academic and their personal development.

- 43 Parents of children in the Foundation Stage speak highly of the support given to their children and are appreciate of the good information provided about the curriculum and the children's progress. They are actively involved in their children's learning at the start of the school day and are keen to help at home. Annual reports to parents about their children's progress are good and there are frequent opportunities for the parents to discuss their child's progress with the teachers
- 44 Parents are involved at all stages of the special educational needs process and reviews. In conjunction with the class teacher some are active in helping their children with work at home. This has a good impact on their children's self-esteem and progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 45 The headteacher has been at the school for less than two years and provides very good leadership. Management is also very good and the school, which is on three sites, runs smoothly. Communication systems and administration are efficient due in no small part to the work of the experienced clerical staff. The headteacher is well supported by her senior management and leadership team and by governors. The deputy headteacher has spear headed developments in literacy that have helped standards to rise. Parents also praise the headteacher's leadership. Her style of leadership is to promote strong teamwork and she is meeting with some considerable success. She has sensibly built on the good practice of her predecessor and has initiated several key initiatives that are helping the school to move forward quickly. She has developed practices that ensure all staff are involved in school improvement including very useful self-evaluation. Questionnaires enable all "stakeholders" to contribute to improvement planning. Performance management systems have been refined and now include most other staff in addition to teachers. All staff are involved in setting targets for the whole school. The headteacher has a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and priorities for the school's development are entirely appropriate. The commitment to improving the school is strong. A range of strategies is used to monitor and evaluate the school's work including lesson observations and feedback to teachers, and scrutiny of pupils' work. Subject co-ordinators write annual action plans that inform the school improvement plan. Analysis of pupils' performance in the core subjects in particular has been followed by action that has borne fruit, for example, in raising standards in literacy.
- 46 The governors fulfil their responsibilities well and are well informed about the school's development. The chair and headteacher meet regularly and several governors work or help in the school. The curriculum committee has good contact with the subject co-ordinators and is therefore aware of curriculum developments. Governors discuss the standards achieved by pupils and compare them with the results in similar schools. Best value has been sought well in the provision for ICT and seeking the views of parents. The budget is controlled efficiently and spending is well linked to the school's educational priorities. Governors have succeeded in maintaining the good staffing levels and this has benefited the pupils. Staffing accommodation and resources are adequate overall but provision for the Foundation Stage and ICT are strengths.

- 47 The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is led and managed very well. Teachers and support staff are a very competent team. The curriculum and assessment are managed very well and this means that there is consistency in developing children's skills, knowledge and understanding in all of the areas of learning. Detailed records and observations enable the co-ordinator to keep track of the children's progress.
- 48 The SEN co-ordinator provides good leadership. There is close liaison with other staff to ensure the best possible provision for all pupils who have educational and other needs. The school has a very strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils and spends its money efficiently and effectively in fulfilling that commitment. Consequently, pupils needing support make good progress. The very good support staff are deployed to good effect and receive training in the particular needs of the pupils they work alongside.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 49 The governors and headteacher should:
- (1) Raise standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 by:
 - ensuring pupils have regular opportunities to write creatively and apply their literacy skills more fully across the curriculum
 - developing more thoroughly pupils' thinking and reasoning skills in mathematics
 - giving the most able pupils more chance to pursue their own ideas in scientific enquiry
 Paragraphs 3, 4, 6, 16, 23, 56, 60, 68, 70-71
 - (2) Raise standards in geography, history and religious education in Year 6 by:
 - teaching them more regularly
 - ensuring pupils' work in all three subjects is sufficiently challenging
 - improving pupils' investigative and research skills
 Paragraphs 5, 6, 17, 21, 60, 76, 79-81, 84, 100, 102.
 - (3) Raise standards in music by the end of Year 6 by widening pupils' musical knowledge and experiences.
Paragraphs 5, 6, 91-5.

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION IN THE ACTION PLAN.

- Improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures in British society
Paragraphs 29, 93, 95¹
- Continue to seek ways of improving attendance¹
Paragraphs 11, 28
- Encourage the oldest girls to participate more actively in discussions
Paragraphs 3, 6, 56, 62-63, 66

¹ Denotes that the school has recognised the issue and is addressing it in its school development plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	8	18	24	13	3	0	0
Percentage	12	27	37	19	5	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 one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	255
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	89

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	15
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	83

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	28

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	20	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	35	35	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (86)	95 (82)	97 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	14	16
	Girls	18	18	19
	Total	30	32	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (70)	86 (70)	95 (84)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	15	22	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	14
	Girls	11	9	14
	Total	25	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (87)	65 (74)	76 (87)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	15
	Girls	10	11	13
	Total	21	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (71)	65 (68)	76 (71)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
252	-	-
-	-	-
2	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
1	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	192

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
	£
Total income	591,464
Total expenditure	635,011
Expenditure per pupil	2,300
Balance brought forward from previous year	93,547
Balance carried forward to next year	50,000

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

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	296
Number of questionnaires returned	91

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	30	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	36	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	50	4	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	41	9	3	7
The teaching is good.	68	27	4	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	38	8	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	27	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	31	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	46	7	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	51	42	2	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	36	5	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	42	5	2	5

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 50 On admission to the nursery at age three most children have levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below those expected for their age. They attend part-time each day, either in the morning or afternoon. On admission to the school, their communication, language and literacy skills are poor. During their time in the nursery the children make very good progress and are prepared exceptionally well for work in the reception year. This very good start is built upon in the reception classes because the staff have a clear understanding of what the children already know, due to the use of sharply focused assessment. Progress for boys and girls of all abilities is very good and by the end of the reception year the children are well-equipped learners. They attain the goals expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development and in mathematical, physical and creative development. Although their communication, language and literacy skills, and their knowledge and understanding of the world, are below average, the children achieve very well in these areas of learning. The school identifies children with SEN quickly and provides them with well-focused support, particularly in their oral English.
- 51 The teaching is very good in all six areas of learning because the staff provide a balanced programme of practical and individualised work with opportunities for the children to learn in groups of different sizes. The children thrive in a positive atmosphere in which they are well supported by adults. They enjoy the wide-ranging activities and are keen learners. The school has maintained the strengths in the nursery provision reported at the time of the previous inspection and has improved the overall provision in the reception classes, including an area for outdoor play.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 52 The staff carefully monitor children's progress in personal, social and emotional development and find ways of fully involving them all, regardless of ability and age, in the wide range of activities. The high expectations of staff and their perceptive questioning and support contribute much to children's development and consequently they are willing to have a go at all activities. They quickly adapt to the routines of the nursery and relate effectively to others because the teaching of this area of learning is very good. Particular strengths in the nursery include the way in which children are expected to make choices, work alongside others and try new activities. There is a high degree of support and staff intervene at just the right time to move learning on. The children have a secure understanding of the needs of others and willingly take turns or help others with tasks such as clearing away equipment. They form very good relationships with adults and it is a tribute to the very effective teaching that children readily approach visitors to show them their work. By the end of the reception year, the children relate very well to others and are co-operative and collaborative learners. Reception children develop self-confidence and are good at making decisions, selecting resources and engaging in purposeful play. In a mathematics lesson they worked hard on the computer as they explored different aspects of the program and took turns with their partners so that everyone improved their skills of using a mouse. The children are very well behaved and show much care for each other and respect for adults and the environment. In the nursery they carefully observe and care for plants, and reception children observe the movements of snails and record their findings using graphs and pictures. The sensitive way they talk about minibeasts is one example of

their understanding of the wonders of the natural world and their responsibilities for caring for creatures. This aspect of their work contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The children also show a good appreciation of the views and needs of others. They work happily alongside children with specific needs and are developing a good understanding of moral and social values. As a result behaviour and attitudes are very positive and contribute much to making the nursery and reception classes purposeful and exciting places

Communication, language and literacy

- 53 Although children make very good progress in this area of learning few attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Nevertheless, they achieve very well because of very effective and often excellent teaching which inspires them with a love of books, songs, rhymes and poetry. The daily opportunities to listen to stories in the nursery, and to join in drama to act out the stories, reinforce good vocabulary. The staff are very aware of the needs of children with speech difficulties and focus strongly on regular practice of sounds, making learning much fun. The more able nursery children take opportunities to “read” from the good range of resources. There are also many opportunities for the children to experiment with writing in such situations as the “Travel Agency” where they book tickets and plan journeys. The children listen attentively, become fully engaged in stories and often repeat familiar phrases. These basic skills are developed to very good effect in the reception year because of highly skilled teaching. The teaching of reading receives high priority and the staff inspire confidence because they use a wide range of methods, including teaching the sounds that letters make, to help the children make progress. The staff provide very good role models in speaking clearly and explaining tasks lucidly so that the children know exactly what to do next. There is a strong emphasis on improving children’s vocabulary and staff seize every opportunity to encourage effective speech. Adults inspire confidence through careful questions and prompts encourage the children to be confident when describing important events in their lives. Daily opportunities for children to read to adults and to practise their skills at home stimulate an interest in books. Group reading times are used to spur children on to read with expression and confidence. The children make very good gains in reading and the more able recognise and use the names and sounds of letters correctly. Others enjoy experimenting with sounds. Several children have SEN and they receive well-focused support which enables them to take a full part in activities. There are good opportunities for children to extend their understanding through role-play, for example, in *Fleur’s Flower Shop* they buy and sell flowers and enthusiastically take the part of the shopkeeper or customer. There is a good emphasis on writing and children are beginning to form letters correctly with the more able writing some phrases with help from adults. Most write their names correctly although some struggle to keep the letters to a consistent size and the right way round.

Mathematical development

- 54 By the end of the reception year most children attain the early learning goals in their mathematical development because of very good teaching in both the nursery and reception classes. Children of all abilities make very good progress because much of their work is rooted in practical activities and the use of a wide range of mathematical apparatus. The children love counting aloud and respond with enthusiasm to number rhymes and games and benefit much from adult participation and guidance. Most nursery children recognise numbers to five and the more able count to 10. Some recognise the numerals and have a good understanding of adding on one. The staff use mathematical vocabulary well and this helps the children to develop an awareness of shape and position. Reception children build on this good start and really enjoy

mathematics. They know many number rhymes and games which help them to develop counting skills; most know the sequence of numbers to 10 and many count forwards and backwards in tens to 100. They correctly form numbers and the more able cope well with simple addition and subtraction. The teachers place much emphasis on understanding and are rigorous in asking questions. The children understand *more and less than* and also have a good understanding of words such as *before, after, in front of* and *behind*. The staff keep a careful check on children's progress and set tasks which are matched to ability so that each child is challenged effectively. In some very effective work on patterns the children showed good understanding of symmetry and this linked very well with their work on Islamic patterns. The children in the nursery and reception also make very good use of computers in mathematics and have great fun in matching and sorting shapes and numbers.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 55 By the end of the reception year, children are a little behind others of a similar age in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They make very good progress in this area of learning although it is progress is hampered by their limited experiences and low level of communication when they start school. The teaching is very good and staff plan very well to provide an interesting range of activities to stimulate learning. The children make very good gains in their scientific understanding. They carefully observe the natural world, for example, they study minibeasts and grow a variety of plants. They know that most plants need water, light and food to survive. The reception children record their findings thoroughly in charts and drawings and talk about the attractive patterns and camouflage of some creatures. The staff encourage the children to use correct scientific vocabulary and this prepares them well for the National Curriculum. In technology, the children make simple and well constructed models and ask questions about how things work; nursery children experiment with construction toys. They co-operate well on large projects, such as making a picture of Barnaby Bear, use a wide variety of materials and explain carefully why they used fur and different fabrics in their picture. The children have good basic skills in using computers and several maintain good concentration for extended periods when drawing, moving objects around the screen and attempting mathematical problems. The children's knowledge and understanding of history and geography is more limited although they excitedly take part in role-play to plan their holidays. They know that some things change over time and talk about how they have changed since they were babies. In religious education the children know some of the main stories in the life of Jesus.

Physical development

- 56 The provision for outdoor play has improved since the previous inspection. The children now have good opportunities to learn through informal play and in some class lessons. This successful balance of activities means that the children make very good gains in their physical development and by the end of the reception year attain the early learning goals in this area of learning. The teaching in informal play is very good and excellent in whole class lessons. The staff join in well with the children and also point out particularly good skills to encourage the children to learn from each other. The outdoor play area is a natural extension of the classroom for nursery children. They run, climb, balance and engage in robust activity. They are beginning to develop control and co-ordination and respond well to the challenges set for them such as steering vehicles without collisions and climbing safely. Reception children are developing good skills in throwing and catching balls and make appropriate attempts to strike balls with a bat. Boys are usually more successful at this task. The children have a good awareness of space because the staff plan their activities, such as games of tag, very

well so that children learn to use space to good effect to avoid being caught. The children thoroughly enjoy physical activity and work very hard to improve their skills. In an excellent lesson using a parachute the children worked very effectively together and improved their co-ordination skills. The teacher used every opportunity to extend the children's language and mathematical skills through a series of games and activities. The children are very careful with equipment and have a good understanding of the importance of exercise and the effect it has on their bodies. Other physical skills are developing well and most children hold pencils correctly and use a variety of tools and equipment safely. This aspect of the school's work contributes much to the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Creative development

- 57 By the end of the reception year the children attain the early learning goals in their creative development. Progress for children of all abilities is very good and they thoroughly enjoy the good creative opportunities provided because the teaching is very good. Staff achieve a very good balance between opportunities for children to learn new skills and techniques, and to explore a wide range of media using their imaginations. The children are keen to explore a wide variety of media and work hard to improve their work. In the nursery they experiment with paint, glue, fabrics and mouldable materials to create recognisable portraits and models. They know the names of several colours and the more able know how to mix some colours. Staff work alongside the children and teach them how to hold paintbrushes and to control them. The children work hard and concentrate well. They paint good pictures of themselves and through careful observations of minibeasts paint accurate representations of spiders, snails and ladybirds. The children make very good gains in music as they daily sing rhymes and songs, often keeping time as they clap and use other sound effects. Reception children develop these skills further and the staff push learning on very effectively. This results in some highly attractive work such as detailed and effective pictures of water lilies in the style of Monet making good use of shades of greens and blues. Children also make good progress in their language development through imaginative opportunities for role-play. The staff regularly change these activities and they are highly effective because adults often join in the play to stimulate good speaking skills.

ENGLISH

- 58 Standards in the infants have risen considerably since the last inspection when they were below average. The current Year 2 pupils achieve levels that are well above the national average in writing and speaking and listening and their reading skills are above average. Standards in writing have risen since the 2002 national tests but there are fewer pupils reading at an above average level. The standards of the Year 6 pupils are below the national average in all aspects of English and have fallen since 2002 when they were average. There are fewer Year 6 pupils achieving above average levels than in the 2002 national tests.
- 59 Pupils make very good progress in the infants and lower juniors and overall progress is good. While girls' achievements are slightly higher than the boys in the infants, similar to the national picture, boys do better than girls by the end of the juniors. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented very successfully throughout the school and all teachers teach pupils about the structure of English conscientiously. This has resulted in a narrowing of the curriculum for Year 6 pupils and there are too few opportunities for pupils to use English creatively and to write extensively in English lessons or across the curriculum. Many of the oldest pupils do not enjoy their lessons

and do not take enough care with their handwriting or presentation in their day-to-day work. The narrow curriculum has had an adverse impact on the oldest pupils' progress, particularly in the case of girls. Pupils with SEN make very good progress in all aspects of English in the infants, and their progress is good in the juniors. The additional literacy support for these pupils and many others throughout the school has been effective in raising standards.

- 60 Many children join the nursery with limited communication skills. By the time pupils start their mainstream education, most are confident speakers but still have a limited vocabulary. They find it difficult to articulate clearly and to construct sentences. The teachers have identified this, and speaking and listening features strongly across the curriculum. For example, in a speaking and listening lesson for Year 1, the teacher read a story and was then followed by a pupil, sitting in her chair, who read to the whole class. The rest of the class were encouraged to ask questions and to discuss their favourite book. Pupils achieved this well because the teacher enabled them to feel valued and secure. In an excellent lesson in Year 2 the teacher expected her pupils to use extended, imaginative speech using compound sentences and a wide vocabulary. As a result, pupils actively inserted conjunctives and adjectives into their sentences while they discussed the difference in stories in the first and the third person. They achieved very well. By the end of the juniors, most pupils have appropriate speaking and listening skills, but it is only a minority of pupils, mainly boys, who contribute to class discussion. Pupils understand and use technical vocabulary well but they are very reluctant to venture opinion or to enrich their speech with description or hypothesis.
- 61 Given the limitations of pupils' skills on entry to the school, Year 2 pupils do very well to achieve good standards in reading. Reading skills are rigorously taught and pupils learn frequently used simple words, letter sounds and blends and the use of the context to make informed guesses. By the time they finish Year 2, many pupils read confidently, fluently and with expression. Their enthusiastic teachers place a high value on stories and books and their pupils echo this. The pupils who find reading difficult, including those with SEN needs, are given very good support, and, without exception, are proud of their efforts in the Year 2 class because the adults ensure that all the pupils know how to improve their reading and celebrate success when targets are achieved. Every class has a dedicated daily reading time while the teacher and teaching assistants work with groups so pupils' technical skills continue to improve. The oldest pupils analyse the text accurately and have a good understanding of the techniques authors use to grip the reader. In one lesson they compared the beginning of three stories by Michael Morpurgo, identified the roots of words, examples of alliteration and personification, prefixes and connectives with ease. But most have little awareness of their audience when reading out loud and have a very limited knowledge of poetry and literature from their own or other cultures. In discussion, five of a group of six of the oldest pupils of mixed ability preferred non-fiction books and they said they rarely read for pleasure.
- 62 The teachers in the infants and lower juniors have high expectations of their pupils' writing, having given them the technical skills to write confidently. Pupils in Year 2 know exactly what they need to do to achieve an above average level. In one lesson, for example, the teacher reminded them that the use of paragraphs was a level 3 skill and that the better the use of vocabulary, extended sentences and adjectives, the higher the marks. Her pupils respond with enthusiasm so that all achieve very well. More able pupils write extended, interesting text, paragraphed and punctuated accurately. Pupils with SEN write with confidence and enthusiasm and almost all, including those with significant learning difficulties, achieve average standards. Those with average abilities

are attaining level 2 or level 3 standards and this represents very good progress throughout the infants. Most handwriting is joined and legible.

- 63 By Year 4, pupils have a good understanding of a range of writing styles. In one lesson, pupils used persuasive language to create snappy, alliterative rhyming slogans that were computer generated. For example, “*super scrumptious sauce*” “*the snack that hits with a tangy taste*” or “*Velvety VIP*”. In the classes containing Year 6 pupils the vast majority of the work has consisted of exercises in aspects of writing relating to the National Literacy Strategy. This has given pupils a secure knowledge of different writing genre, grammatical and punctuation rules and spelling. Additional literacy support ensures that these skills are securely embedded in the pupils’ work. There is some very good marking that clearly indicates how well pupils have done and what they need to do to reach a higher level. So pupils have made good progress in the acquisition of literacy skills but these skills are not applied sufficiently to allow the pupils to write stories or poetry creatively, following their own interests. Pupils know how to extract information from books but the limited provision for history and geography provides few opportunities for independent research. All the writing for these subjects is securely linked to developing basic literacy skills. The majority of pupils’ work has been completed on worksheets, often without dates, so pupils are unable to track their progress securely. This has resulted in a lack of pride in the presentation, and the very good handwriting produced in handwriting books is not reflected in pupils’ day-to-day scripts. Pupils use the computers to present their work with appropriate skills but there is little evidence of extended research or individual anthologies of stories or poems.
- 64 During the inspection, the teaching in English lessons was always good and sometimes very good or excellent. Teachers have a very good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and the teaching is rigorous and accurate. They have high expectations and have their sights set on the best possible achievements for their pupils. Teaching assistants are generally effective in supporting the pupils and they echo the vocabulary and style of the teachers they work with. Where teaching is at its best, as in an excellent lesson in the infants, the teacher inspires her pupils to high achievement by clearly defining the attributes of the best work. Her very skilful and understated “mistakes” have her pupils bursting to correct her. A missed apostrophe, for example, was instantly picked up on and a dull connective generated a wealth of more interesting words. Teachers have clear objectives for their lessons that are always shared with pupils. Pupils with SEN are supported very well in the infants and the support is good in the juniors, although the targets set in the IEPs for the older pupils are not as precise as elsewhere in the school. Teachers mark the work accurately, often set targets for improvement and always acknowledge effort.
- 65 Relationships between pupils and teachers are good throughout the school and all teachers make sure that effort is celebrated. In some classes in the juniors, there are occasions when teachers do not do enough to encourage all pupils to participate. Although they respond to those with their hands up they do not always encourage the passive listeners to answer questions or give opinions. This is very marked in the oldest classes where the majority of participants are boys.
- 66 Literacy is well managed and the school has been very effective in raising standards through the literacy lessons and developing the clear understanding that teachers expect the highest possible standards from their pupils. Pupils’ results in statutory and optional tests are tracked so those who are not making the expected progress are given extra support and the most able pupils continue to be challenged. All pupils have individual targets for reading and writing. The school identified weakness in boys’ progress in the past and has ensured that the library contains books that interest them

but girls have not been achieving as well as the boys over the last three years and this has not been addressed.

MATHEMATICS

- 67 Standards are average for Year 2 pupils and this is a similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection. Although standards are not as high as in the tests in 2002 pupils continue to achieve well. Standards in Year 6 are not as good as in the last inspection but a combination of greater pupil mobility and an increased number of pupils with SEN have affected standards. However, pupils continue to make good progress. There has been a steady increase in the standards achieved by the infant pupils and as they rise through the school this achievement is built on well. Teachers now expect pupils of all abilities to work hard. Pupils with SEN make good progress because they are well supported in lessons and the school's use of flexible setting arrangements helps all pupils to do well. The curriculum is broader and teaching and standards have improved.
- 68 In Year 2 pupils achieve well because they experience consistently good teaching. They gain a thorough understanding of number and the four operations of arithmetic. They work quickly and accurately to calculate mentally and understand, for example, that when multiplying numbers, any order will produce the same answer. Pupils measure accurately, identify two and three-dimensional shapes by their properties, and understand that information can be displayed in graphs. This good progress continues in Years 3, 4 and 5 and pupils reach above average standards. Year 6 pupils understand how to calculate numbers with fractions, decimals and proportions. They calculate accurately by estimating and understand how to use line graphs to convert from one currency to another. Pupils know that graphs come in a number of forms and that each has to be titled and labelled correctly to be used effectively. They plot accurately in four quadrants and calculate area and perimeter using formulae. Despite having a high proportion of pupils with SEN and a high rate of pupils who did not join the school until Year 3 or after, Year 6 pupils achieve well, and standards in this year group have risen from the very low standards achieved as Year 2 pupils, four years ago. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects, such as measuring in design and technology, displaying information in science and using grid references in geography. Some attention has been given to problem solving but pupils' skills in thinking and reasoning are not developed as well as they should be.
- 69 The quality of teaching is at least good and in many of the lessons seen was very good or occasionally excellent. This represents great improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Teachers now have a very clear idea about what pupils should learn. They plan lessons which are challenging, briskly paced and in which the rate of learning is at least good in all cases. Often teachers plan work for high attaining pupils in Years 1 to 5 and these pupils often work from the next expected stage of learning. For example, a particularly bright pupil in Year 2 works from the Year 4 numeracy strategy. The use of sets and assessment systems, which mean that pupils are moved to try harder work, sets pupils difficult but realistic challenges. Work is taken from the National Numeracy Strategy and a key skill is the way teachers reinforce mathematical terms and ensure pupils use these when explaining their ideas. The best learning is in those classes in which pupils are required to think hard and give reasons for why they choose certain methods. This means that these pupils remember lots of ways of working and try different solutions when they are stuck. However, the oldest pupils lack confidence in explaining their thinking and their mental skills are often not quick enough because investigations are not occurring as regularly as they should. Therefore, few pupils reach more than above

average levels. Some teachers do not involve girls in the question and answer sessions as often as they involve boys, who tend to take up the large share of these sessions. Teachers plan lots of opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their mathematics lessons. Pupils use computers to practise skills, such as identifying shapes, and mental calculation is a key element of this work. Pupils also use computers in more sophisticated ways, for example, when they measure levels of light and produce graphs to display their results.

- 70 The subject is managed and led well. Analysis of assessment is beginning to bear fruit in a sharper understanding of what needs to be altered in teaching the curriculum to bring about higher standards. The analysis of individual pupil's progress is in the early stages of development.

SCIENCE

- 71 Standards in Year 2 are above average and have improved considerably since the last inspection when they were judged to be below expectations for pupils' age. The improvement is a result of much better progress through Years 1 and 2 and better teaching. Standards in Year 6 have fallen and are now below average. However, they were better in last year's test results. Pupil mobility and an increased number of pupils with SEN are key reasons for this decline. The school's assessments of Year 6 pupils' performance indicate that they have made good progress over time. Pupils with SEN generally make good progress throughout the school and they achieve well in their work. In many of the lessons observed, and in the scrutiny of work, there was scope for the most able pupils to be challenged more especially in scientific enquiry.
- 72 Pupils in Year 1 are making good progress in their knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things. In a discussion on the life cycle of a butterfly about a third knew that eggs were laid first prior to a caterpillar developing. About a half used cocoon and pupa accurately. By the end of the lesson an increased proportion of pupils talked confidently about the different features of the butterfly's cycle. Pupils in Year 2 have undertaken a good range of work in the required elements of the National Curriculum. The work includes opportunities for pupils to carry out simple tests and there are some clear explanations of their findings, for example, when testing which ice cubes melt the fastest. Work includes recording in writing, pictures and simple diagrams, such as labelling the diagram of an electric circuit. The content of the work is basically the same for all and the level of challenge for the most able pupils is not as high as seen in a lesson during the inspection. However, discussion with several of the most able pupils indicates that they have acquired good knowledge and understanding. For example, they articulate well the differences between living and non-living things, name the parts of plants accurately and talk knowledgeably about how plants reproduce. They know that fish have gills and fins and these are essential to their habitat. When discussing materials they used the terms "reversible" and "irreversible" without being prompted. They make sensible predictions and explain accurately what constitutes a fair test. The teacher assessments indicate that a higher proportion of pupils, than is usually found, are attaining at an above average level especially in their scientific knowledge.
- 73 Progress in Years 3 to 6 is uneven but it is good in Year 4 and standards are broadly above average in this year group. Pupils in Year 3 undertake investigative work fairly regularly and this includes making predictions and testing materials for "wearing away". In Year 4 pupils predict, record their findings and explain them well. Good links are made with mathematics, for instance, when recording which surface creates the most friction. Work is of a good standard in electrical conductivity, sieving and filtration,

solids, liquids and gases. The work in Year 5, especially, in the mixed Year 5/6 classes, is very similar to that in Year 6 and there is not a sharp enough distinction between the work of the most able and other pupils. Good work has been undertaken on micro-organisms. There is evidence of copied texts and too much use of undemanding work sheets. The work in Year 6 is almost all set at the average National Curriculum level and consequently the most able are not stretched enough. Year 6 pupils undertake scientific enquiry regularly and this enables them to identify their approaches, make predictions and describe how the tests are fair. They have reasonable opportunities to explain findings in their own words, for example, when explaining a test on condensation. There are some good opportunities for pupils to design experiments although the ideas for the tests are given to them. Some good links are made with mathematics including drawing line graphs of the degree of stretching of elastic bands. Discussion with a group of the most able Year 6 pupils indicates that their scientific knowledge is better than their skills of scientific enquiry. They talk reasonably well about the functions of the major human body organs and have good knowledge of plants. Although they are somewhat reluctant to explain their work they recall their knowledge and understanding of physical processes well. However, they struggle to cope when asked how they might pursue their own ideas for testing or research.

- 74 The teaching is satisfactory overall. Of the five lessons seen, teaching was very good in one lesson and good in another. In the very good lesson pupils in a mixed aged class, that comprised mainly pupils in Year 4, investigated whether people with larger feet jumped the furthest. This work was part of a topic on moving and growing and linked very well to mathematics. The pace of teaching was brisk and the teacher's well-focussed questions captured pupils' interest. Pupils' skills in recording results improved as they quickly learnt how to read and plot information on a scatter graph. The teacher maintained a good pace in the learning by increasing the levels of challenge as the lesson progressed. In a good lesson in Year 2 the teacher managed a discussion about differences between plants very well. Expectations of the pupils were high at this stage and their very good relationships with the teacher meant that they were very confident in giving their ideas. In the satisfactory lessons there were opportunities to challenge the most able pupils more consistently. For example, often in discussions at the beginning of lessons the teacher's good questions enable pupils to show their knowledge and understanding, for instance, in a lesson in Year 6 on food chains. However, in the main activity in the lessons the level of challenge is not always sustained.
- 75 The subject is well led. Pupils' work is scrutinised regularly and in 2002 lesson observations were undertaken throughout the school and feedback given to teachers. The monitoring of science has led to more attention being given to developing pupils' skills of scientific enquiry. A science week was held in 2002 to raise the profile of the subject. This included very good use of ICT, for example, when pupils used sensing equipment to take readings of the light levels over 24 hours. The school recognises that ICT is somewhat under used in lessons. Pupils are assessed after their units of work and also discuss their progress in interviews with the teachers. The school is looking to focus more sharply on the use of assessment findings. Currently, individual pupils do not have targets in science.

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 76 Standards in art and design are average in Year 2 and similar to the standards described in the last inspection. In Year 6, standards are average but not as good as at the time of the last inspection. This is mainly as a result of art and design being squeezed by the increased attention that has been given to literacy and numeracy. Progress through the school is satisfactory overall. There was little work available for scrutiny in design and technology (D&T) but evidence included photographs of completed work. Standards in D&T are average overall and similar to standards at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 undertake a satisfactory range of work in both subjects and use a sound range of media. ICT art programs are used regularly, for example, dazzle art in Year 1. Year 1 pupils have developed their skills in designing and cutting as they made models of playground apparatus. Pupils in Year 2 have produced colourful prints and patterns found in nature and these show good focus on texture. Year 2's observational drawings of flowers in vases include some that show careful observation. They have also done interesting work on winding mechanisms including using Lego to construct winding cranes. Work in Years 3 and 4 includes good links with science in pupils' careful drawings of edible plants. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have used pencil and chalk to good effect in their still life pictures of plants especially in the use of light and shade. In Years 5 and 6 the work of artists has been used to stimulate pupils' interest and sketchbooks include pupils' writing about famous artists. Pupils adapted designs by an artist working in the art deco style and made effective use of a restricted palette. Paintings in the style of David Hockney are colourful and expressive. In D&T, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have designed slippers for different people and purposes and there is evidence in their sketchbooks of their evaluation of their D&T work. There are some examples in the sketchbooks in Years 5 and 6 of pupils trying out their ideas in art and design but in general sketchbooks are not used as an aid to progression in pupils' skills. In a lesson in a Year 5/6 class pupils skills in drawing and applying media ranged from good to weak and were mainly satisfactory. However, they made good progress.
- 77 The teaching is satisfactory overall and was good in one of the few lessons seen. In the good lesson pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieved well in their attempts to capture movement in their drawings. They worked with a good range of media including charcoal, paint, pastels and pencil. Some of the blurring of images was done creatively. A good feature of the teaching was the opportunity for pupils to evaluate their work. The teacher also praised pupils' efforts and suggested improvements.
- 78 Both subject co-ordinators are relatively new and recognise what needs to be done to move the subjects forward. A good development is the collection of evidence of pupils' work in order to improve assessment arrangements.

GEOGRAPHY

- 79 Standards are above average at the end of the infants and pupils make very good progress. Standards are below average at the end of the juniors and pupils' progress overall is unsatisfactory. This is a reversal of the last inspection findings when standards were average overall but at their best in Year 6. The teaching and the curriculum have improved considerably in the infants and the teachers' high expectations and good planning enable pupils, including those with SEN, to achieve very well. At the end of the juniors the subject is not taught frequently enough to enable pupils to retain their knowledge and skills.

- 80 Prior to an excellent lesson in Year 2 pupils had taken digital photographs of the area around the school. The teacher printed these, in the order of the walk, onto a sheet of paper for each pupil. These were used to support pupils as they drew a map of their walk. A challenging discussion to identify natural and man-made features [learning from a previous lesson] using the photographs showed that pupils have a very good understanding of human influence on the landscape. All pupils were very eager to contribute because the teacher skilfully extracted knowledge from them by the use of well-focused questions. Very well matched tasks, and support from the teacher and teaching assistant, resulted in good work from all pupils. Pupils used symbols given by the teacher in keys, and then created their own. A pupil with SEN had his suggestion for the symbol of the sewage works adopted by the class. He glowed with pride. Pupils in Year 1, thanks to the very clear explanation for “setting” the map from their teacher, drew lively and informative maps of their routes to school, the best containing clear features and accurate turns. The pupils had been very well prepared in their numeracy lesson where they had learnt how to use co-ordinates to identify features on a treasure island.
- 81 By Year 4, pupils analysed the information gathered during a timed observation of the use of Heath Road to inform a discussion about the action that needs to be taken to make the road safer. They will write to parents and the council about the outcomes from this survey. Pupils worked very well together and there were some very confident presentations using the overhead projector. This was a very good lesson; again with well-planned resources and activities based on the pupils’ own research. Speaking and listening skills were promoted very well. The teaching observed in these three lessons was at least very good. A feature of all three was the use of the pupils’ own research or knowledge to provide the data for the tasks. The teachers have high expectations and very good relationships with their pupils. They are trusted to work independently and co-operatively and the pupils rise to the occasion. All pupils achieved very well in the lessons.
- 82 The oldest pupils have completed very little geography work this year and almost all is on worksheets that required very little effort on the part of the pupils. Discussion with a group of them showed a limited geographical knowledge. They have little understanding of other localities. Their geographical vocabulary is poor as is their knowledge of climates and continents. When asked the whereabouts of a mountain they were of the opinion it was “in the middle of nowhere”.
- 83 The new subject leader has made an audit of resources and looked at the teachers’ plans but has not yet got an overview of the provision for the subject, the standards achieved or the progress made by the pupils. There is an overall school plan for covering the curriculum but this needs amending. The local study in the infants was planned because the teachers identified a gap in the pupils’ knowledge that would affect their future learning but it is not on the overall plan.

HISTORY

- 84 Standards at the end of Year 6 have fallen since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2 standards are average and pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Year 3 make very good gains in learning because of inspiring teaching that includes opportunities for role-play, research and drama. However, this progress is not maintained consistently through Years 4 to 6 and by the end of Year 6 standards are below average. Progress varies significantly between classes. In general, more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently and pupils with SEN are set similar work to others

in the class. Consequently, without help they struggle to produce an acceptable standard of work. The main reasons why standards have fallen include:

- Insufficiently challenging and effective teaching in some year groups
- An over-reliance on undemanding worksheets
- Lack of consistency in developing skills, knowledge and understanding because of gaps between the teaching of topics

- 85 The teaching in Years 1 to 3 is good and sometimes excellent because history is brought to life through exciting lessons that inspire pupils and give them a thirst to know more. This was illustrated excellently in a lesson in Year 3 where the teacher played the part of an abbot at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries and successfully involved the pupils in acting out different characters. The skilful questioning drew out much accurate information from the pupils who had previously researched some aspects of the life of Henry VIII, by using the Internet and reference books. Pupils of all abilities were challenged and went on to produce a very good range of work including protest posters, letters of complaint and reasoned arguments in favour of saving the monasteries. Pupils with SEN excelled because of the high level of support provided.
- 86 No history lessons were seen in Year 2 but discussion with the pupils and analysis of their work shows that they make good progress and have a secure grasp of several periods of British history. The teachers bring lessons to life through vivid story telling and the effective use of artefacts. Pupils competently recount the significant events in the life of Florence Nightingale and take delight in explaining her influence on nursing. They also comment on how the health service has improved since Victorian times, showing a good understanding of change over time. Using computers the pupils produced a very good account of the Great Fire of London. They drew their information from the Internet and books and produced a very interesting diary in the style of Samuel Pepys. They make very good use of literacy skills in writing detailed and accurate accounts using a wide-ranging vocabulary and correct spelling and punctuation.
- 87 Discussions with pupils, analysis of their work, and the lessons seen in Years 5 and 6, show that teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Pupils have very insecure knowledge of significant historical events, characters and periods. A particular weakness is in using a range of sources of information to draw conclusions and to give reasons for changes over time. Older pupils show little interest in the subject and this is reflected in their work, which is lightweight and poorly presented. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write imaginatively and accurately about different periods of history because the teachers set tasks that are undemanding. There is an over-reliance on worksheets, which do little to inspire enthusiasm for learning, for example, Year 5 and 6 pupils were required merely to copy single words from a list to label a hoplite. The pupils do not work hard enough and both the quality and quantity of work are insufficient. Learning is more successful when pupils are involved in practical work such as drama, role-play and visits and they recall what they have learned from these experiences. Although computers are used to support some lessons pupils are not always given sufficient guidance on how to be selective in their choice of information.
- 88 The subject leader has very good subject knowledge and plans inspiring lessons but her colleagues do not apply this guidance effectively enough to the work of older pupils and there is a lack of consistency in developing historical skills of enquiry and research. Assessment is unsatisfactory, as it is not used well to guide teachers in planning challenging lessons. Monitoring of teaching, learning and pupils' work are not rigorous enough.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 89 Standards in ICT are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. This shows a greatly improved picture since the last inspection and is due to:
- more and better quality computers
 - growing confidence on behalf of teaching staff
 - a rich and interesting curriculum and
 - very good leadership.
- 90 Pupils in Year 6 have not had the early experiences other pupils are now receiving and therefore have more to catch up than younger pupils. However, the school is moving so quickly that pupils in Years 4 and 5 are now achieving above average standards.
- 91 Pupils in Year 2 load programs and change the colour and style of font. They select and change images to illustrate their work. They save their work in their own files and folders. In pupil discussions carried out by the co-ordinator, pupils in Year 2 showed they knew how to change the background colour of their work and understood how to print their work. They can also control a moving toy and a point on a computer screen to make complex shapes. In Year 6, pupils change how a document looks, draft directly on to the computer screen and use the Internet for research purposes. In Year 4, pupils work at similar levels to the levels expected of Year 6 pupils. Pupils throughout the school show a growing facility when using ICT. They understand the need to develop skills when using computers and know about their real life uses. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 used computers to design advertisements, and applied the same criteria as grownups when they thought of ideas for a campaign to help out a food manufacturer. Pupils in Year 6 used spreadsheets to calculate the cost of holding a party. They know how to place information into the cells of the spreadsheet and apply a formula to carry out calculations. They test the prevailing light conditions in their classrooms using computers as measurement tools.
- 92 Teaching and learning are at least good and are very good in a number of classes. An increasing number of teachers are skilled at using an interactive board to demonstrate to pupils their own level of subject knowledge. This growing level of confidence shows in pupils' very positive attitudes to the subject. In the lesson concerned with an advertising campaign, pupils cheered as they began work and there were intense discussions between partners about which slogan to use. In the best of lessons pupils' learning is productive and enjoyable. For example, in a very good lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils enthusiastically used a database to create a program to sort children by their personal attributes, such as eye colour and gender. They then developed their understanding by applying the program to two-dimensional shapes. All of the pupils in this lesson learned well and those with SEN learned very well because they were included in all aspects of the work, including demonstrating to other pupils. They showed high levels of competence when using computers. In Year 2, in an excellent geography lesson, pupils were given a map of the area surrounding the school made up of digital photographs they had taken the previous week. This helped pupils construct maps in a detailed and exacting manner. The methods teachers use are very practical in nature and usually lessons begin with five or ten minutes when pupils use a typing tutor to help them develop keyboard skills. This is very effective and there are few signs of pupils hunting for keys or using single fingers to type. In Year 2, pupils began to design book covers for a story they would write for younger pupils in the school. Their teacher excited their curiosity and their learning by encouraging them to think of themselves as authors. They worked extremely hard and completed their tasks, showing skills and knowledge above the expected levels.

- 93 The co-ordinator has a high level of subject expertise and uses this knowledge to very good effect in building up the school's resources and when advising teachers. The school has been particularly effective in securing the financial and material support of business concerns and support agencies. The co-ordinator's plans for further development of the subject, including the collection and use of assessment information, are wholly appropriate.

MUSIC

- 94 Very few music lessons were observed during the inspection and it is not possible to judge pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievements in Year 1 and Year 3 are appropriate for their ages. Standards in Year 6 are below average and lower than at the time of the last inspection. The school's emphasis on the core subjects has contributed to a lack of rigour in the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in music. This is particularly the case with the oldest pupils. Progress is satisfactory in the infants but unsatisfactory by the end of the juniors in most aspects of the music curriculum. Pupils with SEN make similar progress to their peers.
- 95 Pupils in the infants sing cheerfully and accurately in assemblies and vary the volume and speed of their performance. They respond well to their teacher and in a lesson for the youngest pupils they echoed the teacher's loud and soft singing. They recognise and repeat simple rhythmic patterns and move accurately to the tempo of recorded music. Pupils in the lower juniors are beginning to use percussion instruments to depict different moods. In a lesson there were good links with literacy as pupils first created a short passage relating to an emotion given by the teacher and then found the opposite, changing, for example, from sad to happy. This would have been more successful if the pupils had been able to select suitable instruments for the task rather than the ones pre-selected on the tables.
- 96 The oldest pupils have had little experience of music from a range of cultures and they found the African music they were listening to strange. Their ability to suggest similar musical elements in other types of music is limited, as is their musical vocabulary. Many pupils in this part of the lesson were lethargic and did not participate, but the rap performed later was more lively and of an appropriate standard. In another lesson pupils worked well together to practice an accompaniment to a poem related to their literacy project, but there was too little time for many to perform to the class and the accompaniments, on instruments pre-selected by the teacher, were sound effects rather than compositions. Discussion with some Year 6 pupils indicates that their musical knowledge and experiences are very limited.
- 97 The teaching was satisfactory in the lessons observed during the inspection and a good lesson was taught by the subject leader. She has good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of what the pupils should achieve. Pupils made good progress overall as they attempted to establish the time signature for different musical passages. In the other junior lessons there were limited opportunities for pupils to select their own instruments. The infant teacher used the commercial scheme appropriately and the content was effectively linked to the topic about minibeasts.
- 98 There have been several changes in the management of the subject over the last few years. The present co-ordinator is part time and has limited time to monitor the subject. There is a commercial scheme of work for the infants and pupils develop appropriate skills and knowledge. The junior classes lack an easy to follow scheme of work that builds progressively on pupils' previous learning. The time spent on music is less than in most other schools. Pupils have a limited exposure to music from their

own or other cultures although there are occasional treats such as the visits by an Indian Dance group and Swing group last year. The choir operates during the school year and there is an infant recorder group. There is no other instrumental tuition. The school participates in local schools' choir festivals and the choir performs to senior citizens at Christmas. There are annual Christmas performances. The resources for the subject are satisfactory but not enough use is made of the musical programs for the computers, or the recorded music, to deepen pupils' knowledge, understanding and response to music from the past and the present, from their own and other cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 99 Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average and these standards have been maintained since the last inspection. During the inspection the focus of physical education lessons was dance and games. Swimming was observed in Year 4. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and all of the strands are covered at some time during the school year. The number and quality of extra-curricular activities support pupils' achievement. Since the last inspection standards in the subject have been maintained and the range of extra-curricular sports and physical education activities has improved.
- 100 Pupils in Year 2 worked well in dance. In a lesson concerned with the Chinese creation myth, pupils developed a sequence of movements which ranged from strong, firm tension poses, as the giant held apart heaven and the earth, to graceful floating motion as the great egg broke and the giant was born. Pupils began their movements in good starting positions showing they were ready for work and had thought of ideas to develop their sequences. They worked very well together in pairs and threes to develop landscapes from the giant's body. Pupils in Year 4 showed above average levels of achievement as they learned to swim in a local pool. In a series of well-organised activities, even low attaining pupils showed they were confident in water and understood safety rules. Strong and confident teaching encouraged pupils to try hard. High attaining pupils, almost half the class, swim further than the distance expected of Year 6 pupils. In Year 6, pupils played short tennis after practising the skills associated with the game. Their work reached satisfactory levels as they tried, with adequate success, to develop their hand and eye co-ordination to hit the tennis ball accurately. A minority of pupils began to move their feet so that they would be in a good position and many pupils followed the balls carefully to hit accurately. There are few differences between the achievements of boys and girls. However, some sports are more popular than others and some pupils, particularly older girls, find the subject difficult and talk of actively disliking sport and physical education. However, these attitudes are improving and many pupils attend after school sport sessions.
- 101 The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and is good at times. In all lessons teachers are careful to ensure pupils are well prepared for their vigorous activity. Pupils understand the importance of warming their bodies. Lessons are an appropriate mixture of skill development and practice and pupils are encouraged to think carefully about their own and other's performance. In a well-taught lesson in Year 2, the teacher showed good use of her voice and she caught pupils' imagination to retell a story in dance. Generally teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and although lessons have a good structure, in that they contain all of the required elements, teachers lack the confidence and expertise to develop pupils' skills to the high levels seen in other subjects.

- 102 The subject is well led and the co-ordinator is actively working to raise the quality of teaching in the subject. The curriculum follows national guidelines and assessment in the subject is in the early stages of development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 103 The school has partially tackled the issues raised in the previous inspection report and the subject now meets statutory requirements. By the end of Year 2, most pupils attain the expected levels and progress is good. However, standards are still not high enough at the end of Year 6 and progress is inconsistent and unsatisfactory. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below those expected. There is little difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Because the work provided for the oldest pupils is often identical for pupils of different abilities most make unsatisfactory gains in their learning. More able pupils are not challenged enough and pupils with SEN also make unsatisfactory progress. The main reasons for insufficient progress and low standards are:
- Some unsatisfactory teaching
 - The work is not matched closely enough to the specific needs of pupils of different abilities
 - There is an over-reliance on undemanding worksheets
- 104 The good teaching in Years 1 to 3 enables the pupils to achieve well. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have a good grasp of some of the stories told by Jesus and significant events in His life. They describe in good detail the story of the Good Samaritan making very effective use of their literacy skills and a wide vocabulary to bring the story to life in their own words using a variety of illustrations. In a very effective lesson in Year 2 the pupils clearly understood the importance of the Bible to Christians and successfully recounted the story of creation using a broad vocabulary. They more able described how the world was special and commented on the need for all to care for plants, creatures and the environment. The pupils know that different religions have special signs and symbols. They have a good appreciation of the world around them and their writing shows sensitivity and an awareness of the importance of faith in some people's lives. The teachers make lessons interesting and stimulate the pupils' enthusiasm for learning. The pupils work hard and are keen to carry out research using books and computers. The teachers show that they value the pupils' work by making helpful comments about how they might improve. Good use of resources and wide subject knowledge are used well to provide sufficiently challenging opportunities for all pupils. In a good lesson in Year 3 the teacher held the pupils' attention through effective story-telling and encouraged discussion about feelings and emotions that Abraham and Isaac may have felt when faced with the prospect of sacrifice. The pupils linked the story to their own experiences and this added to their understanding of ideas such as faith and of coping in difficult circumstances.
- 105 By the end of Year 6 standards are not high enough and most pupils show a disinterest in the subject and low levels of knowledge and understanding. They have a sketchy knowledge of the main religions and have poor recall of what they have been taught. This is partly due to the low level tasks set by the teachers and the overuse of undemanding worksheets to record work. There are often long gaps in the recording of work and this lack of consistency in developing skills, knowledge and understanding contributes to unsatisfactory learning. The teaching is mostly unsatisfactory although a good lesson was seen in Years 5 and 6 when the teacher brought the meaning of the Passover Meal to life by using food to capture the pupils' interest. Pupils found it difficult to understand the links between certain types of food and the meal although the teacher carefully prompted them. The pupils' work and other lessons show that insufficient attention is given to promoting understanding through research, visits and

visitors and many of the tasks are mundane. Very few pupils can recall significant stories, events and characters in the major religions. Marking is a weakness and not enough is expected of the pupils so they produce untidy and poorly presented work.

- 106 Although the teachers make use of the syllabus followed by most schools in Derbyshire and the national guidelines for religious education they do not plan lessons with sufficient depth and interest to enable the pupils to learn effectively. Some improvements have been made since the previous inspection including better resources and additional training for staff but much more remains to be done to raise standards by the end of Year 6. The recently appointed subject leader has a good understanding of what needs to be done. Assessment is weak as teachers do not make sufficient use of the information to plan the next step in learning. There has been insufficient rigour in monitoring the teaching and learning and as a result the good progress made in Years 1 to 3 is not built upon.