

# INSPECTION REPORT

## SHIRLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Shirland

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112620

Headteacher: Mrs I Harry

Reporting inspector: Dr John Hill  
21165

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2003

Inspection number: 112620

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chesterfield Road Shirland Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE55 6BN
Telephone number:	(01773) 832426
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Appropriate authority:	Derbyshire
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Moakes
Date of previous inspection:	2 <sup>nd</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup> February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21165	Dr John Hill	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9974	Daljit Singh	Lay inspector		Pupils attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12394	Carole May	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Music Physical education Religious education	The school's results and pupils' achievements
24260	Dr Derek Allenby	Team inspector	English Mathematics Geography History Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Shirland Primary is a smaller than average mixed infant and junior school. It is situated in the village of Shirland, near Alfreton, Derbyshire. It has 145 pupils on roll and it is housed on a split site, in two buildings, approximately a mile apart. In the Reception and Key Stage 1 site most of the pupils come from the local villages of Shirland and Higham. The number of pupils aged under seven is very small and attainment on entry is average. In Year 3 there is an additional intake of pupils who mainly live in local authority housing in the nearby village of Mickley. Attainment on entry in Key Stage 2 is, overall, average. In the school there are 25 pupils eligible for free school meals, which is in line with the national average. There are 16 pupils on the special educational needs register. This is about a half of the national average. Of these pupils, three have a statement of special educational needs. There are very few pupils in the school from an ethnic minority background.

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

Shirland is a good school with some very good features. Standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, with pupils moving on to attain very highly in Key Stage 1 and well in Key Stage 2.

Teaching within both Key Stages 1 and 2 is of a high standard and it is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Over the last year this small school has undergone significant upheaval due to the loss of a number of key teaching staff. However, the appointment and success of teachers new to the school and the continued hard work and commitment of longer term members of staff have enabled children to make good and very good progress. Throughout the school pupils of all ages and abilities are well supported. The school is very well led and gives good value for money.

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

- Attainment in English and mathematics is very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is good in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The school is very well led.
- Procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are very effective and positively support the raising of standards.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good.

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

- Opportunities for free and structured play indoors, and an outdoors play area for children in the Foundation Stage would further support children's development.
- A greater focus within Key Stage 2 in all subject areas in information and communication technology would extend pupils' learning.
- More regularly planned homework in Key Stage 2 would improve pupils' learning and prepare them better for the next stage of their education.

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

The areas for improvement are highlighted by this report. These have been clearly identified by the headteacher and will form the basis of the action plan, which will be sent to all parents and guardians at the school.

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

Since the last inspection in February 1998 significant improvements have been made within the school. Provision within the Foundation Stage is much improved and throughout the school there is no unsatisfactory teaching. Attainment across both key stages continues to be high and systems for the monitoring of teaching and learning and procedures for assessing pupils' work have improved significantly. The school also continues to be very well led and its supportive and caring ethos has been maintained.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	C	B	C	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	B	B	C	C	
science	D	B	D	C	

Attainment is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. By the age of five virtually all children have achieved the Early Learning Goals expected. Compared with results in all schools, pupils in 2002 Key Stage 1 national tests attained very highly in reading, writing and mathematics and teacher assessment indicates that they also attained very highly in science. Attainment in this key stage is amongst the highest five per cent nationally. When compared to results in schools in similar contexts pupils in Key Stage 1 attain well above average in reading and mathematics and very highly in writing. Attainment of pupils in national tests in Key Stage 1 has, since the last inspection, been maintained in mathematics and has improved in English and science. The attainment of pupils in 2002 Key Stage 2 national tests is in line with national averages in English and science and above this in mathematics. Compared to the results of similar schools and also based on their achievement in Key Stage 1, pupils attain above the national average in English and science and well above this level in mathematics. When compared to the results of schools in similar contexts pupils in this key stage attain in line with what may be expected in English and science and above what may be expected in mathematics. The standards that pupils attain in information and communication technology are good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils in this key stage are not being sufficiently stretched to achieve well in information and communication technology. Standards in religious education are good in both key stages.

Overall, the attainment in Key Stage 2 is below that of Key Stage 1. This can mainly be explained by the large intake of pupils in Year 3, whose attainment is below that of pupils who started their school career at Shirland. There is no marked difference between the attainment of boys and girls, which generally reflects differences in attainment nationally. Over the past four years standards of attainment in Key Stage 1 have remained very high in comparison with national averages and in Key stage 2 they have mostly remained above the national average, with a fall during 2002 to nearer the national average. Pupils throughout the school achieve well and there is good evidence to show that the school has the capacity to improve further. The school's arrangements for the setting of targets for raising pupils' attainment are effectively in place. There is a rigorous analysis of performance data and the targets agreed between themselves and the Local Education Authority have all been met.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes towards school. They are enthusiastic, try hard and respond very positively to teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well in the classroom, around the school and at lunch and break times.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They form positive relationships and are cooperative with one another.
Attendance	The attendance of pupils is very good. There is a very low level of pupil

	absence.
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Attitudes within the school are very good. Younger pupils in the Reception and in Key Stage 1 behave well and are very enthusiastic in their approach to learning. This positive approach is maintained throughout Key Stage 2 with older pupils showing a mature attitude to their studies, cooperating well and making every effort to achieve.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	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 quality of teaching is good overall. Of the 49 lessons observed, none was unsatisfactory; seven out of ten lessons were good and one out of every five lessons was very good. This is an improvement on the quality of teaching reported at the last inspection. Overall the quality of teaching for children in the Reception class in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Often it is good. In both Key Stage 1 and 2, the majority of lessons were judged to be good and there were examples of some very good teaching. The teaching of literacy in Key Stage 1 is very good. In Key Stage 2 the teaching of literacy is good. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on extending pupils' skills in literacy, with teachers ensuring that all lessons have an emphasis on this area of learning. The teaching of numeracy in Key Stage 1 is good with pupils getting a good balance of practical, written and oral tasks. Numeracy is also taught well in Key Stage 2, with a strong emphasis given to helping pupils to solve problems and to improve their mental maths skills. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported within the ordinary classroom. Higher attaining pupils are given every opportunity to extend their skills and achieve well. Teachers encourage pupils to become independent learners and are achieving some success. However, this aspect of learning is not yet fully developed across the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and well developed in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils' basic skills are well provided for and there is a good balance provided through the arts, science and humanities. Improvements, could, however, be made in the provision for information and communication technology in Key Stage 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for these pupils is very good. This is a very inclusive school and care is taken to plan well and provide high quality in class support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils at the school with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision in this area is very good. Pupils are very well supported. The moral and social needs are very well catered for. The school plans and provides well for the spiritual and cultural development of pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. Pupils' health, welfare and safety are effectively catered for within the school.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and fully meets the needs of all pupils. All statutory requirements are being met. Planning for pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

In both Key Stages 1 and 2 the planning for the teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective and the focus on raising the literacy skills across the curriculum is having a positive effect on standards within the school. Although planning for information and communication technology is satisfactory when taught as a discrete



subject, the lack of planning to include this area of learning across the curriculum in Key Stage 2 limits pupils' ability to achieve well. The school cares well for the pupils in the school. Very good attention is given to their support and guidance and very effective support is given to pupils who have additional needs. The school has effective links with parents. It provides good quality information to them and teachers are always available for parents to discuss the needs of their children. The welcoming nature of the school is much valued by parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and is moving the school forward positively. Other key staff are successful in helping to maintain the impetus for continuing improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities well. They have a well defined and strategic management role within the school and are well respected by staff and pupils alike.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has worked positively to generate systems to evaluate its own performance. It is now very aware of its strengths and weaknesses and is taking action to address the issues it has outlined.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are adequate to meet the needs of the school and are adequately stored throughout the school. The library is satisfactory, but the range of books is in need of some updating.

The headteacher has a strong influence on the school and is leading it very well. The strategic management of other key staff is also good and the governors fulfil their strategic role well. The principle of best value is carefully applied. There is an adequate number of staff with suitable qualifications to meet the needs of the curriculum. The accommodation, although based on a split site, is satisfactory and is very well used, with teachers ensuring that good links are maintained between the sites. Learning resources throughout the school are satisfactory and are appropriately used.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is very well led.</li> <li>• Pupils make very good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is very good, with teachers new to the school having a very positive effect.</li> <li>• The behaviour of pupils throughout the school is very good.</li> <li>• The school is very welcoming and gives open access to parents.</li> <li>• There is a very good range of after school clubs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The building of a new school on the Key Stage 1 site.</li> <li>• Improved arrangements for the setting of homework in Key Stage 2.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents on their positive views of the school. This is a small school where parents and carers are valued and careful attention is given to their views. The issues raised by parents at the pre-inspection meeting are recognised by the school. They are identified in the school development plan and are being appropriately addressed. Plans for the building of a new school, however, are still on hold, although discussions with the Local Education Authority have been ongoing for some considerable time.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Attainment is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Early assessments show that on arrival children are achieving at an average level for their age. On entering school children settle well and by the end of the Reception class, virtually all of them have achieved the Early Learning Goals expected for five year olds. By this stage, most children are able to listen well and are developing a good vocabulary. They enjoy looking at books and are becoming familiar with initial sounds. Most can recognise their names and higher attaining pupils can write their names independently. Children are developing sound skills in counting and can tell the difference between shapes. Higher attaining children are beginning to add and subtract, using relevant vocabulary. Children in Reception are able to talk about living things in their locality and in the environment. They are developing sound physical skills through regular planned exercise. The children are enthusiastic about creative work and use their imagination satisfactorily. They enjoy music and are successful in a wide range of art and craftwork. Children are also developing good computer skills and many can follow a variety of simple programs. While the standards that children achieve are much improved since the last inspection, planning for independent learning and structured play is, however, limited and there is no designated outside play area to support pupils' physical and creative development. This limited provision reduces the progress that children make in these areas.
2. Pupils in Key Stage 1 attain very highly in national tests. In comparison with all schools, pupils in the 2002 Key Stage 1 national tests attained very highly in reading, writing and mathematics and, when assessed by teachers, in science. Attainment in this key stage is amongst the highest five per cent nationally. Higher attaining pupils in this key stage also attain well above average in all these subjects. In comparison with the results of similar schools, pupils in Key Stage 1 attain well above average in reading and mathematics and very highly in writing. Attainment of pupils in national tests in Key Stage 1 has, since the last inspection been maintained in mathematics and has improved in English and science.
3. Pupils in Key Stage 2 attain well in national tests. The attainment of pupils in the 2002 Key Stage 2 national tests is in line with national averages in English and science and above this average in mathematics. In comparison with the results of similar schools with similar attainment in Key Stage 1, pupils attain above the national average in English and science and well above this level in mathematics. When compared to results in similar schools, based on the percentage of free-school meals, pupils in this key stage attain in line with what may be expected in English and science and above what may be expected in mathematics. Overall, the attainment in Key Stage 2 is below that of Key Stage 1. This can mainly be explained by the large intake of pupils in Year 3, whose attainment is mostly below that of pupils who started their school career at Shirland.
4. Over the past four years standards of attainment in Key Stage 1 have remained very high in comparison with national averages. In Key stage 2 standards over this period have mostly remained above the national average, with a fall during 2002 to nearer the national average. However, care must be taken in interpreting this drop due to the evidence, provided by the school, of the lower than average starting point of many of the pupils who joined the school in Year 3. There is good evidence to show that the school has the capacity to improve further as well as sustain the improvements it has already made. The school's arrangements for the setting of targets for raising pupils' attainment have improved since the last inspection. There is now a more rigorous analysis of performance data and the targets agreed between the school and the Local Education Authority for 2002 have all been met. The targets set for 2003 have been agreed and are appropriately challenging.
5. Inspection findings agree that a significant number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are attaining standards above those expected nationally of pupils of the same age in English, mathematics and science. Standards in English and mathematics have improved since the last inspection. The effective teaching of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies has helped to improve standards across the school. Planning of work is now well matched to the ability of all pupils,

ensuring they make good progress and achieve well. Standards in science have also improved as teachers continue to develop the pupils' skills of inquiry through experimentation.

- Evidence collected during the inspection also confirms that in all other subjects standards found at the time of the last inspection have either improved or been maintained, with no subject area having less than satisfactory standards. Standards in both key stages in art and design and religious education and in Key stage 1 in geography and information and communication technology are good, with pupils making above average progress. In history, design and technology, music and physical education, pupils make satisfactory progress and continue to achieve average standards by the ages of seven and 11. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs promptly, sets appropriate targets for them and supports them so that they progress well. Higher attaining pupils get good support and attain well.

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

- Pupils' attitudes, their behaviour and their relationships with teachers and support staff are very good and effectively support their learning. The levels of very good attendance and the pupils' commitment to the school are also a significant strength.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are mostly very positive and they enjoy school because of its friendly and supportive learning atmosphere. Most pupils sustain appropriate levels of concentration and good levels of interest. In many lessons across the school pupils were observed enjoying their learning and there is a recognition that teachers work hard for them. Pupils settle to work quickly and their helpful attitude to learning enables most teaching and learning to proceed without interruptions. Opportunities for discussion and questioning enable pupils to share information and exchange ideas. Most respect each other's opinions and work collaboratively to enhance their learning. However, in some lessons the opportunities for pupils to work independently and use their initiative are underdeveloped.
- During the inspection a significant number of pupils were observed participating in extra-curricular activities, for example, exercising their creative skills through the art club or through the school choir. The stimulating art displays of pupils' work around the school illustrate the commitment that they have to their learning. Pupils spoke affectionately and were very positive about their school, teachers and teaching, as well as the caring and support provided by lunchtime support staff. These attitudes contribute significantly towards pupils' very positive perception of school and their personal and social development.
- Pupils show respect for property and share resources helpfully. They work hard and show pride in their achievements. Behaviour in class is often very good and mostly good around the school and at playtime. Lunchtimes were also valuable social occasions and pupils needed little supervision. During the inspection there were no visible signs of bullying and the vast majority of pupils continue to learn in a tolerant, welcoming and friendly environment. Racism is not tolerated and the headteacher, governors and staff work hard to ensure good effective race relations and to recognise and appreciate different cultures.
- Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner, particularly when they are being escorted to the dining area, which is also used for collective acts of worship. During assemblies pupils are attentive and display very good behaviour. When addressing visitors, pupils are polite, respectful and courteous. Interviews with pupils show they know the rules for good behaviour at playtimes and what to do if they are bullied, but some do not report all incidents of anti-social behaviour. However, most pupils are confident that teachers will deal with any incidents effectively. Most pupils and their parents are particularly proud of the action taken by the headteacher to create a friendly and warm learning environment.
- Relationships within the school are very good and the very small numbers of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are well integrated into the school community. Teachers and lunchtime support staff set positive examples of caring, friendly behaviour and this fosters very good relationships between pupils and staff. This has a very positive effect on pupils' learning and their social and individual development. Some pupils display a positive spirit of enquiry. For example, the

Sikh inspector was asked about his faith and the reasons for wearing his turban, during a visit to a local swimming pool. During this visit the behaviour was excellent and contributed to pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Other conversations with pupils indicate that most pupils are sensitive and they relate well with those who come from different backgrounds. These very good relationships have ensured that there have been no exclusions during the 14 years that the present headteacher has been in post.

13. Pupils are given good opportunities for personal development, including being assembly monitors, members of the school council, lunchtime assistants and enthusiastic fundraisers. They carry out these tasks in a mature, responsible and proud manner. These experiences promote their sense of community and citizenship and enable them to serve their school and the wider community.
14. Attendance is consistently very good and unauthorised absence is below the national average. It is sustained by the very hard work of teachers and by the effective partnership between the school and most parents. Parents ensure that their child attends regularly and on time. Registers are taken on time and comply with statutory requirements. The school rigorously pursues all absences and teachers encourage regular attendance by making effective use of the system of rewards. This very effective work supports pupils' learning and personal and social development. However, a very small minority of parents bring their children to school late and this disrupts their learning and sets a negative example for the rest of the school community.

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

15. The quality of teaching overall is good. It was never less than satisfactory during the week of the inspection and was good or better in over seven out of ten lessons and very good in one in five. The quality of teaching overall is much improved since the last inspection.
16. In the Foundation Stage teaching is overall satisfactory. Often it is good. Here teaching is appropriately linked to the Foundation Curriculum. Children develop a sound range of skills and are soundly prepared for transition to Key Stage 1. The teacher's planning reflects an appropriate understanding of the curriculum being taught and is delivered with much enthusiasm. The frequent turnover of teachers in the Foundation Stage over the past year and a half has been ended with the appointment of a newly qualified teacher. She is now bringing stability and much energy to this area of learning.
17. In Key Stage 1 teaching is very good in English and good in mathematics. It is also good in science, information and communication technology, geography, art and design and religious education. It is satisfactory in design and technology, physical education and music. In Key Stage 2 teaching is very good in English, good in mathematics, science, geography, art and design and religious education and satisfactory in information and communication technology, music and physical education. Although no lessons were observed during the week of the inspection in both key stages in history and design and technology, evidence from the scrutiny of work and from discussions with teachers and pupils shows that arrangements for teaching are satisfactory in these areas.
18. In lessons where teaching is good or very good teachers plan well with carefully structured activities that engage all pupils in the class. Teachers in these lessons in both key stages are well organised, have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve and manage pupils very well. Throughout the school, teachers demonstrate a very good knowledge of the subjects they teach. This is particularly the case in English, mathematics and science. In addition, the very effective systems for assessing the levels that pupils are working towards help teachers plan appropriately for all levels of ability. Teachers new to the school have settled very well and are making a very effective contribution to raising standards.
19. Throughout the school the teaching of literacy is effective and well linked to the National Literacy Strategy. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. In both key stages teachers have a good understanding of the subject. They plan well to ensure that literacy is effectively taught across the curriculum and encourage pupils to do their best. The good and very good teaching in this area ensures that pupils attain highly in English.

20. The teaching of mathematics throughout the school is good. Teachers are successful in their adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy. They work well with pupils to apply their skills to solve problems, calculate and extend their abilities in mental mathematics. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils of all abilities reach the standards they are capable of.
21. Overall, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, both in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2. All the shortcomings outlined in the previous inspection have been properly addressed. This includes the setting of challenging tasks for pupils of all abilities and the increasingly effective use of assessment to raise expectations and support teachers' planning. In addition the monitoring of teaching by subject coordinators, particularly in English, mathematics and science, has helped to raise standards throughout the school. Teachers make every effort to ensure that higher attaining pupils achieve their potential. The inclusive ethos of the school has further enabled pupils with special educational needs to achieve well. Here teachers take considerable care in planning to support these pupils and support staff engage very well with them within the ordinary classroom.

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

22. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils are good and the statutory curriculum is in place. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to pupils with appropriate emphasis on all the necessary requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education.
23. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage in the Reception class is satisfactory and covers the expected elements of learning. The Early Learning Goals are identified clearly as the objectives for learning. Overall there is a sound balance of child initiated and adult directed work. This could be improved, however, with greater emphasis given to the activities the children choose for themselves in order to develop independence for their own learning, especially in creative work. The curriculum for aspects of literacy and numeracy in the Reception Year is given a very strong emphasis, which is of benefit to the children's learning in these areas. However, the other areas of learning could be improved by an outdoor area for the children to use for their physical development and to find out about the environment.
24. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum for literacy is very good and the curriculum for numeracy is good. The coordinators of these subjects ensure, through their monitoring, that planning builds on the guidance given in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, an improvement since the last inspection. Consequently, all pupils benefit from well-planned, focused activities that ensure they learn well. Provision to improve pupils' literacy is made in almost all subjects and is a significant strength. There is also good development of numeracy in other subjects, particularly in science, where pupils are able to develop skills in collating and recording practical information. High quality provision in literacy and numeracy results from the very good leadership of these areas, an improvement since the last inspection.
25. Shirland has an inclusive curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, benefit from their inclusion in the full curriculum and from the well planned provision of support provided by teachers and other staff to ensure that they make good progress. As a result they are fully integrated into lessons, respected by their classmates and make good progress. Higher attaining pupils also benefit from good planning to meet their needs and as a result attain well.
26. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. The school organises recorder and chess clubs at lunchtimes. After school clubs are arranged for art, drama, sport and information and communication technology. All pupils are given the opportunity to attend at least one club per week. These clubs provide a good contribution to the curriculum, developing pupils' self confidence and independence as well as enjoyment and the opportunity to foster friendships. It is a strength of the school that it considers the inclusion of all pupils to after school clubs, providing transport when required for pupils living in Mikely. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from an annual residential visit to the Peak District, or further afield, where they develop social skills and friendships while learning about different environments.

27. The school makes good use of the community to enrich the curriculum. Purposeful visits are arranged for pupils to enhance their learning, for instance in science at the Leicester Space Centre and in history at Alverston Castle where they experience a Victorian day, including the making of Christmas crackers and sugar mice. Satisfactory use is made of links with partner schools through the Clay Cross and District Schools Music Festival and inter-school sports matches. The school has appropriate policies for sex education and drug misuse. These areas are satisfactorily incorporated within the curriculum of the school through a well-established personal, social and health education programme.
28. The overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and continues to support their attitudes and personal development.
29. The school promotes good opportunities for pupils' spiritual development and has made very significant improvement since the last inspection. A strong community and family ethos of shared values and respect runs through the daily routines of school life. Through assemblies there are purposeful opportunities for pupils to offer prayer and thoughts in response to a story or theme. This became evident when two members of the local clergy took an assembly and used their Christian teachings to reinforce the school's aims of respect, caring and valuing others. Teaching and learning frequently promote a feeling of awe and wonder, which is evident from the illuminating displays, which celebrate the work of eminent painters such as Turner, Monet and Van Gogh.
30. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Throughout the school pupils respond well to the teachers' very high expectations of behaviour. The focus of discipline procedures is justice and fairness and teachers rigorously apply these procedures. The school also encourages pupils to take ownership of their own behaviour from an early age. This was evident in a Reception class where the teacher used 'circle time' to discuss inappropriate behaviour and develop relationships. This gave children the chance to accept responsibility for their actions, which they did very effectively. These young children have a clear understanding about what is acceptable in their school. Teachers throughout the school take time to talk through difficulties with pupils so that they begin to appreciate another point of view. The school's behaviour system emphasises high expectations of pupils and makes serious attempts to place the responsibility clearly on the shoulders of the individual. Older pupils are encouraged to consider global issues and how the way people behave affects the lives of others. Overall the promotion of pupils' moral development enables pupils to become mature and responsible.
31. The social development of pupils is also very good. Teachers provide very positive role models and enjoy constructive and purposeful interaction with pupils. Extra-curricular activities, including an annual residential trip for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils actively contributes to the life of the school. Older pupils help around the school, particularly during assembly time where they were observed controlling the music and helping the teacher with the overhead projection. In lessons pupils work well together sharing ideas, information and resources and positive relationships are a strength of the school. There are good links between the school and the wider community and this contributes positively to pupils' social development.
32. The provision for cultural development is good. Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' knowledge of Christianity and makes reference to other faiths and cultures. The main festivals of Christianity are appropriately celebrated and pupils learn about Chinese new year and older pupils have some understanding of Sikhism and Buddhism. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop a good understanding of their local heritage through regular visits to museums and other places of interest. Displays in Years 1 and 2 illustrate the importance of the host culture by studying the work of the London Dome and value the culture and life in a big city.

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

33. Shirland Primary School has very good procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. It uses this information well to support pupils' academic progress. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The assessment coordinator is trained in the use of a computerised assessment system and is using it to good effect. The school assesses pupils' progress and attainment in both literacy and numeracy very well. The coordinator effectively uses

National Curriculum sub-levels to record progress and maintains an up-to-date file of pupils' moderated work for all subject areas. Teachers use these assessments to set annual improvement targets for individual pupils. These are appropriately modified each term depending on the progress that pupils have made. This high quality information is used well to ensure that teaching is very closely matched to pupils' individual learning needs. These very good assessment procedures contribute much to the high standards achieved by pupils at both key stages. Pupils know what they are expected to do to improve. Teachers in their marking and in lessons tell them how to improve and when their targets have been reached. Information about pupils' levels of attainment and the progress they are expected to make is used in discussion at parents' evenings but less well in written reports to parents where it is not always clearly explained how parents could help their children improve. The provision of homework, while satisfactory in Key Stage 1 is not effectively planned for in Key Stage 2. Here, teachers do not effectively plan for or consistently provide opportunities for pupils to work at home to supplement their learning in class. Older pupils in this Key Stage are particularly disadvantaged in this area and lack the homework routines that will soon be expected for them in their secondary school.

34. Pupils with special educational needs are identified in line with the Code of Practice. Individual education plans are satisfactory and they have a relevant and manageable number of targets. Teaching and support staff use them well in their work with pupils and they effectively supplement the school's assessment systems. The requirements of statements of special educational needs are also well met. Annual reviews, however, while properly convened, are often not attended by parents and supporting agencies despite the school's invitations. They do, however, meet statutory requirements and help promote pupils' progress in school.
35. The provision for pupils' care, support and guidance and welfare is good and arrangements for child protection are appropriately in place. The good procedures ensure pupils continue to learn in a safe and secure environment. This level of care has been sustained since the last inspection.
36. Arrangements for child protection are clear and satisfactorily implemented by a designated teacher. She provides clear leadership and co-ordination, which ensures that, appropriate staff are informed, suitably trained and understand their role in relation to the issues. All incidents of concern are effectively pursued, recorded and monitored. The satisfactory arrangements for child protection are complemented by good procedures for the welfare of the school community and ensure that health and safety are given priority. Accidents are recorded and systematically investigated. There are regular fire drills and pupils have a clear understanding of the school emergency and evacuation procedures. A visit to the local swimming baths illustrated the care the staff take to ensure the safety and security of those in their care.
37. There are very good policies and procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development. Registration time, break and lunchtimes, extra-curricular activities, assemblies and "circle time" contribute well to pupils' moral, social, physical and emotional development. Teachers enjoy a very constructive, trusting and productive relationship with pupils. They celebrate and reward pupils' achievements, both inside and outside of the classroom. They provide effective supervision, listen attentively to pupils' concerns and provide good quality information and good educational advice and guidance. This ensures that pupils feel secure, confident and self-assured and helps foster good standards of achievement.
38. The personal, social and health education programme further complements pupils' personal development and ensures that pupils are provided with appropriate information, support and guidance. This enables them to make informed choices about healthy eating, relationships and drugs awareness. Staff work very effectively to monitor attendance and ensure that very good levels of attendance are maintained. Parents are encouraged to support regular attendance and time keeping. However, a small minority of parents bring their child to school late and this causes disruption during registration time.
39. There are very effective strategies for promoting good behaviour. The school policy and code of conduct are clear and effectively implemented by all staff. Bullying and other types of anti-social behaviour are discouraged and action is taken to thoroughly investigate, record, monitor and report incidents. However, some racist incidents are not consistently recorded or reported to parents in the

governors' report. The headteacher is aware of this and is taking action to review and develop existing practice.

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

40. The school's partnership with parents is good. Since the last inspection the school has sustained its productive and purposeful relationship with its parents, who continue to speak highly of the school.
41. Parents value the positive ethos of the school, the good teaching, behaviour and the efforts of the teachers, who ensure their child is well cared for. This enables their children to become responsible and mature members of the school community and this pleases parents. Parents rightly value the good and efficient leadership, which ensures that their concerns are addressed and their child's achievements are celebrated. Inspectors support the constructive comments of parents. However, some parents have expressed concerns about the provision for homework. Inspection evidence indicates that homework is given regularly by some teachers, but is sometimes inconsistently provided in some Key Stage 2 classes.
42. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. Parents are actively encouraged to attend parents' evenings and annual reviews and special arrangements are made for parents who are unable to attend. Most parents bring their child to school and take this opportunity to meet and talk to class teachers. This offers them the chance to visit the classroom and acknowledge their child's achievements and understand the topics being taught. Newsletters also provide relevant information about what is taught in the classroom.
43. Parents receive good written information in a user-friendly style through the school prospectus, which meets with statutory requirements. Parents also receive regular newsletters, which keep them informed of events in the school and community. The annual governors' report to parents provides valuable information and meets requirements. The annual report to parents also supports the information that parents receive during consultation evenings, but the report does not set clear targets for improvement or provide sufficient information about how they can help their child to improve. Parents of children with special educational needs are invited to all meetings and fully informed of the support their children receive and the progress they are making.
44. Parents are consistently and actively encouraged by the school to support learning in the classroom and at home. A number of parents in Key Stage 1 were observed assisting the teacher with learning and supporting the reading of some pupils. The Friends of the school support numerous social and recreational activities, which enhance learning and help raise significant funds to support learning and purchase educational resources. Most parents acknowledge and effectively support the home/school agreement by supporting their child's learning at home and in school. They ensure their children attend school regularly and on time. However, a small minority bring their child to school late and this negatively affects the child's learning and disrupts teaching.

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

45. The leadership and management of the school are very good and make a positive contribution to the quality of education provided and the high standards that pupils achieve. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. She has maintained the strong commitment to high standards and inclusive principles that were reported in the last inspection. Key staff with additional responsibilities manage their roles well and are prominent in helping the school to continue to improve. The educational vision and direction of the school is very clear. The school's aims are clearly stated and shared by everyone who works there. There is a sense of purpose, confidence and loyalty from staff and pupils alike. The headteacher works effectively alongside the governing body, deputy headteachers and staff of the school. Together they have helped to maintain and raise standards throughout the school.
46. The governing body plays an active and successful role in supporting the work of the school and in the planning and implementing initiatives. Governors are very committed to the school and are active in promoting school policy through an effective system of committees. They meet regularly and work very well with the headteacher. Together they ensure that all statutory requirements are met and



oversee the school development plan effectively, identifying relevant priorities and targets. These have been carefully costed, are appropriately linked to named personnel and include well-defined success criteria. The support of governors is greatly appreciated by the staff of the school.

47. All teachers have subject responsibilities and are developing their management roles successfully. This is particularly the case in English, mathematics and science where much time and effort have been given to developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Coordinators meet regularly with colleagues and plan efficiently. Every effort is made to link the Key Stage 1 and 2 sites together through joint planning and careful consideration of the needs of pupils when they move into Key Stage 2. There are very good systems in place to support staff that are newly qualified, or new to the school. Appraisal through the performance management system is up to date and used well throughout the school to help strengthen those areas of the curriculum where teachers feel less confident.
48. The monitoring of the teaching and curriculum is good. It is undertaken on a regular basis both by the headteacher, deputies and by curriculum coordinators. It is very effective in English, mathematics and science in supporting teachers in their planning and target setting arrangements. Monitoring is satisfactory in other subject areas. Arrangements for the teaching of special educational needs are very good and provision is effectively organised throughout the school. The coordinator, who is new to the school, is building on the positive work of the previous post-holder in providing for this population through a commitment to in-class support and the promotion of basic skills. The school makes every effort to use relevant outside agencies to support pupils with special educational needs and, when available, uses the speech therapy and the educational psychological services to good effect. The small numbers of pupils with statements of special educational needs are very well supported and their needs fully provided for.
49. Funding within the school is well managed. The plans of the headteacher and governing body to defer some spending from the previous year's budget to support the building of a new school on the Reception and early years site led to a larger than average carry-forward. The lack of progress on the new school has resulted in this money being appropriately spent on upgrading the Key Stage 2 site. Decisions on spending within the school are carefully monitored by the school administration officer and the specific grants it receives are spent appropriately. The governors effectively apply the principles of best value when determining spending. New technology is also used well to support very good administrative procedures. The school's recent auditors' report highlighted the school's competence in this area. Unit costs within the school are average for a school of this size and overall the school gives good value for money.
50. There are sufficient teachers with an appropriate range of qualifications to teach the number of classes. The skills of teachers and support staff are appropriately matched to the needs of the curriculum, although there is a need for further staff training in information and communication technology, which the school has acknowledged in its development planning. After a long period of stability there are a number of staff who are new to the school. They have been very well supported, have settled well and are making a positive contribution to teaching and learning. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting indicated their satisfaction at the new appointments. The levels of support staff in the school are satisfactory. They are valued members of the team, are effectively deployed and make a significant contribution to the raising of standards. There are a small number of parent helpers who provide additional good support to teachers in the Reception and Key Stage 1 classes.
51. The school is on a split site. The accommodation for pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 is spacious and generally well used, but the outdoor grounds, although safe, are underdeveloped and underused, with no designated play area for the Reception class. However, the stimulating displays around the school, as well as the internal fabric of the building, are in good order and well maintained. Rooms are well furnished and storage space is plentiful. This supports both learning and teaching effectively. The other site, which is about a mile away, accommodates older pupils and is adequate for the size and age of pupils, with large, spacious rooms, which have recently been upgraded with new windows. Whilst it is adequate for the taught curriculum it has a number of deficiencies, which were reported to the headteacher. In particular, the library is too small and this limits opportunities for pupils to work as a whole class, which subsequently affects learning. The school hall is also used as a dining facility and for assemblies and is too small. In addition the space it provides for the teaching of physical education in the winter months is inadequate for fully meeting

the needs of the pupils. The staff make very good use of the space they have and have worked hard to improve its appearance. Overall the accommodation is satisfactory and supports the teaching and learning in the school.

52. Resources are satisfactory in all subject areas and this enables teachers to teach effectively. However, there is a lack of suitable computer programs across the curriculum to support learning. In addition, some of the books in the library are old and this has a negative impact on the research opportunities of the pupils.

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

53. In order to improve standards further, governors and staff should:

I. Improve children's opportunities for learning in the Foundation Stage by:

- increasing the planned access to the structured and free play area within the early years classroom; and
- developing a secure and easily accessible outdoor play area.

*(Paragraphs 1, 23, 51, 66, 70, 73)*

II. Improve the teaching and learning in information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 by:

- ensuring that teachers' planning within all subject areas has a clear information and communication technology focus;
- providing a broader range of information and communication technology programs to support pupils' learning; and
- ensuring that teachers are suitably trained in all aspects of information and communication technology.

*(Paragraphs 104, 133-138)*

Other points the school may wish to consider in its Action Plan are:

- Provide more regular and planned opportunities for homework in Key Stage 2.

*(Paragraphs 18, 41)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	10	25	14	0	0	0
Percentage	0	20	51	29	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	145
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	3	5	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	8	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	8	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	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	17	14	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	15
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	22	22	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (87)	77 (87)	87 (87)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	17
	Girls	10	11	13
	Total	24	26	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (87)	84 (87)	97 (87)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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



### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	105
Number of questionnaires returned	61

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	39	5	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	55	40	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	45	10	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	45	11	1	0
The teaching is good.	58	37	0	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	44	9	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	41	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	31	0	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	34	47	11	6	2
The school is well led and managed.	56	39	3	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	36	2	2	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	50	5	2	4

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents at the pre-inspection meeting and through their questionnaire returns were very supportive of the school. The main issues of concern were the frustration in moving forward in the building of a new school on the Key Stage 2 site and a lack of consistency between teachers in setting homework in Key Stage 2.

## **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**

54. Children are admitted to school in the term they are five and, because of small numbers, join a mixed age Reception and Year 1 class. Most children have had some prior experience of early education at one of the two local nursery groups. Analyses of assessments made on entry to the Reception class show that overall the children are attaining broadly average standards. At the time of the last inspection, attainment on entry was found to be above average, but as the numbers of children are so small, the average attainment on entry varies from year to year.
55. At the last inspection, the provision for and the teaching of the reception age children were found to be unsatisfactory because planning was not in accordance with the nationally recommended curriculum for reception age children. There were also weaknesses in the classroom management and organisation and in extending children's learning. Satisfactory progress has been made towards addressing these issues. Planning now appropriately includes all the areas of learning and the children make sound progress. By the end of the Reception Year most children have achieved the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory overall and many of the lessons observed were good. However, the organisation of the timetable and the management of lessons are sometimes more suited to the Year 1 pupils, even though these are in a minority in the Reception class.
56. Assessment and tracking of pupils progress towards the Early Learning Goals is at an early stage of development. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and the curriculum is adjusted appropriately to suit their needs and they make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Staff work hard at developing links between the home and pre-school groups and children visit with their parents during the half term before they start in the Reception class. Records of children's progress are passed to the school from the local nurseries. Parents are welcome to come and help in the classroom, but few do so on a regular basis. However, parents are appropriately kept informed of their children's progress through reports and regular consultations. Resources for indoor use are generally sufficient and in a satisfactory condition. Whilst the school is gradually building up the resources for use outside, at present the provision for outdoor play is unsatisfactory.
57. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The teacher in charge of the class is new to the school and is newly qualified. After an unsettled period in terms of staffing in this area she has made a very positive impact in many areas of the curriculum in the five months she has been in post and has built on the improvements made by previous coordinators.

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

58. By the end of the Reception Year, most children will have attained the standard expected for their age. Children settle into school quickly. They know the classroom routines well. They can find their own name card when they arrive in the morning and are able to post it up on the board to signify their presence and quietly gather on the carpet for formal registration. This is a pleasant social time when children bring items from home to show and discuss.
59. During assembly children are very well behaved and sit quietly. The more confident and mature children sometimes answer the teacher's questions. In an assembly during the inspection the children were interested to learn about the stories and traditions associated with the Chinese new year. In another, they appropriately joined in the discussion on why it is important to be a good neighbour and why we should help others. Both these assemblies helped to further the children's personal development well.
60. In lessons, pupils can concentrate on a task well, especially when they are engaged in an activity that really interests them. When working with adults, the children learn to listen carefully, join in with songs and rhymes and to take turns and share. The behaviour of the children is good. The calm, friendly, supportive approach of the teacher creates a positive response from the children who try very



hard to please. However, opportunities for children to exercise their independence are limited because the Reception class timetable is organised into very specific subject areas. There are also too few opportunities for children to use their own initiative, select their own activities and resources and often insufficient time to finish a task in one lesson.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

61. The children's skills in speaking and listening are average for their age by the end of the Reception Year. The children make satisfactory progress because teaching in this area is sound and because of the teacher's good relationships with pupils. The best opportunities for children to talk occurred when adults were present to support their language and learning during their play activities. However, these opportunities do not occur often enough because the children do not have many occasions to engage in self-chosen activities.
62. The teaching of reading is satisfactory and a love of reading is fostered in the classroom. As a result, children enjoy looking at books and hearing stories. They listen carefully when adults are reading to them and talking about the story. When looking at books on their own and with their friends they turn the pages carefully and talk about the pictures. During the inspection, whilst waiting for their physical education lessons to start, pupils were observed sharing books with one another and discussing the pictures. Children can recognise familiar words and anticipate what comes next in the story. They are beginning to learn letter sounds and recognise simple rhyming words. They make sound progress in their reading and, by the end of the Reception class, attainment is broadly average. The school has appropriately implemented the National Literacy Strategy in the Reception class, but for the youngest and least able pupils a whole hour of literacy is too long. The school recognises this issue and has clear plans to address it.
63. The teaching of writing is satisfactory. Children can write their own names and most are at an early stage of writing. Children are given appropriate opportunities to spend time using a variety of writing implements. They are effectively being taught how to form letters and have some opportunities to practise the skills taught by writing for themselves.

### **Mathematical development**

64. The children make satisfactory progress in mathematics and, by the end of the Reception Year, their attainment is average for their age. The satisfactory lesson observed was based appropriately on the National Numeracy Strategy. Good attention was given to teaching counting skills. The children sang a variety of number songs and rhymes which they enjoyed and tried hard to join in the actions. Children are also appropriately taught about the use of space, to know the names of simple two and three - dimensional shapes and how to measure using non-standard units of measure. However, the children are given insufficient opportunities to consolidate and reinforce the ideas taught by using large and small building blocks. Whilst the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall, there are too few opportunities provided to use mathematics in play.

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

65. Children make satisfactory progress as a whole in this area of learning and achieve the level expected by the time they leave the Reception class. However, sometimes the theme of the lesson and the tasks provided are unsuited to the children's age and stage of development. For example, the Great Fire of London, a topic being studied prior to the inspection, is too far distant in time and location to be truly relevant to the children.
66. Because of the nature of the timetable, pupils have too few opportunities to build with large and small construction kits, or to experiment with natural materials such as sand and water as an integral part of lessons. Finding out about the natural world is also limited because there is no discrete, secure area where children can dig, plant, collect leaves and look at plants and insects.
67. The teaching of other aspects of this area of learning is very appropriate, such as learning about the seasons and weather. Here good links with other aspects of the curriculum were made such as dance and music. Computer skills are taught well and the children have the opportunity to use a wide

range of computer programs. They know how to manipulate the mouse to 'click', 'drag' and 'drop'. Pupils' computer skills are good overall and also reflect the very good knowledge and enthusiasm of the teacher in this area.

### **Physical development**

68. At the end of the Reception class, most of the children are achieving the standard expected for their age in this area of learning. Fine hand control is generally satisfactory and pupils can cut, stick and colour well, but their hand control in writing and drawing is weaker because they have too few opportunities to practise these skills in their free play by using play doh clay and small construction toys.
69. Larger movements and games skills are also satisfactory and are taught well. In the good dance lesson observed, the teacher encouraged pupils to take part by joining in and demonstrating the movements to the children. This lesson was particularly effective because the theme was 'wind' and at the time of the lesson a gale was howling around the building creating atmospheric sound effects.
70. The games lesson observed was also good. The children learned how to throw and catch and how to improve their ball control skills. In both dance and games, most children demonstrated that they could use space well and move with control avoiding collisions with one another and with furniture. One or two children do not yet understand 'a space of your own'. The teacher spotted this and intervened appropriately. She also helped the children to understand the benefits of exercise and the changes that happen to their bodies when they exercise. However, the lack of a discrete, secure, fenced area means that the children do not have the opportunity to co-operate with one another using wheeled toys designed for use by two or three children, or to practise skills taught in lessons during free play.

### **Creative development**

71. At the end of the Reception class the achievement of children in this area of learning is average for their age. Children are satisfactorily helped to develop their skills in dance. The lesson observed had a good brisk pace and kept the children focused on what they were doing and the skills they were learning. The resources for the lesson were appropriate and used well. The children worked hard, listened well to instructions, imitated the movements made by the teacher and created movements suggested by the music. The children enjoy taking part in dancing and ring games.
72. In music, standards are also as expected. The children sing familiar songs and join in the actions. About half the children can clap in time to music. These children have a good sense of rhythm. In the music lesson observed, the teacher made good use of simple, home-made instruments to suggest weather sounds. The children were expected to listen and the teacher praised those who did. She had appropriately high expectations of the children's behaviour and involved the children actively in the lesson by encouraging them to invent and write their own musical symbols and then play their own 'music'.
73. In art, the children are also achieving the level expected. The children make collages, paintings and drawings using a variety of tools and techniques. Children appropriately learn about famous artists and try to copy their work. However, because of the layout of the rooms and lessons planned as subjects, there are too few opportunities for children to practise the skills they learn and to develop their own creativity.

### **ENGLISH**

74. Standards in English are good overall. Pupils attain well in both Key Stages 1 and 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in 2002 national tests compared with results in all other schools were well above what was expected in both reading and writing. Pupils attaining higher levels in both reading and writing were well above the national average. When compared with results in similar schools, pupils attain very high standards in both reading and writing and those attaining higher levels are well above the average for these schools. Evidence collected during the week of the inspection

from pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 indicates that pupils are attaining good standards in relation to national expectations in reading and writing.

75. Pupils throughout Key Stage 1 speak and listen well showing confidence in the tasks set. By the end of the key stage, they can talk with assurance when, for example, discussing the reflection in the lake in Monet's garden and can explain very clearly in technical language how to use a CD Rom. Pupils also use formal vocabulary well, such as 'evaporation' when answering questions in science about experiments with puddles and weighing water.
76. Pupils read a variety of texts with increasing fluency. By the end of Year 2 they read accurately using a variety of methods to establish meaning, recognising simple words and using the phonic strategies that they have been taught. Pupils respond with enjoyment to stories such as Three Billy Goats Gruff, understanding the main points and developing strategies to read unfamiliar words. Through Key Stage 1, they increasingly read with fluency from a variety of texts.
77. Pupils make good improvements in their writing in Key Stage 1. In Year 1, pupils use simple words well in their writing such as 'pointed' and 'sharp' to describe fictional characters. By the end of the key stage many can structure their writing well and use imaginative language. This is mainly the result of good teaching, including marking that explains to pupils how their choice of words makes it exciting for the reader. Pupils select words in their writing with interest to describe characters and events in books they have read. They learn to use simple punctuation well in sentences and most pupils are beginning to extend their understanding of punctuation to know when a question mark should be used. In Year 2, pupils form letters accurately and write well and most spell common words accurately.
78. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in national tests compared with those in all schools are in line with expectations in English. When compared with the results of similar schools, pupils attain better than the national average and those attaining higher levels are well above the average for these schools. Because of the intake of pupils in Year 3 from another school, caution is required in making comparisons with standards at Key Stage 1. Evidence collected during the week of the inspection indicates that standards are good and pupils are making good progress, when their attainment on entry to Year 3 is taken into account.
79. In Key Stage 2, pupils speak and listen well. In Year 4 they quickly learn to discuss the meanings of words in science that describe different properties. In literacy lessons they listen carefully to their teachers reading poems and other texts, responding appropriately to teachers' questions. Pupils listen well to other pupils reading their work in plenary sessions, including pupils with special educational needs and they respond well to their reading. By the end of the key stage pupils thoughtfully develop ideas in discussion with their teachers and can talk confidently about their writing.
80. Throughout this key stage pupils read well as a result of very good teaching of literacy. Younger pupils in this key stage understand the main points of stories and can express preferences about characters in traditional stories. In Year 4 they understand the meaning of non-standard English in poems by John Agard and refer to the words of the poems to justify their views. By the time they are 11, pupils can explain the views of authors from texts dealing with environmental issues and can make relevant notes from material that they have obtained from the Internet. They make good use of factual information as a result of their good reading skills. Weaker readers achieve well as a result of the effective deployment of support staff to ensure that their learning matches their needs.
81. Pupils attain well in writing, making consistently good progress throughout Key Stage 2. In Year 3, pupils had fun with words, extending their vocabulary when describing the wrong-doings of a wicked witch in a wanted poster. Higher achieving pupils in Year 4 know the difference in science lessons between reporting in bullet points and reporting in paragraphs. By the end of the key stage pupils have developed their writing skills well. They have learned to use complex sentences and they choose words for effect when designing leaflets in order to write persuasively. Most pupils spell well because they are taught how to remember the spellings of difficult words. Their writing is well structured into sentences and paragraphs and pupils in Year 6, for example can write reports on BMX

bicycles for formal audiences, presenting factual information very well. Pupils achieving lower levels of writing make sustained progress as a result of well-planned and encouraging support.

82. The achievement of pupils in English is good overall. They enter Key Stage 1 with average standards and leave this key stage with above average standards. The good achievement of pupils is maintained throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in English and achieve well in both key stages.
83. Overall, the teaching of English at Shirland Primary is very good and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection. In Key Stage 1, teaching is good. Lessons are clearly planned and teachers make good use of the methods suggested in the National Literacy Strategy in their whole class teaching and in grouping pupils. Teachers have good levels of competence in teaching phonics and other aspects of literacy. Different objectives are written for pupils in Years 1 and 2 who share a class and sensitive grouping ensures that all pupils make progress. Teachers know well what individual pupils should achieve and ensure that pupils have their own targets in the front of their books so that they know that they have to use full stops and capitals, for instance. They assess pupils' work well through marking books so that pupils know that they have made their writing exciting for the reader and that they have remembered their targets. Homework is sometimes given to extend the learning begun in lessons. However, this is not consistently planned for or applied. Teachers ensure that lower achieving and special needs pupils make good progress through appropriate class grouping and the setting of appropriate targets and by the good deployment of support staff.
84. Teaching is very good in Key Stage 2. Lessons are very well planned and effectively linked to the National Literacy Strategy. A key feature of the very high quality teaching is that teachers challenge pupils very effectively in their oral questions to them. These very well focused questions require children to remember previous learning by, for example, recognising rhyming words in a mainly non-rhyming poem. Pupils are well aware of the aspirations that teachers have for their learning and are told by their teachers in their marking when they have reached their current targets. Teachers provide good structures to support learning and story maps and writing frames are used very effectively to support all children's writing. The setting of homework, although appropriately provided on some occasions is not systematically planned for. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 2. Additional support is very effectively deployed in the classroom by learning support assistants and volunteers to supplement the additional support that teachers give to lower attaining pupils. Staff know pupils' individual needs well. Very high standards of behaviour are expected and achieved at all times as a result of teachers' very good management of their pupils.
85. Pupils in Key Stage 1 respond very well to the teaching of English. They show very high levels of interest in reading stories together from big books and are very keen to do well in their writing. At Key Stage 2 they respond equally well showing very good interest in their work. They have very high levels of enthusiasm and motivation and show very good responsibility and behaviour by the end of the key stage.
86. English is very well led by the coordinator. She monitors teaching effectively across the school, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The coordinator gives appropriate attention to improving all aspects of English and is very well aware of the continued high quality of work required of all staff if end of key stage targets are to be met. She plans well for the development of literacy throughout the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

87. Standards in mathematics are good in both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments in 2002 national tests compared with those of all schools were well above what was expected. Pupils attaining higher levels were well above the national average. When compared with the results of similar schools, pupils attained very high standards and those attaining higher levels were well above the average for these schools. Evidence collected during the week of the inspection from pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 indicates that pupils are attaining good standards in relation to national expectations.

88. In Key Stage 1, pupils' ability to use and apply mathematics is satisfactory. There are good opportunities for them to learn about mathematics in a science topic when they weigh water to find out how much of it has evaporated. In mathematics lessons, pupils can discuss their work using symbols and drawings to explain on paper how they work out from the amount saved in one week how much they would save in five weeks. They appropriately work out for themselves different ways of selecting coins to make set amounts of money. Pupils check their ideas by counting coins. By the time they are seven, pupils know how to use diagrams to explain the thinking they used while doing simple investigations. More able pupils can explain that there are 200 pence in £2 because there are 100 pence in £1.
89. Good standards are achieved in number by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils understand the sequences of numbers to 100 and can count forwards and backwards in tens starting from different numbers. By the end of the key stage all pupils are beginning to recall addition and subtraction facts to 20, doubling and halving numbers with fluency. More able pupils can use mental strategies to double numbers up to 64. All use mental strategies to solve number problems in games and activities designed to extend their understanding of number. Pupils count sets of objects with ease. They have a good understanding of money and by the time they are seven know the equivalent values of coins up to £1.
90. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of shape, space and measures in Key Stage 1. They can recognise and draw common two-dimensional shapes such as triangles, squares and rectangles. By the end of the key stage, higher achieving pupils learn by investigation the number of faces on solid shapes such as cubes, cuboids, cylinders and cones. Pupils measure in metres and centimetres the distance a car has travelled and measure lines and small items in centimetres. They measure time in hours, weight in kilograms and know the months of the year. Pupils handle data well in Key Stage 1. Pupils sort data using Venn diagrams; they use tally charts and bar charts to indicate favourite fruits and by the end of the key stage higher attaining pupils interpret information on pictograms to answer questions.
91. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in national tests for all schools are in line with these expected nationally. When compared with the results in schools in which the pupils' prior attainment was similar, pupils are well above the national average and those attaining higher levels are in line with the average for these schools. Evidence collected during the week of the inspection indicates that standards are good and pupils are progressing well.
92. Pupils achieve good standards when using and applying mathematics in Key Stage 2. They develop their own strategies for solving problems in numeracy lessons throughout the key stage and can respond well to teachers' questions. By the time they are 11, almost all pupils have developed good strategies to solve problems such as working out how many weeks and days they have been alive and can calculate for how long chickens of different weights should be cooked when they know the cooking time for each kilogram.
93. Good standards are achieved throughout the key stage in number. In Year 3, most pupils soon learn mentally to add two digit numbers while those achieving at lower levels understand addition and subtraction facts to ten. Pupils make good progress so that by Year 5 most understand the value of decimals to two decimal places and some are secure in understanding tenths and hundredths as decimals. By the time that they are 11, most pupils can use the four operations with two places of decimals while higher achieving pupils calculate percentages and know how to use brackets. They use efficient written methods when performing operations with numbers.
94. In Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well when studying shape, space and measures as a result of very high quality teaching. Because lessons are very well structured, pupils in Year 4 learn to calculate the area of rectangles by counting shapes and quickly come to realise when the squares are removed that they can arrive at the answer by multiplying the sides. Higher attaining pupils can confidently discuss the formula for finding area. Pupils measure well using metric measures appropriately. By the end of the key stage they can identify symmetries in two-dimensional shapes. Pupils handle data well. They use and interpret pictograms in Year 3 and in Year 5 learn to use line graphs to show water loss through evaporation. By the time they are 11 pupils can understand and use medians and modes when handling data.

95. The achievement of pupils in mathematics is good overall. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with average standards and by the end of this key stage have attained above average standards. Pupils continue to achieve well in Mathematics throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in Mathematics and achieve well in both Key Stages.
96. Teaching is good at Key Stages 1 and 2. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In Key Stage 1 teachers make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to plan effective learning experiences for pupils that match their levels of understanding. They know well the achievements of different pupils through their careful assessment and provide different challenges to ensure that they all make good progress. For example, when setting problems to do with money teachers require pupils to work with different amounts according to the levels of understanding that they have reached. Additional support is directed to those pupils who are currently achieving less well than others and more able pupils are challenged orally and by extension work to extend their knowledge. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning. Teachers know their subject well. They use plenary sessions effectively to summarise learning and to enable pupils to demonstrate what they have learned.
97. In Key Stage 2 teaching is good. Teachers structure their lessons, using the guidance of the National Numeracy Strategy, posing searching oral questions that challenge pupils well to think hard as mathematicians. Activities in lessons are well planned to ensure that pupils develop skills and knowledge in sequences of lessons. Teachers' good levels of competence in the subject are shown in their use of correct mathematical language and the help that they give pupils to use these terms. Resources are used imaginatively and variably to help pupils understand patterns and ideas through sight and touch as well as hearing. Teachers have good knowledge of the achievements of their pupils through their frequent assessments. In their marking they tell pupils when they have achieved the targets set for them and what they should do next. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported - for instance, by teachers asking appropriately lower level questions during oral work, by providing non-teaching support to groups of pupils and by teachers directly working with these pupils.
98. Pupils in Key Stage 1 work very productively and with enjoyment and as a result they learn well. In Key Stage 2 pupils are stimulated by quick fire oral questions. Pupils behave very well, they work hard and show a very high interest in their work.
99. The numeracy coordinator is relatively new to the school and already leads the teaching of mathematics very well. It is a particular strength that she recognises that problem solving is underdeveloped in the subject and that she has made this a school wide target for teachers in their performance management. She has begun to monitor teaching and learning in classrooms to drive up standards and is aware of what is needed to continue to improve standards in the subject. The strength of the coordinator's leadership in mathematics is an improvement since the last inspection.

## **SCIENCE**

100. Standards in science have improved since the last inspection and are above average overall. Attainment by the age of seven, as identified in teacher assessments in 2002, was very high when compared with the national average. Attainment in national tests in 2002 at age 11 shows that the performance of pupils was in line with what may be expected nationally. In comparison with results in similar schools and based on their achievement in Key Stage 1, pupils attain above the national average in science. When compared to results in similar schools, based on the percentage of free-school meals, pupils in this key stage attain in line with what may be expected. Evidence collected during the week of the inspection shows that by the age of seven and 11 pupils are attaining above what may be expected.
101. In Key Stage 1 pupils in Year 1 can talk about how sound is made. They are able to predict whether objects will float or sink and they understand the difference between hot and cold. Pupils know the difference between living and non-living things and can explain what seeds need to grow. Pupils at the end of the key stage know the difference between pushing and pulling and higher attaining pupils are able to explain how gravity pushes objects downwards. Most pupils in Year 2 can describe the

process of 'fair testing' and are able to predict and record observations when, for example, classifying materials according to their properties.

102. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils are able to describe well the properties that make up an object and what that object can be used for. By Year 4 they are able to understand the difference between solids and liquids and were successful in predicting the outcome of a teacher led experiment to separate objects of a different size and texture. Pupils throughout this key stage build very well on the key scientific skills of prediction, experimentation and analysis. Pupils in Year 5, for example, were able to successfully predict how sound could be reduced by the use of ear protectors. By the end of this key stage pupils are succeeding well in science. They are clear in their understanding of the 'food chain' with higher attaining pupils in this year group also able to identify clearly how animals can adapt to their environment and surroundings. Pupils in this year group can also distinguish effectively between good and bad organisms, highlighting how bacteria can cause colds, flu and headaches.
103. The progress of pupils in science is good in both key stages. They understand the key elements of the subject and are gaining good practical skills through experimentation. They can record results accurately and are able to explain the outcomes with confidence. Pupils starting with average standards on entry to Key Stage 1 leave this key stage with above average standards. This good level of achievement is maintained throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in science and achieve well in both key stages.
104. Teaching is good in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Sometimes it is very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and are enthusiastic in its delivery. Experiments are appropriately planned and teachers engage well with pupils orally in developing their understanding of key themes. There are many well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills and to link with other subject areas. A good example of this was in Year 5 when pupils in design and technology made moving vehicles that were battery powered and explained in some detail how they were made. Teachers in both key stages set realistic targets for pupils to achieve. Support staff are very well employed in science and give very good support to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The progress of those pupils with special educational needs is good. There is, however, within Key Stage 2 a lack of the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. This is particularly the case in the collecting and recording of information. The coordinator is aware of this issue and has good plans to rectify it.
105. Pupils respond very well to science. They enjoy conducting experiments and are enthusiastic when answering teachers' questions. They present their work well. The presentation of pupils' work is good with pupils setting out their experimental work in a neat and orderly way.
106. Science is well managed throughout the school. The coordinator, who is relatively new to the school, has worked hard in moving the subject forward. Meetings are regularly held to plan work and science has maintained a high profile in the school. There is a policy and suitable scheme of work, and procedures for monitoring teaching and assessing pupils' work are good. Pupils' work is carefully moderated and examples of their assessed work are shared amongst the staff to consolidate their grasp of the level they are achieving.
107. Accommodation is satisfactory and there is a sound range of equipment, including books. Resources are appropriately located in a central store area or in the classroom. The science curriculum is appropriately supported by visits to places of local interest, including the Space Museum in Leicester.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

108. The high standards in art and design attained at the ages of seven and 11 described in the last report have been maintained. Pupils make good progress in art and design throughout the school. They are very enthusiastic, work hard and produce high standards of work.
109. In Years 1 and 2 evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they effectively use paints, pastels and collage to work in the style of Van Gogh and Monet. They work to a good standard,

reflecting the high status that art and design has in the curriculum. The work produced links together many subjects helping to provide children with a good understanding of the place of nature in art. The work of Monet inspired some high quality work and a fascination with reflections and the effect of light upon water. The resulting work revealed a growth in the pupils' spiritual development and their capacity to appreciate and respond to beauty and emotion in an artistic way. Pupils also use the computer to find out more about the artists they study and use the computer well to generate colourful designs and pictures.

110. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in both key stages and their skills in art are developed as they move through the school. In Year 3 pupils imitated the work of Seurat by using felt pens to good effect to create trees and landscapes. Year 4 pupils successfully worked in pastels to create atmospheric weather effects after studying the works of Turner. Year 5 pupils also experimented with shades, tone and texture to weave with colour washed paper to produce some stunning visual effects. In Year 6 pupils have effectively experimented with tools and techniques including painting with fingers to produce some very effective winter tree pictures.
111. The quality of teaching is good overall. Two art lessons were observed. In the good lesson seen in the mixed Year1/2 class, the children were creating 'weather' pictures using a variety of techniques. The teacher had made the links with other areas of the curriculum clear and a group of pupils were making a collage to represent the rain cycle. Water played a large part in the lesson as other children experimented with wax crayons, whilst others were spattering paint with water for a rainy effect. At the end of the lesson the teacher encourage the pupils to compare the methods, ideas and approaches they used in their own work with those of other pupils. Thoughts and ideas were discussed and exchanged helping them to develop a critical approach to art and design.
112. In Year 6, the pupils were working with polystyrene to cut shapes to use for printing patterns. This was the start of a series of lessons in experimenting with a variety of techniques to produce effects with print and stencils. The pupils were all very interested and well behaved. They used resources carefully and cleared away well at the end of the lesson. Evidence from the lessons observed and from art displayed around the school and in portfolios shows that the skills needed for success in art and design are taught consistently well throughout the school. The teachers take time to display the pupils' work with care and to ensure that artwork from all classes is shown across the school. The weekly after school art club gives additional support to those pupils who show an interest in the subject.
113. The leadership of the subject is good. The coordinator is well qualified for the role and shares her expertise well to ensure that the curriculum is well planned and resources available are well matched to the needs of the pupils. However, work in three dimensions, which was weak at the time of the last inspection, has only been partly addressed. The progress of the pupils is assessed at the end of each academic year and the standard achieved is reported to parents.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

114. No lessons were observed during the week of the inspection. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with the co-coordinator and evidence from displays around the school indicate that pupils in both key stages are attaining in line with what may be expected. Compared with the previous inspection satisfactory standards have been maintained in both key stages.
115. By the age of seven pupils are able to design and make a good range of objects using a variety of materials. In Year 1 for example there are good examples of pupils using paper and card to make shelters as part of a topic on homes. Pupils were also successful in their design of finger puppets using felt material. Here they knew how to plan their work and became skilled in cutting out objects. By the age of 11 pupils have developed sound skills in design and technology and have become more sophisticated in their choice and use of materials. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2, for example, successfully designed and made Egyptian 'mummies' that were inside a cask, using bandages and wood and painted them to good effect. Pupils in Year 4 have also made a good display of money pouches they made using felt and buttons. Older pupils in Year 5 in a good link with a science topic on sound were very successful in making telephones from string and paper cups. Pupils in this year



group also designed and made moving to good effect 'space buggies' that were battery operated using wood and card. By the end of this key stage, pupils in Year 6 were particularly successful in making a variety of Victorian clothes following a visit they made to Elvaston Castle as part of a history topic. These items formed a very impressive display within the Year 6 classroom.

116. The progress made by all pupils in design and technology, including those with special educational needs is satisfactory. They successfully build on the skills they have learned as they move through the school.
117. No judgment can be made on the quality of teaching in this subject as no lessons were observed during the inspection. However, teachers are skilled in their understanding of the subject and link it well to other areas of the curriculum. They use resources well and encourage pupils to evaluate their work carefully.
118. Discussions with pupils show that they enjoy working with different materials, complete their work with pride and enthusiasm and enjoy talking about what they have made. Pupils throughout the school help in mounting their designs - for example, to make attractive displays. This contributes well towards making the school an attractive environment.
119. The coordination of design and technology is satisfactory. The headteacher has taken the lead in this area and there is a suitable policy and scheme of work. She has clear systems for the monitoring of curriculum planning and assessing the work of pupils, including the maintenance of examples of pupils moderated work from each year group. There is a satisfactory range of materials and tools to support learning and these are easily accessible from a dedicated storeroom. In addition there is a satisfactory range of suitable books to support learning in this area.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

120. Standards of work in geography are in line with what is expected of pupils at the age of 7 and 11 and satisfactory progress has been made in this subject since the last inspection.
121. In Key Stage 1, pupils can make comparisons between a seaside environment and their own locality of Shirland. They also effectively compare a seaside environment with their own experiences of holidays and know about the changing weather in environments at different times of the year. They know how a seaside environment has been influenced by people visiting it since Victorian times. Pupils are beginning to use appropriate geographical language such as river, stream, sea and hills when making diagrams to show their understanding of the water cycle.
122. In Key Stage 2 pupils learn to contrast the main physical and human features of different localities such as Braemar in Scotland and Barrow in Alaska and understand how these different cold places are different from wet ones they have studied such as the Lake District. They use atlases and a globe to locate places and to understand their character. They compare places of different sizes noting the differences in facilities between Cromford and cities such as Nottingham. Higher attaining pupils understand how tourism can result in different patterns of shops in an area. By the time that they are 11 pupils can use the Internet to explore the features of different environments, selecting relevant information and photographs to present in a display.
123. The achievement of pupils in geography is good overall. They effectively build on the average standards on entry to Key Stage 1 and make good progress as they move throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in Geography and achieve well in both key stages.
124. Teaching in geography is good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers understand the subject well and plan lessons effectively to develop pupils' understanding. Lessons are well sequenced so that one lesson prepares the ground for the next. Teachers introduce lessons clearly so that pupils know what they will learn and what they should do next. They give good guidance on the information that should be extracted from videos in the notes that pupils make. They ask searching questions of pupils to challenge and extend their reasoning. High expectations are set, for instance that pupils will explain using geographical language such as "honeypot" "development" and "tourism", why more people visit

Cromford than Shirland. A good range of resources is used to promote pupils' awareness of other locations; pupils were captivated by the sight of a polar bear's footprints on a video of Alaska. Residential visits to Derbyshire in Years 5 and 6 further promote pupils' understanding of geography. Pupils in Key Stage 1 visit web sites with their teachers to learn about rainforests. Learning support assistants are deployed effectively to ensure that pupils of all levels of achievement including those with special educational needs are given full access to the subject.

125. Pupils behave very well in geography and show good levels of interest throughout both key stages. They co-operate well with one another and always use resources carefully. The coordinator for geography has recently taken responsibility for the subject. She has made a satisfactory start and knows that she will monitor teaching when staffing resources allow. Work in the subject is properly planned throughout the school. The coordinator is particularly aware of the links that can usefully be made between geography and other subjects. Teaching in geography is now good.

## **HISTORY**

126. During the week of the inspection no lessons in history were observed. However, evidence gained from the previous term, including the scrutiny of pupils' work and from displays around the school indicates that standards in Key Stages 1 and 2 are satisfactory.
127. Pupils in Key Stage 1 understand the differences between their own and other people's lives when they learn about holidays in the past. They know that some people in Victorian England went by train to seaside holidays and show their understanding in posters of the seaside depicting characteristic features such as Punch and Judy shows. They learn about famous people in the past such as Guy Fawkes and Neil Armstrong.
128. In Key Stage 2 pupils develop a good awareness of the past through the study of the ancient Egyptians, the ancient Greeks and the Vikings. In Year 3 for example they related well to the life of the ancient Egyptians through the study of their beliefs, deciding what they would take into the afterlife. They understand chronology using time lines to order significant events in their studies of the ancient Greeks. By the end of the key stage pupils are able to make comparisons of the life of Victorians with life in contemporary Britain. In their study of child labour in Year 6, for example, they effectively voiced a sense of injustice at the conditions young children had to work under.
129. The progress of pupils in history is satisfactory. The pupils' average standards on entry to Key Stage 1 are maintained as they move through the school and pupils gain a accurate and detailed overview of different historical periods. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in both key stages. Overall, satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection.
130. No judgment can be made on the quality of teaching in this subject as no lessons were observed during the inspection. However, teachers know their subject and make good use of resources in the community to ensure that children learn about past times. They arrange visits to Derby Museum so that pupils can experience the past, dressing up and wearing make up of ancient Egyptians and examining artefacts such as vases. Teachers use a variety of methods to help pupils learn, such as bar charts to understand the number of deaths in Victorian England, Venn diagrams to compare Viking food with our own and maps to show the location of Victorian seaside towns. Teachers assess work satisfactorily through their marking, giving praise and encouragement to pupils.
131. Pupils show very good attitudes in the work that they produce. Their work on the Egyptians is very well presented showing that they take considerable care when drawing maps and writing within the subject. Pupils show high levels of respect for their work at all times.
132. The coordinator has recently taken charge of this subject and leads it in a satisfactory way. She is aware that she has yet to monitor the teaching of the subject in classes but ensures through planning that there is progression in learning through the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

133. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is satisfactory. Pupils in the Reception classes and in Key Stage 1 are developing good skills on the computer. However, these are not always appropriately built on, in Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to listen to stories, record information and to undertake basic word processing. Pupils in this key stage are also learning how to store and retrieve information. In Year 1, for example, pupils were able to direct the teacher to look up a variety of topic areas with 'Encarta' and most knew how to scroll backwards and forwards using the mouse. In Year 2 pupils can use simple computer programs to draw and colour and are able to draw bar graphs when documenting which areas of the school give more light. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have gained satisfactory skills in information and communication technology. Younger pupils in this key stage know about data sets and can record information on animal habitats using a relevant program. As they move through this key stage pupils can copy and paste, resize and colour in shapes and by Year 6 they can locate a web page on the Internet. This was shown to particularly good effect when pupils, linking with a geography topic on travel, were able to download information on the Lake District from a variety of web sites. They were also able to save and collate this information ready for a presentation in a subsequent lesson.
134. The progress of pupils in Key Stage 1 is good and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils up to the age of seven gain good opportunities to use a variety of computer programs and are developing their skills well. They know about the Internet and can find and download information from relevant web sites when finding out about Neil Armstrong and space exploration. They are also able to use a floor turtle to map out a route. While pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing good computer skills their rate of progress is not maintained in Key Stage 2. In this key stage most pupils have developed sound skills in graphics. The majority can use databases and spreadsheets effectively and can find and manipulate information from the Internet. They are also able to successfully use a digital camera. However, because not all teachers are confident in the use of information and communication technology there is a lack of consistency in its application and planning is often limited to basic word processing. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported with satisfactory arrangements in place for their support.
135. The teaching of information and communication technology is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The skills that are being adequately developed within the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 are not sufficiently extended across Key Stage 2. Within Key Stage 1, the teacher has good subject knowledge and effectively provides opportunities for pupils to succeed across a range of skills. However, while in Key Stage 2 some good teaching was observed in relation to specific number or language programs, teachers generally lacked the confidence to offer an extended range of programs linked to the curriculum area being taught. The exception to this was observed during the after school computer club where pupils were being effectively taught how to use the school's computer network.
136. Pupils' attitude towards information and communication technology is good. They enjoy working with computers and other technologies and their behaviour is always very good. This is particularly the case when they use the computer suite and are able to use a computer to themselves or in pairs.
137. Planning for information and communication technology in the long term is good and the coordinator, who has only been responsible for the subject for six months, is making every effort to develop the subject. However, while statutory requirements are being met, the practical shorter-term arrangements within classes for incorporating information and communication technology within the subject being taught are inconsistent, lack detail and leave too much for the teachers' discretion. The coordinator is in the process of buying additional computers, some of which arrived during the week of the inspection. Systems for assessing the work of pupils in information and communication technology are appropriately in place and are satisfactory. Samples of pupils' work are collected and shared with teachers so that clear estimates of the levels at which pupils are performing can be achieved.
138. Resources for information and communication technology are satisfactory. Computer hardware is satisfactory, although this is in the process of being extended with some new computers arriving during the week of the inspection. Software is satisfactory but there is a lack of suitable and specific programs within subjects. In addition there is a lack of confidence amongst some of the staff when planning for and delivering this subject. The progress made in this subject area has been limited since the last inspection where it was also identified as being satisfactory. The school, however,

recognises the need to give greater priority to this area of learning and has well established plans to extend opportunities in this area.

## **MUSIC**

139. By the ages of seven and 11 pupils reach satisfactory standards. This is in line with the outcomes of the last inspection. Over the past year a new policy based on a nationally recommended scheme of work, which has been adjusted to suit the needs of the school, has been introduced. The co-ordinator, whilst having no formal qualifications in the subject, is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Many other teachers are less confident in teaching music and welcome the help from volunteers who come in to play the piano once a week for music lessons and to run the choir.
140. In Years 1 and 2, pupils can sing simple songs from memory and identify different ways in which sounds can be made and changed. They have opportunities to work as part of a group using percussion instruments, keeping time to music. They can recreate long and short sounds. They can repeat and recreate short rhythmic phrases accurately and choose appropriate sounds, for example, to represent different types of weather. They can play simple accompaniments, keeping a steady pulse.
141. Pupils in Year 3 are taught to play the recorder and there is the opportunity for pupils to learn to play a brass instrument. A visiting music teacher successfully teaches this. By Year 6, pupils can sing two part songs with an awareness of how the parts fit together and the need to achieve an overall effect. They are able to accompany performances with percussion instruments and achieve a polished performance in front of an audience.
142. Overall satisfactory progress in music is being made in both key stages. Pupils are building appropriately on the skills they are taught on entry to the school and are able to experience and succeed in the good variety of musical opportunities that the school provides.
143. During the inspection, three music lessons were observed. In a good lesson seen in Years 1/2, the teacher was building on pupils' previous learning in the Foundation Stage well, effectively developing pupils' skills by the introduction of an enjoyable 'follow my leader' game. The pupils were very enthusiastic and responded well. The teacher's good relationships with the pupils, together with her appropriate use of well-deserved praise, ensured that the pupils made good progress. The lesson was well planned and the pupils were engaged in active learning throughout. The teacher's skilled management of the pupils, her knowledge of their different abilities, coupled with the brisk pace of the lesson, ensured that all pupils made good progress. Throughout the lesson, the children were well motivated, listened carefully and joined in, often taking the lead. The teacher's sensitive intervention at the first sign of the leader faltering ensured that all pupils achieved well.
144. Two satisfactory lessons were observed in Year 6. In both of these the class was practising for a performance. Most pupils have a mature attitude towards music, they work hard and try to improve their performance and concentrate well. In one of the lessons, a significant minority, mostly boys, did not join in the singing, but most pupils enjoy music.
145. Leadership and management of the subject are sound. Musical resources are satisfactory. However, at present there is no system for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils in music.
146. The music curriculum is enhanced by the activities of the choir. Two volunteers lead the school choir and have done so for many years. They make a valuable contribution to the music curriculum of the school. They have high expectations of the pupils, encouraging clear diction and teaching the pupils a wide range of songs with varying pace, pitch, timbre and tempo. They teach pupils to control their breathing to maintain a note. The choir is well attended having a membership of 22. The choristers make good progress because they enjoy the pace and challenge and especially the end product – the performance. They put concerts on in school and attend the local schools' music festival. Whilst boys can join the choir, at present only girls attend.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

147. Two physical education lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 and three were seen in Years 3 – 6 and by the ages of seven and 11 standards are average. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and the quality of teaching is good overall. Most pupils show good attitudes to their learning. Consequently, pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Teachers successfully include all pupils in lessons. During the inspection lessons in dance, games' skills, gymnastics and swimming were observed.
148. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve average standards in dance. In the satisfactory lesson observed, whilst most pupils co-operate well, the behaviour of a minority of pupils detracted from the standards achieved in the lesson. In the good games lesson seen, pupils behaved very well, rose to the challenges set by the teacher and achieved well. Pupils tried very hard to do as they were asked and to improve their skills. The lesson was very well structured and the teacher included all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The teacher ensured that the contribution they made to the lesson was appropriately valued by asking them to give demonstrations of what they had achieved with their partner. Every pupil's contribution was equally valued.
149. In Year 3, pupils build on the skills learned previously. When pupils prepare for exercise they appropriately join in the 'warm up' routines, showing good awareness of themselves and others moving around them. The quality of their work is enhanced by opportunities to evaluate their own and others' performance and by helpful comments from their teacher. Space in the hall where the lesson took place, however, was restricted and pupils' movements were curtailed. This led to noisy behaviour and detracted from pupils' learning because the teacher had to stop the lesson and repeat instructions.
150. Overall the progress made by pupils in physical education is good. They enter Key Stage 1 with average skills in this subject and by the end of Key Stage 1 are achieving well. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils succeed in a wide variety of physical activities and have improved their skills considerably.
151. A gymnastics lesson was observed in Year 5. This lesson was good because the teacher recapped on pupils' previous learning very well and structured the lesson to build on skills previously taught. The teacher used pupil demonstration well to motivate and inspire the rest of the class. The tasks were pitched at exactly the right level and most of the pupils were well motivated to learn. Pupils were able to communicate their ideas effectively, not only in words, but also through their movements. Those watching provided constructive criticism. Pupils were able to rise to and meet the challenges posed. Whilst all the learning objectives of the lesson were fully achieved, the limitations of the space available meant that for safety reasons, sometimes only half the class were able to use the apparatus at once. This limited the pupils' opportunities in the lesson and the standards achieved in the lesson were, therefore, average.
152. Swimming is taught to all pupils in Years 5 and 6 and by the time pupils leave the school nine out of ten can swim 25 metres. Specialist teachers employed at the swimming pool taught the lesson observed and standards of teaching were good. The teachers employ effective class management skills and the pupils behaved well and made good progress in the lesson. Most pupils enjoy swimming and try hard to improve their skills.
153. The physical education curriculum is further enhanced by a variety of extra-curricular clubs. These include football and other games skills such as netball and cricket. The football club plays in matches against various local schools. The older pupils also have the opportunity to go on a residential visit where outdoor adventurous activities take place.
154. The quality of the leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. A new coordinator has recently been appointed and as yet has had little time to make her mark. She has, however, good subject knowledge. The subject policy has recently been rewritten and the scheme of work is effectively based on nationally recommended guidelines. Very good attention is paid to health and safety procedures. As yet, there is no whole-school system for assessing the progress of individual pupils except in swimming. There are sufficient resources for the subject, However, space inside the building is limited for energetic exercise. Years 3-6 make use of the playground and small grassed area when the weather is suitable, but pupils in Years 1 and 2, who have a large outside space, do not make use of this often enough.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

155. Standards attained in religious education are high. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils at both seven and 11 reach the standards set out in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The high status given to the subject throughout the school, coupled with good quality teaching, mean that children are encouraged to reflect on what it means to have a faith. As a result children develop a good knowledge and understanding of both Christianity and other religions and gain a deep insight into what it means to be a believer.
156. Year 1 children in the Reception class learn about special celebrations that are important to them, such as birthdays and Christmas. In Years 1 and 2 the children celebrate Divali. The children demonstrated their understanding of the story of Rama and Sita well by retelling it in their exercise books. Their understanding of celebrations is further enhanced in assemblies where children are taught about the customs and traditions associated with celebrations across the world such as the Chinese new year.
157. In Year 2 pupils talk about places that are special to them in order to set the scene for learning about places of worship. In the children's work, one of the local very 'special' places identified was the chip shop! Following discussion and work about places special to them, children are taken to visit the local church. This visit clearly made a positive impact on the pupils and, following the visit, they made very careful drawing of things they had seen in the church such as the lectern and the font.
158. In Year 5, most pupils can identify stories from the Old Testament from clues given by their teacher. They are able can look up references in the Bible and summarise the main points they have read. They understand that the Bible was written over a very long period of time.
159. Pupils make good progress in the understanding of religious education as they move through the school and by Year 6 pupils know about a variety of religions, their special books and about key religious figures.
160. During the inspection two lessons were observed. The quality of teaching in both was good and as a result the pupils made good progress. In the Year 3 class pupils were giving presentations about the benefits of belonging to a club in preparation for future lessons on what it means to belong to a religious group. All pupils were included in this and the teacher stressed that clubs do not have to be expensive and promoted the school's own clubs well. Pupils were very interested in the hobbies and pastimes of one another and most listened carefully.
161. In Year 6, the children were studying stories from the Old Testament. The teacher told the story of Ruth. This was done in such a way that all children, including those with special educational need, could understand because the teacher tailored her questions and explanations to the differing needs of the pupils. The teacher helped the pupils to understand the underlying message of the story well and to enjoy the lesson. The resulting written work was of a high standard and the teacher worked with the lower attaining and special needs pupils to help them achieve well.
162. The coordinator is appropriately qualified for the role and carries it out well. A new syllabus has just been launched and the coordinator is awaiting training in its use. There is a satisfactory system in place for monitoring the standards that pupils achieve.