

INSPECTION REPORT

EUREKA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Midway, Swadlincote

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112677

Headteacher: Miss J A Hinchliff

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Barnes
32073

Dates of inspection: 10 - 12 February 2003

Inspection number: 247256

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: 5 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Dunsmore Way
Midway

Postcode: Swadlincote
DE11 7LA

Telephone number: 01283 216451

Fax number: n/a

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs C Brown

Date of previous inspection: 09/02/98

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
32073	Mrs J Barnes	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography History Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school lead and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19344	Mr D Jones	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development Partnership with parents
16041	Mr O L Thomas	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs Educational inclusion	How well are pupils taught?
22578	Mr G Jones	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities? How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Eureka Primary School is situated near Swadlincote, about four miles south of the South Derbyshire town of Burton-on-Trent. The school is housed on a spacious and attractive site in a single storey building with a mobile classroom and has 128 pupils on roll aged from four to 11 years. The locality is undergoing social and economic change as redundant industrial land is reclaimed for new businesses, houses and leisure facilities. Pockets of significant unemployment remain. About one in five pupils has been identified as having special educational needs, with two Statements of Special Educational Need. A similar proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is a little more than the national average. All pupils speak English as their first language. The school has no nursery and most pupils have attended the local playgroup. Pupils' attainment on entry to the reception year group is below average overall, but includes pupils who are close to or above national expectations.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is held in high regard by many parents and offers a calm, welcoming and supportive environment for their children. The relationships in school are very good and the provision for pupils' personal development is good. The results in 2002 national tests for 11 year olds improved significantly from the previous year in mathematics and science but not in English. However, the results are well below the national average in English, mathematics and science, and below those in similar schools. The most able pupils achieve above average standards that compare well with similar schools, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make at least steady and often good progress. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with regular examples of good teaching. The pupils behave well and almost all have very positive attitudes to their work. The curriculum offers a range of interesting opportunities and activities, many of which motivate the pupils well. However, the planning of pupils' work is not good enough to ensure that they make the progress they should. Sometimes teachers' expectations of what they are expected to achieve are too low and this slows their learning. The leadership and management of the school are effective in ensuring the school routines run smoothly, pupils behave well and the school environment is attractive and well maintained. Less successful is the management of the pupils' learning which leads to slow progress for many pupils. There are signs of improvement as new staff become familiar with their management roles and new governors take a more active role in the strategic management of the school. At present, the school does not provide satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Provides a caring environment with good relationships that encourage pupils' positive attitudes.
- Manages pupils' behaviour well in lessons.
- Communicates well with parents and has their confidence.
- Successfully provides for pupils' moral and social development.
- Ensures teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of pupils' learning, particularly the pace at which they make progress.
- The organisation and management of the curriculum, especially for the youngest pupils and for classes with mixed ages.
- The quality and frequency of acts of worship.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998 and a number of improvements have been made since then, including pupils' behaviour and the introduction of schemes of work to support the curriculum. In some areas, the school has made little or no progress, especially in improving the provision for the youngest pupils and in raising standards of attainment. Since the last inspection the school has undergone a significant period of instability in staffing but the staff is now stable and committed to improvement. Significant improvements have been made to the building and grounds which now provide an attractive and generally well used environment for teaching and learning.

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	E	E*	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E*	E*	E	D	
science	E	E*	E	D	

The school's results for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils in the 2002 national tests for English, mathematics and science were well below those of other schools nationally and also those of schools in similar circumstances. The school did not meet its own targets in English and mathematics. The results over the recent years have varied from year to year but overall have shown an improvement especially for Year 2 pupils. However, the results in other schools nationally have improved similarly, so by the end of Year 6 the gap remains the same. There is considerable scope to improve test results in both infants and juniors.

Compared with the previous year, the 2002 tests results in reading for Year 2 pupils maintained the same percentage of pupils attaining at least the Level 2 expected for their age although fewer pupils reached the higher Level 3. In writing, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and Level 3 fell significantly. In spelling, the results for the higher level fell, although the school was successful in raising the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2. In mathematics, the overall results were maintained with a higher percentage of pupils securely attaining the expected standard for their age, but fewer reaching the higher level.

For Year 6 pupils, the 2002 test results remained well below the national figures although some improvements were evident. Results in mathematics and science were significantly better than in the previous year, with both subjects showing good gains in the Level 5. Although in English, results remained well below the national average and there was little gain in the percentage of pupils attaining at least the expected Level 4, there was a considerable increase in pupils reaching the higher Level 5. This improvement shows in reading, and also in writing which compares very well with schools in similar circumstances.

The school's own test and assessment information also shows signs of improvements in standards in some subjects but not consistently through the school. This variability is also reflected in the standards seen in lessons. In Year 2, attainment generally reaches the expectations for the year group in all subjects except English and mathematics. In Year 6, attainment is below expectations in English, mathematics, science, geography and information and communication technology (ICT), but reaches acceptable levels in art, design and technology, history and religious education. Attainment in singing is above the expected standard.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The school has made significant progress since the last inspection in promoting the positive attitudes and values of the pupils; they are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. On the rare occasions when a pupil does not behave well, the situation is dealt with fairly and firmly and most pupils respond well.
Personal development and relationships	Good progress has been made. The very good relationships in school and the targeted support for behaviour have helped to create a calm environment for teaching and learning. Opportunities to show their initiative and sense of responsibility are not systematically planned through the school.
Attendance	Attendance has deteriorated since the last inspection and is now unsatisfactory. A small number of parents is not successful in ensuring their children attend school regularly. There is too much holiday taking in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching in all lessons was at least satisfactory and in almost half the lessons it was good. Teachers develop good relationships with pupils which encourage them to take an active interest in their learning and have positive attitudes. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, conscientiously prepare the resources for lessons and often provide interesting tasks that involve practical activities. This helps pupils to maintain interest in their work. However when they are planning the pupils' learning, teachers do not take sufficient account of the information about pupils' strengths and weaknesses which is provided by the school's assessment procedures. This results in some pupils having weaknesses in their basic skills, and others working at too slow a pace to achieve as well as they could. Some good lessons were seen in all classes. The best lessons were lively and challenging with a high level of participation by pupils. Teaching assistants provide valuable help, especially for those pupils who learn slowly. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught in most classes, but too little attention is given to providing challenging work for the most able pupils. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught systematically using the national guidance. The planning of the content of most lessons has improved since the last inspection as schemes of work are now in place.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. All the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are in place and taught regularly. Homework is used well. The school now has schemes of work to ensure suitable topics are covered in each subject. However, the planning and organisation of the curriculum are not yet well matched to the mixed age classes in school or to the range of ability in each class. There is insufficient attention to developing investigative skills. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision for pupils with special educational needs, with good use of support staff. Procedures are in place for checking pupils' work and most pupils make at least steady and sometimes good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision has successfully improved pupils' social and moral development. Opportunities to develop independence and responsibility could usefully be extended. Spiritual development is aided by the warmth of personal relationships, but not yet planned in all subjects of the curriculum. The quality of collective worship is unsatisfactory and the frequency does not meet statutory requirements. Other faiths and festivals are studied but pupils have only limited knowledge of living in a multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The care and welfare of pupils are good. The systems for assessing pupils' progress have improved recently and there is an increasing amount of information available about pupils' strengths and weaknesses. However, this is new information and the school is only just beginning to use it to influence the teaching and learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The management of school is satisfactory with smooth routines, a calm atmosphere and good behaviour. The leadership and management of pupils' learning are unsatisfactory, with co-ordinators and the newly appointed deputy headteacher not fully involved in their roles at present. However, recent changes in staffing and improvements in job descriptions and the allocation of time, are encouraging and the situation is likely to improve in the near future.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory, with the exception of collective worship. New governors have added expertise to the governing body and increased the governing body's role in the school. They are well informed and taking an increasing role in strategic management.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The recent analysis of test results and improved procedures for assessment have identified obvious areas of weakness. Extensive monitoring of teaching and planning is undertaken which has helped to improve the quality of teaching. However, the monitoring is not rigorous enough in checking pupils' progress.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Due attention is given to principles of best value in expenditure on learning resources and buildings. This focus now needs to be linked to pupils' achievements. Spending is well matched to priorities in the school improvement plan.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's enjoyment of school. • The progress the children make, especially in their personal development. • The quality of teaching. • The approachability of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities. • The behaviour of a minority of pupils. • The information provided on their child's progress. • The school working more closely with parents.

The inspection findings support parents' views. Out of school activities have the potential for expansion.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The standards of attainment through the school are too low and many pupils are not making sufficient progress to ensure they attain suitable standards for their age and ability. The school is aware of the need to improve standards and recent changes in staffing and procedures have been focused on doing this. As a result, the quality of pupils' work in some lessons and subjects is beginning to get better. The pace of this improvement is still too slow to ensure the majority of pupils reach suitably high standards.
2. Pupils begin the Foundation Stage in the reception class, and only a few are at the standards expected for their age on entry to school. However, most learn quickly and make steady or better progress, especially in the early skills of reading and number, although in most areas of learning the majority are unlikely to reach expected standards by the time they enter Year 1.
3. The school's results for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils in the 2002 national tests for English, mathematics and science were well below those of other schools nationally and below those of schools in similar circumstances. The school did not meet its own targets in English and mathematics. The results over recent years have varied from year to year but overall have shown an improvement especially for Year 2 pupils. However, the results in other schools nationally have improved similarly, so by the end of Year 6 the gap remains the same. There is considerable scope to improve test results in both the infants and juniors.
4. Compared with the previous year, the 2002 tests results in reading for Year 2 pupils maintained the same percentage of pupils attaining at least the level expected for their age (Level 2) although fewer pupils reached the higher Level 3. In writing, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and Level 3 fell significantly. In spelling, the results for the higher level fell, although the school was successful in raising the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2. In mathematics, the overall results were maintained with a higher percentage of pupils securely attaining the expected standard for their age, but fewer reaching the higher level.
5. For Year 6 pupils, the 2002 test results remained well below the national figures although some improvements were evident. Results in mathematics and science were significantly better than in the previous year, with both subjects showing good gains in the Level 5. Although in English results remained well below the national average and there was little gain in the percentage of pupils attaining at least the expected Level 4, there was a considerable increase in pupils reaching the higher Level 5. This improvement shows in reading, and also in writing which compares very well with schools in similar circumstances.
6. The school's own test and assessment information also shows signs of improvements in standards in some subjects but not consistently through the school. This variability is also reflected in the standards seen in lessons. In Year 2, attainment generally reaches the expectations for the year group in all subjects except English and mathematics. In Year 6, attainment is below expectations in English, mathematics, science, geography and ICT, but reaches acceptable levels in art, design and technology, history and religious education. Attainment in singing is good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The school has made significant progress in promoting the positive attitudes and values of the pupils and these are now good. During lessons the pupils are alert and lively individuals who, nevertheless, work well co-operatively and support one another. During a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, they were practising their handwriting and settled quickly to the lesson, listening well and responding to the teachers' questioning. This had a positive effect on the pace of the activity and learning. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed during an art lesson when they were making clay pots out of slabs. They clearly enjoyed the activity, concentrating well and persevering in preparing the clay and creating the slabs. They worked well independently but showed concern for one another, sharing ideas and giving helpful hints to other pupils about how they could improve their pot.
8. Progress has also been made in furthering pupils' personal development. Relationships in the school community are very good, with staff setting an example in their care for pupils and co-operation with other adults. Alongside the development of strategies to improve behaviour, these relationships have helped to create a calm environment for teaching and learning. Some pupils have regular opportunities to use their initiative and show responsibility, such as taking registers to the office, working with younger pupils and helping staff at lunchtimes, but these aspects of personal development are not yet planned systematically for all pupils.
9. Despite pupils' positive attitudes to school, attendance has deteriorated since the last inspection and is now unsatisfactory, falling below 90 per cent on occasions. Persistent late attendance occurs both before and after the closure of registers. It is evident that teachers are active in promoting prompt attendance from the responses of some pupils who apologise for their late arrival. The school has not made adequate ongoing provision to promote attendance through rewards and sanctions, but has involved the education social worker who has focused on the most persistent offenders. A small but significant number of parents are failing to support their children, and the school, through ensuring regular and prompt attendance. Three boys accounted for six exclusions in the last academic year. These issues have been resolved and exclusions are no longer necessary.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in all lessons, and good in close to half with one very good lesson. Good teaching was observed in all classes. This is an improvement on the last inspection when a small proportion of lessons was unsatisfactory. The proportion of good teaching was about the same as in the last inspection and leaves room for further improvement. Several teachers have been appointed recently and are only just beginning to have an impact on pupils' standards of attainment. Teaching was strongest in the teaching of reading, mathematics and creative work with Foundation Stage pupils; in mathematics, history, music and physical education in the infants, and in English and physical education in the juniors. Homework is used well throughout the school to provide additional practice or to pupils' extend experiences.
11. Throughout the school, teachers are particularly skilful in managing pupils' behaviour and developing supportive relationships that provide a positive environment for learning. The good behaviour and positive attitudes to work of almost all pupils are now major assets in enabling a more imaginative approach to teaching to be used. The best lessons were lively, with interesting activities and a high level of participation

from pupils. These lessons were usually in subjects where the teacher had good expertise in the subject, was clear about what learning was expected, and used imaginative strategies to teach the key points.

12. Despite the school's strong commitment to improving standards through improving the quality of teaching, and the hard work of staff, there remain several inhibitors that together slow the progress that everyone wants to see. Some of these are not the responsibility of individual teachers but reflect on the way teaching and learning are organised through the school.
13. The excessive use of worksheets and activities where the outcomes allow little opportunity for pupils to make progress, reduced the quality of teaching and learning in some lessons. Although the teaching in these lessons was satisfactory overall, it was not good enough to accelerate pupils' learning at the rate necessary to drive up standards. Combined with the limited gains in literacy and numeracy made by many individual pupils who are not entirely secure in their use of some basic skills, this impedes the improvement of standards of attainment.
14. In English and mathematics, the use of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has provided a more coherent approach to planning the teaching of the subjects and improved pupils' learning in most basic skills, particularly in the computation of number. However, few staff use information gathered about pupils' achievements effectively enough to ensure the work that is planned enables them to make the accelerated progress needed to improve their competence from the current low level. This is particularly evident in aspects such as reading, writing and data handling where pupils' specific weaknesses in skills or experience persist. The marking of pupils' work is rarely detailed enough to provide suitable guidance for them to improve, and targets are rarely commented upon.
15. The teaching assistants provide valuable help in lessons, and occasionally are able to demonstrate that they are capable of introducing new work to small groups of pupils very effectively. This is usually, but not always, for the benefit of pupils with special educational needs and is a major factor in the good progress that many of these pupils make. However, in many lessons, the teaching assistants spend at least a third of the lesson listening to the class teacher teaching the full class, sometimes trying to help those pupils whose attention is wavering or who do not understand what is being taught. Where classes include such a wide range of ability and age, this is rarely the most effective use of the adults.
16. The planning of lessons in most subjects has been improved since the last inspection by the use of the national schemes of work, and this is slowly helping to improve standards. However, staff focus mainly on planning their own part in the lesson with much less consideration of what their pupils need to learn and how they will know when this is achieved. Without this clarity the pace of learning is often too slow, and pupils undertake time consuming activities which are often at similar levels. Not all pupils need so much reinforcement and others only need it in specific areas where they are weak. The school now has much of the information and the staffing it needs to target teaching much more accurately to small groups of pupils.
17. Teachers' expectations are often much too low for many pupils in their class, especially in the juniors, and there are too few strategies in place to boost pupils' learning adequately. A significant impediment to ensuring that suitable expectations are set, is the limited range of teaching strategies used, not only by individual teachers, but also in the school's approach to organising pupils into classes which

include a wide range of ability and age, without regular means of boosting the progress of specific groups. Groups are occasionally organised to boost performance, but this is usually prior to national testing and do not ensure steady progress through the school.

18. Many of the staff have been appointed over the last two years and a few very recently, including the deputy headteacher. Only the headteacher remains from the last inspection. The new staff team has established a good team spirit, works hard and has a strong commitment to improvement. Most staff have an adequate level of expertise in the subjects of the National Curriculum and in the age range they teach, but there are occasional weaknesses in expertise and experience. Although they are supportive of each other when requested, and sometimes plan together, there are too few opportunities for staff to share their expertise, for example by teaching other classes on occasions.

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

19. The school has worked hard at improving the opportunities available for pupils to achieve. It has been successful in ensuring good personal development, attitudes and behaviour, but this has not yet resulted in raising standards of attainment significantly in the subjects taught. The school needs to look more carefully at the way the curricular opportunities for learning are planned, organised and taught throughout the school, to ensure a good match to the needs of different groups of pupils.
20. All the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are included in the school's timetable. Since the last inspection improvements have been made to the school's policies and schemes of work. All subjects now have policies and almost all are using the nationally recommended schemes of work. However, these schemes have not yet been adapted to suit the school's organisation and the needs of its pupils. The school makes effective use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to support teaching in these two subjects. Good quality support from the local education authority, has helped teachers to plan lessons and to make better use of assessment data. Whilst this is having some positive effects on pupils' progress, it is not yet embedded in the regular day to day practice of all teachers.
21. The current organisation of classes does not help in the delivery of the subjects of the National Curriculum. The variable number of pupils in each of the year group has led to mixed age classes, split year groups and a wide range of pupils' abilities in each class. Alongside this organisation, a topic approach is adopted in the infants and discrete subjects in the juniors. This provides a complex situation upon which to build a balanced and effective curriculum, and the school currently uses only a limited range of strategies to organise the pupils, staff and subjects. The main approach to delivering the curriculum is that all classes are taught all subjects by the class teacher, sometimes with the support of one or more other adults. History and geography are taught in alternate half-terms. In some subjects, two topics are being taught in a lesson as the class contains different year groups.
22. The curriculum for children under the age of five, does not meet their needs. Almost all children enter school without experience of nursery schooling. They are given, too quickly, access to the National Curriculum, without having the full benefit of working towards the recommended Early Learning Goals. The staff strive to ensure children have suitable experiences, but the reception class also includes Year 1 pupils, the space is restricted, the outdoor provision is underdeveloped and the planning of the

day is fragmented in an effort to accommodate both year groups and the twice yearly admission to reception. Some children have only two terms to benefit from the statutory Foundations Stage curriculum, others have three terms. The school's planning of their curriculum experiences is too general to take sufficient account of these differing stages, their expected progress, and the resources and facilities they need.

23. The curriculum for the rest of the school also has limitations. Although it is broad and generally relevant to the pupils, it is not yet designed to develop their skills and understanding alongside the development of knowledge. The school's curriculum map, which is an improvement on the situation noted at the last inspection, ensures that the teachers know which subject and unit of work from the National Curriculum they are expected to teach for every year group. However, this is not matched by suitable guidance about how pupils' skills and understanding should be developed year by year and what can be expected of pupils of differing abilities. As a result, although all the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught regularly, the planning of lessons is focused too much on introducing new information and on the teachers' organisation of activities, and not enough on planning progressive learning for pupils. This imbalance is particularly evident in the development of pupils' investigative skills.
24. The school's recent inclusion policy makes a commitment to ensuring that all pupils, irrespective of social background, ethnicity, race or academic ability, have opportunities to fulfil their potential. This works well for some, but not all, pupils. For many pupils, the range of information available from the school's improved systems for assessment is not yet reflected in the teaching and work they receive in many lessons. Sometimes too much direction by the teacher limits the access pupils have to investigative work, especially in mathematics and science. Those pupils with special educational needs are given effective support in their classes and have equal access to the curriculum. Their learning is supported well by learning assistants whose work is well prescribed and documented. Most pupils with special educational needs make at least steady progress. More able pupils have been recognised by the school, but are rarely adequately provided for in lessons or through the organisation of their work. Their more general needs are noted in literacy and numeracy and this has improved their attainment. In other subjects, expectations of them are often too low and the work is often too easy with limited scope for independence.
25. The school now has a more stable staff, and is therefore in a position to develop further the outline map of the curriculum and the contribution of the national schemes of work. The current organisation of the pupils and staff includes mixed age classes and year groups split between two classes, and the present arrangements for the systematic development of pupils' skills and understanding do not fully reflect these complexities. When reviewing the organisation of the curriculum, the school also needs to consider the balance of time, which is currently weighted very heavily towards literacy and numeracy, with work in English accounting for well over a quarter of curriculum time each week. As a result, not all other subjects receive sufficient time for their development.
26. Homework was an issue for development, noted at the last inspection. The school now provides homework and ensures that parents are well informed about its timing and content. Parents, for their part, respond well to this and homework is being effective in improving the quality of pupils' work, particularly in literacy and numeracy. A lunchtime homework club is in place at the school, providing some pupils with access to a place to work and with support for their homework tasks during a lunch-hour. The school also makes satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities.

There is a reasonable range of activities of good quality. This includes art and drama clubs and choir. With changes of staff, the programme of activities has changed and parents are currently not completely satisfied with what is provided, as there is little provision for the infant pupils and sport is limited. There is room to extend the extra-curricular work further, while taking due care not to overburden school staff.

27. The school makes good provision overall for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their moral and social development is very good, while their spiritual and cultural values are satisfactory. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection.
28. The pupils enjoy spiritual warmth through the quality of relationships that they experience with the school staff and each other. Their insight into spiritual values also receives support from a sound programme for the delivery of religious education. The provision for furthering pupils' spiritual development is not yet planned through other subjects of the curriculum. Nonetheless, opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences of the spiritual aspects of day to day life are provided, such as discussions with a parent who brought a new baby into school, and pupils playing roles in a class wedding ceremony. Staff also make good use of incidental opportunities to create a sense of wonder, such as the melting of ice sculptures in an infant science lesson.
29. The quality of worship does not have significant influence on pupils' development of spiritual values. Collective worship does not meet statutory requirements in that provision is not made for daily celebration.
30. Pupils' moral development is supported through consistent and clear expectation for good conduct and the role model provided by all staff. Parents approve of the school's achievement in raising pupils' moral values. The pupils understand right from wrong, and during lessons and about the school they demonstrate tolerance and consideration. The progress of lessons and the quality of the learning environment are favourably influenced by the good behaviour of pupils. The pupils are courteous and respectful with adults, and welcoming and friendly with visitors. In lessons, they recognise the need to consider others and to co-operate during activities. During a physical education lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5 they were introduced to a game that required them to negotiate rules for fair play. They made genuine effort to devise the game so that it was fair to both sides and revealed a clear understanding of the need for rules. Older pupils are encouraged to support those who are younger, although there are too few opportunities across the year groups for such initiative and responsibility.
31. Within religious education, the pupils gain insight into the beliefs and customs of people of other faiths and have studied life in some ancient cultures such as the Greeks and the Vikings. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have studied their own culture through a visit to Elvaston Castle to experience a Victorian Christmas, and pupils from Years 1 and 2 studied the Great Fire of London and produced a timeline of some of the great historical events of British history. The depth and range of their cultural studies are not yet sufficiently comprehensive to prepare them for living in a multicultural society and insight into their own cultural traditions is limited.
32. Recent changes to the scheme of work for personal, social and health education have made improvements to this provision. Aspects of science support sex education for pupils together with advice and help from the school nurse for Year 6 pupils. Displays of good work were noted in pupils writing about people who help them in the

- community and again when discussing a community issue based on dogs straying in the local area.
33. The school has suitable links with the local community. The school makes use of places of interest such as Rosliston Forestry Centre in connection with its work in history and environmental education. At the same time visitors to the school, to further sporting activities such as cricket, football and rugby, have been well received. While some parents expressed concern over the amount of activities and visits offered as part of the curriculum, the inspection finds that they are satisfactory.
34. Good relationships exist between the school and other schools in the area. The links with secondary schools are well established, while “cluster” groups of schools, sometimes formed by the local authority and at other times by the schools themselves, fulfil a number of needs. Schools meet to discuss literacy and numeracy issues, while other groups meet to further development in ICT. There are links between primary schools for sporting events and an annual music afternoon for the infant children is a highlight on the calendar.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school makes good provision for child protection and for the welfare of the children, and the learning environment is safe and secure. This judgement is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
36. A strength of the school is the quality of relationships together with the pastoral knowledge and support provided by the staff. The teaching of personal, social and health education has been introduced to the curriculum which, provides a balanced programme of issues to be taught to inform and guide the pupils’ decision making in personal health and safety matters. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and eliminate bullying are successful in ensuring a safe and co-operative learning environment. However, procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory. The school does not consistently pursue first day contact with parents in the event of a child’s absence.
37. At the last inspection the creation of an effective system of assessment for the school was a key issue for development. The school has worked successfully to produce such a system which is in place and which now provides sufficient relevant information. However, as yet, in spite of this development, the use all teachers make of the information does not always guide their provision for the full range of pupils in their classes.
38. The National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven and 11, are well analysed by the school. The school compares results with national figures and against previous groups of pupils. Individual pupil’s progress is checked against forecasts and targets. Comparisons are also made between the progress of boys and girls. Minor adjustments have been made to the curriculum as a result of the increased data, and the school is planning further action.
39. Teachers carry out an early assessment of children’s abilities when they enter school in the reception class. This illustrates that the group overall is generally below the nationally expected achievements for their age. However, there is still a small number of children who are appreciably higher than this, and more who are close to reaching these achievements. The results of this early assessment need to be treated with caution when predicting what progress pupils are capable of making as so few

children have had access to nursery provision previously. Once in school, many learn quickly when taught well and make at least steady and often good progress.

40. During the reception year and in Year 1, assessments are largely made by teachers and are only sometimes supported by tests. Currently, teacher assessments are not as accurate as they might be throughout the school. Bearing in mind the limitations of the early assessments, it is vital that assessments made about children, during the time they spend in the infant classes, are accurate and used more consistently to provide effective learning opportunities for them, especially in relation to the detail of the Early Learning Goals. In the junior classes, pupils' progress is checked each year, using the nationally recommended annual tests. This helps the school to see if pupils are making appropriate progress against the targets set for them.
41. Recent developments in assessment, supported by the local authority, track back key areas of weakness and attempt to raise standards to the appropriate levels for the pupils' ages. As these developments are at an early stage their effectiveness is not yet evident.
42. Pupils do not yet take an active part in assessment, even though some targets are shared with parents. Pupils do not set their own targets, neither do they have the ability to check their own progress against national levels. To this end, whilst marking of work is generally carried out satisfactorily, not enough detail is written in pupils' books, so that they might understand what it is they need to do in order to make better progress.
43. The school has yet to make full use of ICT, in order to enter data on to the school's computers so that individual teachers can store, amend and retrieve data easily.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school has effective links with parents and keeps them well informed about the life of the school. Most parents have a positive view of the school. This has further improved the satisfactory position reported in the previous inspection.
45. Although the school has made significant efforts to provide opportunities for parents to be involved with the school and in the children's learning, only a minority contribute directly to the life of the school. A small group has raised significant funds for the school and a few help in the classroom and on visits. Parents generally support homework and in completing their children's reading records. Of those parents who responded to pre-inspection enquiry, a significant majority supports the school and report satisfaction with its achievements and relations with parents. The school provides a monthly newsletter and comprehensive annual reports of pupils' progress. All parents who responded, report that the school is approachable to discuss concerns and during the inspection many were seen coming into school at the start and end of the school day.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The management of the school is satisfactory but the leadership is not yet effective in improving pupils' standards of attainment.
47. The day to day life of the school runs smoothly within an attractive, clean environment that encourages good behaviour by pupils and enables staff to focus on teaching. Required procedures are in place for aspects such as the performance management

of teachers, the production of a school improvement plan, and the induction of new staff. The inspection procedures were managed professionally, with prompt and efficient access to the school's documentation and a positive approach to external evaluation. The present, calm organisation is mainly due to the headteacher's management skills, and good quality support from the local education authority in helping the school to recover from a period of staffing instability and disruptive behaviour attributed to a significant minority of pupils.

48. The leadership of the curriculum and the management of pupils' learning has had much less impact and has resulted in standards remaining too low for too long. This is a small staff, many of whom are recently appointed, and have needed to take on weighty responsibilities. As a team, and with the help of additional expertise provided by the local education authority and the headteacher's determination to improve pupils' behaviour, they have succeeded in changing the attitudes and response of the pupils to the point where this aspect is a major strength of the school. New initiatives, such as the raising achievement in primary schools (RAP) have also been integrated into the school's practice and co-ordinators of subjects and stages, have helped to lead school initiatives such as the improvement in the assessment procedures. These efforts have enabled the school to move forward in some areas, but have not yet provided the clear leadership and educational direction that the school needs in order to drive up pupils' standards of attainment.
49. The role of the subject and stage co-ordinators has recently been reviewed, but few have yet had opportunity to provide significant leadership in improving standards in their areas of responsibility. The exception is the special educational needs co-ordinator who has a clear view of the needs of the pupils and has successfully targeted resources to ensure they make suitable progress. The staffing is now stable, most staff who are relatively new to the school are now familiar with the pupils and resources, and co-ordinators have action plans which focus more clearly on raising standards. Some results are already evident, such as more interesting work in geography, but not consistently through school. It is the intention that the newly appointed deputy-headteacher is to take on the major responsibility for managing pupils' learning and progress in literacy, but this role is not currently active.
50. The area of management that is least effective is the impact on pupils' learning of the extensive monitoring that has been undertaken. Given the changes in staffing and the need to improve teaching, most monitoring has focused on checking teaching and planning, but not with the rigour needed to ensure pupils are making progress. There has been some scrutiny of pupils' work, but again focusing on whether the content of the curriculum has been covered and not on what has been attained by different groups of pupils. The useful information arising from the analysis of test results has not yet been linked to checking pupils' work and the planning of their learning. This has limited the school's view of its strengths and weaknesses, and its overall effectiveness.
51. The governing body is almost fully constituted and many governors have been recently appointed. They take a lively and active interest in the school and in developing their own role. They have their own development plan and take advantage of training when possible. Appropriate committees are in place and meet regularly, with sound procedures for communicating with the full governing body. The governors are becoming increasingly well informed and are now taking more active responsibility for strategic planning, especially on issues such as finance and the appointment of staff. They recognise the improvements that the school has made, but are not complacent about the need to improve standards. The school improvement plan sets mainly

suitable priorities although the success criteria, especially in the main area of raising standards are not sufficiently precise to lead to effective monitoring of interim progress.

52. The school has adequate resources for learning to sustain its present curriculum, with the exception of reading materials for the least competent pupils in the older year groups. Accommodation is limited, with the inconvenience of a detached classroom outside the main building, but is generally well used, maintained and managed to ensure best use is made of the available space. The exception is the provision for the Foundation Stage, which is too cramped to sustain the range of activities needed, and lacks adequate outdoor facilities.
53. Finance is tight, with the school using reserves to pay for current staffing levels. However, the number of pupils on roll has risen slightly and this is improving the situation at present. Increased expenditure on support staff is directly improving the learning of many pupils, especially those who learn slowly. The budget is now managed satisfactorily with due attention paid to the principles of best value when expenditure on resources or building maintenance is agreed. Less so on the effectiveness of expenditure in relation to pupils' progress and attainment. The school's financial procedures have recently been audited by the local education authority. The recommendations relate mainly to introducing more rigour and security into the school's financial management, and have already been put in place or are included in an agreed action plan to be implemented within given time scales.
54. The headteacher and governors value the close working relationship with the LEA and the extensive support that has been provided. All concerned recognise the need for continuing support from the local education authority, at a reducing rate as the school becomes more capable of managing its own resources and issues.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to improve further the pupils' standards of attainment and the quality of education offered, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

Raise standards of attainment, especially in English, mathematics and science, and for the more able pupils in reading and science at Key Stage 1 and in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 by:

- more rigorously matching pupils' work in lessons to the assessment information available;
- raising the expectations of teachers throughout the school;
- increasing substantially the amount of good teaching;
- ensuring coordinators monitor impact on improvements to standards;
- improving attendance, and the reduction of absence due to holidays taken in school time.

Main references to these issues can be found in paragraphs: 1-6, 36-37,41-4 and 48-49.

Improve significantly the quality of pupils' learning throughout the school by:

- improving teachers' skills in identifying learning objectives which ensure pupils make brisk progress in skills, knowledge and understanding;
- increasing the pace and depth of pupils' learning;
- using a wider range of teaching and organisational strategies to ensure teaching is well matched to needs of different ability groups;
- identifying and sharing the best quality teaching through the school.

Main references to these issues can be found in paragraphs:10-18 and 50.

Improve the organisation and management of the curriculum so that all pupils can develop a full range of skills, understanding and knowledge and reach suitably high standards, by:

- enhancing the Foundation Stage curriculum with better outdoor play and other facilities, particularly to develop spoken language, questioning and problem solving skills;
- increasing the influence of the subject leaders in improving the quality of teaching and learning, and pupils' progress, in their subjects;
- reconsidering the planning of the subject topics in mixed age classes to enable the whole class to study a topic in depth;
- adapt the curriculum to support accelerated learning, especially in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and rapidly improve pupils' performance from the low baseline at entry.

Main references to these issues can be found in paragraphs:19 -25

Ensure that the statutory requirements for collective worship are fully met.

Main reference to this issue can be found in paragraphs:29

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	14	17	0	0	0
Percentage	0	3	44	53	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 three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	128
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	25

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	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	12	12	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	9	9	11
	Total	18	18	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (75)	75 (92)	92 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	11	10
	Girls	9	11	9
	Total	17	22	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (92)	92 (92)	79 (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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	16	9	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	6	10
	Girls	6	7	8
	Total	10	13	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	40 (38)	52 (29)	72 (42)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	8	7	9
	Total	22	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (67)	88 (58)	96 (71)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	67	5	1
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	52	0	0

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

of pupils excluded. These figures were produced before the January 03 intake of pupils into the reception class.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	103

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a
Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
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	£
Total income	310,401
Total expenditure	258,900
Expenditure per pupil	2,421
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,202
Balance carried forward to next year	51,500

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	103
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	36	0	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	55	41	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	20	64	11	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	41	2	0	0
The teaching is good.	64	36	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	36	7	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	27	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	36	11	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	59	32	2	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	43	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	34	16	5	2

Other issues raised by parents

A small number of parents considered the extra-curricular activities were not extensive enough, especially in sport, and that there were too few visits to places of interest in school time. The inspection findings agree with the parents' comments on the range of extra-curricular activities, but school visits were found to be satisfactory.

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

56. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy school. The assessments made within a short time of them arriving in the reception class indicate that only a few are reaching national expectations but a significant proportion is very close. Very few have had nursery experience, although most have attended the local playgroup, so their experiences are often limited. Many learn quickly once they enter school and make steady progress. They have much to learn and are enthusiastic about doing so, but they have only one year in the Foundation Stage in which to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in a learning environment suitable for their age. However, the reception class also includes Year 1 pupils and is not well served for space, either indoors or out. Staff work hard to ensure that the children in the Foundation Stage have the appropriate experiences for their age, but this is not entirely successful at present. The main issue, which was also reported at the last inspection, is that the curriculum, including the teaching and organisation, is geared more to the National Curriculum than to the needs of the younger children. Some improvements have been made since the last inspection. The teaching is sound and sometimes good, especially in literacy and numeracy, and support staff make a valuable contribution, especially for those children with special educational needs. However, although the children have many useful experiences and make good progress in some areas, they do not have enough opportunities to explore and to develop their understanding and skills, especially in language, before moving on to the National Curriculum.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. Many children entered the school with reasonable social skills and have quickly learned the routines and expectations of the classroom. They are eager to learn and confident, with particular enthusiasm for practical work and activities outdoors. Although the classroom is a little cramped, pupils move around sensibly and are often willing to help others without specific guidance from the teacher, for example, when putting on aprons for art work. They show a good degree of independence, such as finding their own snacks and putting on coats. Some children still prefer to work alone but most are co-operative in group work, showing reasonable sensitivity to the needs of others and, on occasions, a willingness to share. They respond very well to working with an adult in a small group, with most listening attentively and focusing on what they are doing. In this circumstance, most children are able to maintain their concentration with only occasional prompts from the adult. In class sessions their concentration varies, mainly because the sessions are too long for their age group, and they become restless. However, most children make good progress and are likely to meet national expectations by the end of the reception year.
58. The teaching of this aspect is good overall. Staff pay much attention to developing the children's social skills and promote their personal development through example and day to day activities, as well as discussion. Relationships are supportive and courteous, with due care taken to ensure pupils are secure and comfortable and are gaining a knowledge of themselves, for example by talking about what they like and dislike, by recognising or writing their names, and by comparing their physical features. However, the mixed ages in the class and its current organisation of tasks and timetable, tends to restrict the opportunities for pupils to extend their personal development, through exploring, contributing their own ideas and using their independence to the full.

59. The children's response to those with special educational needs is very good for their age. They are learning to help by not reacting to unexpected noises or behaviour which is unusual. The staff have created a good atmosphere and organisation to which supports this approach well.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Although some pupils enter the school with a basic competence in language and a willingness to communicate, many do not, and need much encouragement to speak. Early assessment showed many children were a little below the expectations for their age and some were significantly below. The staff work hard to introduce new words as well as encouraging children to speak and listen carefully. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching in small groups when staff can focus on individuals and encourage them to respond in more than single words. The literacy lessons, which combine reception and Year 1 pupils provide a good basis for the more capable pupils, who can maintain concentration while the teacher introduces more than one point, but less so for the remainder of the children for whom the sessions are often too long.
61. Staff encourage careful listening, for example, by using a whispering game where pupils have to pass a word along to others in a whisper, and most children listen well as long as their interest is maintained. Frequent efforts are also made to encourage speech and many children make good use of these, especially during role play. They are gaining confidence and most are capable of making their needs known. However, not enough opportunities are provided during the day to ensure they can have extended conversations which involve putting their own ideas into words rather than giving brief responses to adult questions, and that they use the new words they are learning.
62. The early skills of reading are developing well. Children have a love of stories and books and enjoy reading the Big Books alongside the teacher. Many are able to retell a story or frame a sentence or two to describe a character. This puts them in a good position to develop their writing. They can recognise simple language patterns and rhymes, and can use clues from the text, such as when reading the "Peach, Pear, Plum" story as a class and predicting the next rhyming word using clues from the pictures and the previous story line. Recognition of letters and sounds, including blends of two letters, are skilfully introduced by staff, for example in a "plate game" game where each pupil had a paper plate with a word beginning with "pl" and had to identify their own word and those of others in the group.
63. Children learned well in these small group situations and were proud of their achievements. Their knowledge of letters of the alphabet, sounds and simple words is good and most children make at least steady progress. There are some opportunities for them to read privately and to practice their new skills. These opportunities are used well, but the present use of space does not encourage easy access to reading materials with comfortable areas to read and share their favourite stories. A small but significant number of pupils are not making suitable progress in literacy. The school does not have a clear approach to ensuring that they are not left behind as others move on.
64. The written work of the older children shows evident progress although the amount of writing is not extensive. There is a very broad range of competence in the year group, with a significant group of children still at an early stage that is well below the

expectations for their age, and others close to or above expectations. A few are able to write simple words themselves, using their knowledge of sounds and letters, although many are still learning to form letters and copying from adult scripts. Nonetheless, progress is clearly evident, and most children are gaining in confidence. Writing skills overall are not progressing as well as reading skills and, without improved opportunities, only a minority of pupils is likely to securely achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.

Mathematical development

65. Many children are proud of their knowledge of numbers. Staff have suitably high expectations and most children have made steady or good progress. The older pupils are confident with numbers to ten, using them in their daily activities when counting the number of children to work in an area, or on tables at lunch time. Most can confidently recognise the numbers as well as count in sequence. Younger children are beginning to understand that subtraction results in a smaller number by singing number songs such as "Speckled Frogs". Knowledge and recognition of basic two-dimensional shapes are good, with most children able to name the shapes and sometimes recognise a property such as "four sides the same" for a square. This understanding is effectively reinforced through creative work using shapes, and through an exciting "shape hunt" around the school. A large minority of children is on target to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach Year 1.
66. However, some children are less confident in their knowledge and use of mathematics, including mathematical vocabulary, and often need considerable help from adults to complete their tasks. Despite the good work of the staff, the present organisation of the reception year leaves limited opportunities to explore mathematical ideas such as sorting, matching and grouping as part of children's structured play. This has implications for the children's depth of understanding, especially those who learn slowly or who had little experience of mathematics before starting school. In order to increase the impact of the present good teaching on children's attainment, the planning of mathematical development as part of the Foundation Stage curriculum needs to be reconsidered, particularly for these pupils, with attention given to the strengths and weaknesses in the understanding of individual pupils.
67. The use of worksheets to check children's understanding is likely to have only limited value for the children at the early stages of mathematical development. Sufficient time is currently spent on recording children's work, but the assessments are too rarely focused on mathematical development rather than attitudes to work. Improved assessment strategies are needed with a clear view of what different children need to learn.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. The topic approach to planning the pupils' learning in this area is successful in providing a broad range of experiences for all children. The teaching is good and most pupils make good progress in understanding their environment and gaining the early knowledge of different disciplines such as science and geography. There is some unnecessary repetition of teaching as each of the twice yearly groups who are admitted to the reception class, complete many of the same tasks. As the class also contains Year 1 pupils, this adds to the complexity of the planning and organisation. It also reflects the school's tendency when planning the curriculum, to focus on providing tasks and topics rather than developing skills and understanding which could be developed through different experiences.

69. Nonetheless, children's work indicates that most experience a range of scientific activities, such as growing beans in the classroom and using labels and diagrams to identify their parts, and studying light and its effects on different materials and in the dark. These topics are well supported for most, but not all, children by recording their findings by using pictures and simple classification graphs. All pupils undertake similar recording, the majority of which indicate a reasonable level of understanding. Some, children do not complete their recording, so no firm judgements on their understanding and progress can be made.
70. Other topics support pupils' knowledge of the occupations of people who have significant roles in the community, such as the fire fighters, police officers and staff in school. These are enhanced by visits and visitors, and the pupils talk confidently about what they have learned. They also have experience of drawing simple plans and following routes successfully, and are becoming familiar with their immediate surroundings. They have a basic understanding of environmental issues such as litter and a few are well informed for their age about aspects such as recycling. They are introduced to communication technology through role-play areas, such as the police station office with equipment such as a digital clock and telephone, and also confidently use the computer for work mainly related to literacy and numeracy. The children enjoy their work in these areas, which is usually practical, and often involves an element of exploring and investigating. Most of the older children in the reception year are on target to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Some, but not all, of the younger pupils may also be successful but they have been in school too short a time to make a judgement on their standards in this area.

Physical development

71. The provision for physical development is limited. Outdoor provision is barely adequate for the age group with no designated area or opportunities for climbing, tunnelling, or using wheeled toys. However, teaching is sound. Staff take children outside to walk and play on a regular basis and also use the hall for more formal lessons. Children respond very well to the limited space in the classroom in terms of moving safely to different activities and around the classroom, with good control and care for others. When in larger spaces, outdoors or in the hall, many are confident in interpreting the teacher's instructions for movement and explore the use of their body in a variety of ways.
72. The children's ability to use paintbrushes, pencils and other simple tools is very variable, but most are close to the expectation for their age, and some are very competent as they demonstrated in a design and technology lesson using waste materials and construction apparatus to make model houses. There was little opportunity to observe children using larger equipment and toys. Most are unlikely to reach to the Early Learning Goals before they enter Year 1.

Creative development

73. Good teaching helps to compensate for the limited space and time for sustained creative work. Although time on a particular activity is often limited in order to use the space for other work, the children have regular opportunities to paint, to design and build, and to make music. They use a range of materials with confidence, and make decisions about what will serve their purpose or communicate their ideas most effectively. A debate about whether foil or paint was the best way to represent glass in the windows of a model house, demonstrated how carefully two of the younger girls

considered their work. They are beginning to learn about texture through printing and about three dimensional shape by using soft modelling material. Many of the younger children have imaginative ideas but do not yet have the skills to put these into practice, especially when attempting large paintings, however some know about simple colour mixing and are satisfied with the pictures they paint. More opportunities for small group work on creative activities, including music, are now needed so skills to support the children's imaginative ideas can be taught, and used without too much direction from adults. Progress is satisfactory at present, given that most children have not attended nursery, but more frequent checks on the pace of progress towards the early learning goals are needed. A significant majority are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach Year 1.

ENGLISH

74. Standards in English are well below national expectations for seven and 11 year olds. When compared to similar schools results show low levels of achievement. For example, only two out of five pupils attained the expected Level 4 in the 2002 national tests for 11 year olds. This picture is little different from at the time of the last inspection. The current Year 6 pupils are making better progress but there are too many gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Much remains to be done to ensure pupils' journey through school gives them the required skills to achieve in English but also apply themselves to work in other subjects; many are generally working at a level more typical of much younger pupils. The performance of the Year 6 pupils indicates that the school will be hard pressed to reach its target for 2003. Despite a concerted move by the school in partnership with the local education authority to raise standards and tackle underachievement, there has been no significant improvement in standards in any year group. Although, evidence does show that the more able pupils and those with special educational needs make better progress, benefiting from the additional high quality support made available to them.
75. While the inspection acknowledges that many pupils, but not all, start in the reception class with limited vocabulary and communication skills too many of them, and most frequently boys, get off to a slow start in reading and writing. The school has made efforts to improve speaking and listening skills, for example, effective behaviour management ensures pupils are attentive in lessons but success in them talking confidently and being articulate to describe their work remains elusive. By the end of Year 2, a good number are still in the early stages of reading and writing; this signals that their learning has not moved far enough or fast enough during their infant years. Very few pupils scored at the higher Level 3. Not enough is known by the school as to why standards are scraping along at these low levels so that action can be taken to put it right. In the 2002 national tests for seven year olds, 75 per cent of pupils reached the level expected for their age in reading and writing, although too many of these scored the lowest Level 2c.
76. The general standards of reading are below national expectations, in line with findings at the time of the last inspection. Pupils express an interest and pleasure in reading; those chosen to read to inspectors were enthusiastic. They are encouraged to take books home and reading records show that a good number of parents involve themselves actively in sharing reading at home. Some pupils were uncertain about their use of the school library, but a significant number shared the fact that they used the local library on a regular basis. By the age of seven, the more able pupils can read simple texts with confidence and reasonable accuracy and fluency. They can talk about a story and its characters. However, most pupils read hesitantly, are unaware of their mistakes and make little effort to read with expression. Most require regular

prompting and support to use explicit strategies to tackle unknown words and to express their meaning. By the age of 11, too many pupils are still struggling to come to terms with improving their reading skills. Their ability or inclination to use the range of reading skills available to them to read unfamiliar words is still limited, generally weak and hinders their progress. Although many read accurately from selected texts, which in the main are below the level normally expected of pupils of this age, they lack fluency and expression. Their ability to infer and deduce and to evaluate texts through a range of literature remains underdeveloped. This affects the quality of their writing. Greater opportunities are being offered for the use of extended reading skills such as skimming to retrieve information, paraphrasing, and researching which was highlighted as an issue previously. Reading records are kept but few contain sufficient constructive or diagnostic comments to inform future planning and teaching. However, those which profile the progress made by pupils with special educational needs are detailed and used effectively to inform the next step in the learning process. This effective action is not transferred to the needs of all pupils.

77. Pupils' writing skills are weak. Many pupils of all ages spell simple words incorrectly, their handwriting is often untidy, and they miss out punctuation or use it inaccurately. Standards in spelling and handwriting are generally low. The quality of the content of pupils' writing also varies and is generally below expectations for pupils across all ages and abilities. Very few pupils start Year 1 with any real skills as independent, fluent writers. Year 3 pupils' work also shows that many leave Year 2 only just at the stage of writing simple sentences. Only a small number include speech or run sentences together when writing unaided.
78. They continue to need support and guidance in the junior years in how to compose and draft their writing. Pupils learn how to structure their writing, such as different ways to start a story and how to write a letter but there is much less evidence of them learning how to develop and refine their style. Year 5 pupils have written adventure stories that end realistically and which contain some attempts at characterisation and plot but few are at the expected level for their age. Few write really well constructed or lively stories, accounts and reports, even in Year 6 where much of the work lacks maturity with careless errors. Pupils are not well versed in checking for success in what they have done or considering ways to improve it before handing it in for marking. Only the higher attaining pupils reach a reasonable standard in literacy lessons but they are insufficiently adept in applying what they learn in lessons to their work in other subjects.
79. Teaching is adequate with some better teaching in Year 2 and 6; where flashes of liveliness and higher expectation are making up for lost time. In the adequate lessons, too often the work given to pupils requires them to complete routine worksheets or exercises which demand little more than word or phrase filling or limiting tasks which put a ceiling on how high they can achieve; many pupils are not motivated by this work and their progress is slow. Another reason for the limited impact of teaching on learning is that the teachers are too accepting of what the pupils do, and do not give sufficient time to showing them how to improve. The teachers' comments on pupils' writing are usually too general to drive learning on; they do not make use of pupils' individual targets to give them an indication of how well they are doing or what they can do to improve their writing. Very few comments urge pupils to take greater care about their handwriting and spelling. Although pupils are sometimes expected to plan and improve their writing the majority of work is teacher directed, with learning outcomes pre-determined by the nature and level of challenge built into the set task. This sets a climate of low expectation. Very little use is made of the computer to teach drafting and editing skills.

80. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented and teachers' planning is based on the recommended framework for lessons. Long and medium term planning provides a coherent and structured scheme of work that ensures coverage of all aspects of the subject. The Headteacher recently took over the leadership and management of English from the previous deputy headteacher who monitored teachers' planning, commented on standards and was involved in the implementation of the Raising Attainment Project (RAP) across the school. The leadership of the subject has so far focused mainly on the management of the subject rather than on the quality of learning and the use made by teachers of assessment information in matching tasks to the needs of individual pupils. The performance data, which gives good information on where pupils' learning is problematic, has not been used critically enough to specify exactly what needs to be done, and by whom, to raise standards to a satisfactory level. Subject delivery meets requirements but its impact is not having the desired effect on raising standards.

MATHEMATICS

81. Pupils in Year 6, in 2002, attained standards in the National Curriculum tests, which were well below those expected for their age. When compared against results from schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, these results were still below average. From the time of the last inspection, results have varied slightly over time, but despite standards being a key issue at that inspection there had been little evidence of improvement up to the 2002 tests. The very recent support given by the local authority as part of the "RAP" initiative, is gradually having an effect, but this would better be seen in the longer term, rather than a short-term fix to raise standards.
82. By the end of Year 2, the picture is a similar one, with standards well below national averages and below those of similar schools, in spite of the fact that pupils' average scores for mathematics were the highest for four years, illustrating the gap between the current position and that of schools nationally.
83. During the inspection, whilst there were examples of individual pupils, both in the infants and juniors, reaching the expected levels for their age, this was not true for the majority of pupils. Scrutiny of previously completed work in all year groups, shows that the National Numeracy Strategy has helped both teachers and pupils improve standards in aspects of arithmetic, including computation, whilst other aspects of mathematics, notably work in data handling receives very limited coverage. At the same time, very little time has been spent on encouraging pupils to put their arithmetical understanding to use in investigations. In general, teachers place most of their efforts in raising standards in arithmetic and not enough in developing pupils' understanding and ability to apply what they have learned.
84. Although there has been monitoring of planning, recent advances in using assessments and some improvements in teaching, the school is still attempting to build current mathematics teaching and learning upon gaps in knowledge and understanding created over a number of years. Thus pupils in Year 6, for example, may be taught currently the correct elements of the National Curriculum, but have gaps in their previous knowledge and understanding which makes learning difficult for them. This will not be immediately remedied but will take some time to recoup the lost ground.
85. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of place value to 100, but do not make enough use of it in problem solving or investigations. They can

measure small lengths with a ruler and know the names of some two-dimensional shapes. Many are able to shade in, or highlight, fractions of a whole shape, but have too little experience of graphs or pictograms. Little use is made of ICT to support work in this area.

86. By Year 6 pupils are able to multiply and divide by ten and set out long multiplication and division sums. They can draw from a small range of strategies to make these calculations. They can use standard measures of centimetres well in finding the perimeter of shapes. They have carried out a limited amount of work in drawing graphs but once again their work here is not supported by the use of computers. Pupils' use of their mathematical knowledge is often limited to solving word problems, but there is little evidence to show that they have had experience of more open-ended investigations.
87. Bearing in mind the below average abilities noted in the children when they enter the school, they make satisfactory progress in the reception class, but much better progress in the Year 1 and 2 class. In a lesson seen in this class, pupils made good progress in gaining an understanding of weighing and comparing the mass of different objects. They made less progress in using the mathematical vocabulary involved. Pupils in a Year 6 made equally good progress in their mental mathematics, quickly answering questions or writing answers on their white boards. Overall, however, because there are many more gaps in their previous knowledge, their progress is just satisfactory over time. Those pupils who are of higher ability, are not always given challenging enough tasks, even though their extra ability is noted through assessment. Provision for this group of pupils is not yet consistently good enough.
88. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress, in relation to their ability and to their targets. They make even better progress when they receive specific help during lessons, as in a Year 6 lesson when the support adult was able to help two or three pupils with special educational needs, working alongside them and not distracting other pupils in their work.
89. There are adequate opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. They make measurements in science and design and technology lessons and historical timelines are noted in many classes. However, their access to ICT is limited in its support of their work in mathematics. Very little evidence was seen of pupils making use of specific programs to help them with their understanding of concepts or of their drawing of graphs for example. Displays concerning mathematics, in classes, are generally of a satisfactory quality. Whilst many of them are colourful and often emphasise the vocabulary of mathematics, few of them are interactive or include examples of pupils' work.
90. Teaching overall is satisfactory, although some of the teachers performed well during the inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, an improvement on the last inspection. The best teaching of mathematics was seen at the end of the infants and in the class of the oldest pupils. Work was well planned but concentrated rather too much on what the teacher was doing rather than what and how the pupils were learning. In a very good lesson seen in Year 6, very good use was made of individual white boards on which pupils answered questions. The teacher made a particular point of asking pupils to explain their answers and strategies to the class. They did this with confidence, responding well to the careful questioning. The teacher enlivened the lesson further through good use of the overhead projector, using it to illustrate the rotation of shapes on different axes. The pace of the lesson was brisk and this kept pupils motivated and on task. The very good relationships established

within the class helped the teacher manage the pupils very well so that no time was lost during the lesson. In all lessons, the attitudes and behaviour of the vast majority of pupils were good and sometimes very good. This played a significant role in supporting the progress they made.

91. The school has made satisfactory progress in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. As a result of this and with the support of the local authority, teachers are gradually adapting the planning for lessons in mathematics to suit a wider range of needs. Some are doing this better than others. Nonetheless it is still not yet fully effective in catering for the wide spread of ability and age in each class. More consistent use of the good assessment material gathered now on a very regular basis, would support further improvements in teaching, although there is still much to be done to secure improvements in learning.
92. The co-ordinator has received specific training for her role and is beginning to make an impact by checking planning, supporting a consultant in monitoring teaching and playing a role in the ongoing project for raising attainment of pupils in mathematics.

SCIENCE

93. The national test results and pupils' work in lessons and books indicate that standards of attainment in science are improving significantly, especially in the juniors. The more capable pupils gain the most from the school's present provision for science, and reach above average standards in tests. However, for the majority of pupils, standards remain below those expected nationally, and overall test results are below those of similar schools. Overall, standards of attainment in lessons for the majority of pupils are satisfactory at the end of the infants, and unsatisfactory at the end of the juniors.
94. The main reasons for the improvement in standards are the use of the national guidance to establish a scheme of work through school; the consistent teaching of the topics included in the scheme, and the practical work which is now a regular part of every lesson and has helped to develop the positive attitudes that pupils have towards the science.
95. In the infants, the pupils' gain a good range of experience, including developing their investigative skills. They are successfully encouraged to share their ideas when solving problems, and participate enthusiastically in discussions about the results of investigations. They are curious and questioning, work well together when planning and have a growing awareness of the need for a scientific approach to their work in the subject. For example, when discussing the changes in blocks of ice of various shapes, they knew that tests had to be fair, and that measurement in some way was needed. They have only limited skills in recording their findings, but use drawing effectively as their observation skills are good. Many pupils are building a sound basis of factual information that they use to inform their ideas. For example, they knew that heat was a factor in changing things, but did not consider light would melt their ice blocks, until sunlight was suggested by one pupil and it was evident that they knew that thermometers measured temperature although they did not know these words.
96. The organisation in the infants, results in almost all pupils being taught in one mixed class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, with a few Year 1 pupils being in another class with the reception year group. This arrangement, together with the planning of science within a thematic approach with different science topics for each year group, makes planning and teaching the science curriculum very complex. Teachers do well to

ensure that pupils have regular experience of good science investigations, and that they have a developing knowledge of a range of scientific topics including plants and electricity, which are based on practical activities. The preparation of lessons is good and the teaching is sound, which leads to steady progress for the majority of pupils.

97. However, it does not drive up standards of attainment sufficiently, especially for the most and least capable pupils, because there is a lack of clarity about what they should be expected to learn and attain in a given time. They move through a variety of interesting science topics without sufficient checks on what they are gaining from each topic in terms of skills and understanding. The teaching and the tasks are the same, or very similar, for all pupils and do not take sufficient account of how well individual pupils are already achieving or where they need additional help. Assessment in the subject is basic and, although the teachers know their pupils well, this does not significantly influence what is planned for different groups of pupils. The result is that the more capable pupils are not able to demonstrate what they can do or where their understanding is limited, because the tasks do not provide the opportunity. In order for the efforts of the staff to be reflected in better standards, there needs to be better planning and checking of pupils' learning.
98. In the juniors, the subject is taught separately rather than within a thematic approach, but links are occasionally made to other subjects where appropriate. This works well, giving each lesson a clear scientific focus. The national guidance is used as the scheme of work to guide teachers' planning, although it has not yet been adapted by the school to meet its own circumstances. As a result, some of the work and the curriculum time allocated, is not well matched to the pupils' needs. However, the teaching remains sound, with good preparation of resources and carefully planning of the teacher's input into each lesson and the tasks the pupils are to undertake. Pupils are introduced systematically to each of the science topics, in line with the school's curriculum plan, and lessons are usually based on a practical investigation.
99. Most pupils enjoy science and are keen to undertake the practical work. However, as the lessons are planned to extend their experience of different topics in science, rather than to develop their skills and understanding, many pupils struggle to gain the best from the teachers' efforts. Most can talk knowledgeably about the topics they have studied, but can rarely explain why investigations were undertaken in a particular way, or raise further questions as a result of their findings. This is partly because most lessons consist of an investigation, where the question is raised and the investigation planned by the teacher prior to the lesson, then the test is demonstrated by the teacher as an introduction to the lesson and repeated by the pupils. This has some merit, especially for the more able pupils who can more easily remember previous work and see the scientific points that are being made. However, the majority of pupils does not have a secure background of building up scientific understanding and skills, and for many the investigations stand alone and do little to extend their thinking. They do not have enough opportunity to raise scientific questions and develop their own ideas on how to investigate the question. Too much direction from the teacher reduces the level of scientific enquiry that pupils undertake.
100. The result is a strong bias towards factual knowledge and experience of a narrow range of techniques for setting up and recording investigations and tests, but little independent work in depth which would require the pupils to be familiar with the use of scientific vocabulary and apply what they know to new circumstances. Pupils' planning skills are weak, and only the most competent are able to suggest practical modifications that would improve their work.

101. The development of the subject has not been a priority in the school, and the leadership has been low key. Some checks on pupils' progress and help with teachers' queries, have helped to ensure a reasonably consistent approach to the subject, especially in using the national guidance and this has improved standards. The need now is to focus more on the planning the pupils' learning, as the teachers have demonstrated that they can competently deliver basic information and prepare tasks in lessons. This will involve having a clearer view of how the National Curriculum topics are to be introduced and revisited where necessary to classes that include two year groups.

ART AND DESIGN

102. During the inspection it was possible to observe two art lessons. In addition, teachers' planning was scrutinised and a number of pupils were encouraged to discuss their work which had been skilfully displayed. Work throughout the school shows that pupils have been encouraged to express their own ideas, to represent real objects and to express their feelings through the use of a range of techniques. The evidence gained indicates that pupils' attainment is generally in line with national expectations, with a range of examples of high quality work having been produced by pupils across the age range. For example, the large paper mosaic collages, the tube sculptures and magnificent silk screen paintings produced by members of the weekly art club. These examples reflect the good standards found at the time of the last inspection.
103. In the two lessons seen, the teaching was sound and upper junior pupils involved themselves well in working with clay and middle juniors with observational drawing of Viking pots. They listened attentively to instructions, concentrated well and persevered with the set tasks. However, progress suffered when the older pupils were required to observe the teacher carry out each and every step towards the making of the slab pot and when the younger pupils were not directly taught how to create line, tone and texture, using different grades of pencils, to enhance the quality of their drawings. Little attention was given to the acquisition of language and the usage of precise vocabulary relating to the subject being taught.
104. The programme of art topics and the use of the subject to support other curriculum areas are effective. Resources and accommodation are adequate and generally used effectively, including their use to produce and display three-dimensional work. The subject makes a useful contribution to the pupils' personal development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. As at the time of the last inspection, standards are in line with national expectation and pupils' work is typical for their age at the end of the infants and juniors. Satisfactory teaching overall ensures that all pupils make satisfactory progress in learning how to work with tools, materials and components. Pupils develop an early understanding of the design process and how to record their ideas. Year 1 pupils commented that they needed to draw the model of their house as "Otherwise you would not know what your model would look like or what you need to make it".
106. Through photographic evidence, displays, models and discussions with pupils it is evident pupils enjoy designing and making and eager to share what they have been asked to do. They are given a range of materials to use and are encouraged to consider their suitability. Infant pupils become competent in cutting, attaching and decorating paper and card as well as the techniques of stitching and gluing materials

together. Year 1 pupils successfully used sticky tape and glue to fasten, join and secure their model houses.

107. Older pupils use design sheets to help formulate and record their ideas and plan their work. Pupils in Year 3 worked sensibly in exploring ideas for a moving monster, developing the use of pneumatics successfully. Large (balloon) eyes gave sideways glances as pupils squeezed their plastic bottles to good effect. Apparent gaps, however, are the focused use and development of precise vocabulary and the use of ICT equipment as part of the process.
108. The subject is led satisfactorily. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work and there is a suitable range of construction kits, tools, equipment and materials to support the pupils' learning.

GEOGRAPHY

109. No lessons in geography were seen during the inspection and, as the subject alternates with history, the range of pupils' work was not consistent through the school at this stage of the school year. However, teachers' planning indicates that the subject is taught regularly and the geography topics of the National Curriculum are covered systematically. As with several other foundation subjects, the emphasis appears to be on introducing a range of experiences with little rigour in planning the progression of pupils' learning. Pupils' books indicate a good range of topic work, although some is superficial, and all pupils undertake the same tasks with varying degrees of success. Overall, the standards are broadly satisfactory at the end of the infants, although the use of geographical terminology is weak.
110. The pace of learning in the juniors is too undemanding to raise standards sufficiently and they are unsatisfactory by Year 6, despite some interesting topics. Staff need to consider how to make best use of the motivating work they plan in order to raise standards further. For example, in a Year 3 class, the pupils wrote letters while on an imaginary holiday in Florida. The presentation of their work was good, and they gave a good flavour of the type of activities they had enjoyed, or not, and included comments on food, weather and swimming. With a little extra consideration, the pupils could have extended their work to include reference to coastal location, or comparisons of weather to another location with brief data on temperature or wind scale, and so raised the geographical focus of their work.
111. The subject co-ordinator is well qualified and has made a good start on managing the subject, which has not been a school priority, by ensuring that the staff are familiar with national guidance, teach geography regularly and cover the assigned topics. This has worked well and the next stage is to focus on raising standards, which is a sound decision. An action plan is in place and provides a reasonable basis for moving the subject forward.

HISTORY

112. Standards of attainment are satisfactory through the school, with room for improvement by the older pupils. A good range of topics is studied and pupils gradually build up their knowledge of their own family history and life in ancient cultures such as that of the Vikings and Greeks, as well as knowledge of people who influenced societies in various countries such as Mary Seacole. Pupils are competent at researching information, including using ICT, and can compare similarities and

differences in the life styles of people over time. In one lesson, the oldest pupils were comparing the modern Olympic Games with those in ancient Greece. Most pupils remembered information from previous lessons in this unit of work and were able to respond well to the teacher's questions about different aspects, such as the use of technology and equipment, dress and travel. They clearly understood the implications of some of the changes over time, and were able to undertake basic research from texts to expand their knowledge and check facts. However, some pupils are working at too low a level to achieve the standards expected for their age. Despite being confident in describing the work they have undertaken recently, pupils are not confident about setting the periods they have studied previously within an overall chronology, and are uncertain about links across different periods. They clearly remember the historical characters they have been introduced to, but have only vague ideas about how these people influenced their times.

113. The work that the school now includes in planning for the subject should provide a more secure position from which to improve standards further, providing that more rigorous checks are kept on pupils' progress. For example, in an infant lesson as part of the study of the great fire of London, pupils were working at least at the level expected for their age. They knew the date, the reasons and the effects of the fire, and in a class discussion confidently compared the situation with a serious fire today. They identified the differences in the materials from which the homes were made, the community provision to fight fires, and the similarities in deaths and injury. They moved to discussing the feelings associated with such events, and empathised with those involved as well as describing how they thought they would feel themselves if caught in a similar disaster. Their creative work and writing, including poetry, was of a high quality and bodes well for the future of the subject, if the good standard of teaching in the infants can be maintained through the school.
114. The teaching is satisfactory overall, with most teachers having an interest in the subject and adequate expertise. However, in the juniors the planning of lessons and tasks is less linked to developing pupils' learning than in the infants and this makes a significant difference to the teachers' expectations for achievement. Pupils' books indicate there is considerable variability in the quality and range of work in history from year to year, with room for further improvement across all ability groups.
115. In both key stages, pupils appear to enjoy the subject, have positive attitudes and they behave very well. Their work is well presented, although in some classes worksheets are used too frequently to ensure a broad range of recording techniques are developed. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the subject, but has only recently taken on the responsibility, so leadership has been low key in recent months. Although there is work to do to improve standards further, much of the recent developments in putting the national guidance into place has provided a sound basis for improving the quality and range of pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Standards in ICT are satisfactory in Year 2 and unsatisfactory in Year 6. The teaching is at least sound and sometimes good. The older pupils have made good progress but not enough to reach the expectation for their year group because much of the progress has been in recent months.
117. The subject is taught systematically from the time pupils enter school, with an awareness of how information is collected, stored and retrieved. Role-play areas include a range of play materials linked to technology such as telephones and digital

clocks. Teaching is sound, and pupils in Year 1 are already familiar with computers and basic programmable technology and many accurately use words such as monitor, keyboard, mouse mat and cursor. Through the school, pupils' books in most subjects include examples of the use of computers, with graphs, word processing and art work being featured regularly. Control technology is the weakest aspect of the provision, although the Year 6 teacher has provided equipment to enable the pupils to write simple procedures to control lights. Class lessons introduce pupils to particular skills and these generally work well with good behaviour by pupils and keen interest in learning. For example, the Year 5 pupils made good progress when learning to give instructions to the screen turtle to move direction and distance.

118. However, the school's facilities for providing enough computers for classes to learn together are very limited. There is not enough room for a computer suite and the number of computers available is presently well below the nationally recommended levels. This limits the opportunities for pupils to access a computer frequently enough to practise and consolidate their skills. The school has plans in hand to expand the resources for the subject, which should help to improve the volume of work undertaken using ICT.
119. The management of ICT is basic at present. The co-ordinator has sound knowledge of the subject, but also holds responsibilities for mathematics and science and this limits her time for ICT. Nonetheless, the national scheme of work has been introduced and consideration is being given to improving the means of assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress. Links have also been made with the local cluster of primary schools in order to share good practice. However, the subject tends to be neglected and improvements in pupils' learning are mainly due to the enthusiasm and initiative of members of staff. This helps with pupils' progress in individual classes, but does not set a suitably brisk pace for progress through the school.

MUSIC

120. Only one lesson of music was seen during the inspection. This, together with a whole-school hymn practice, was not sufficient to give a clear picture of standards in music throughout the school. They were noted as satisfactory at the last inspection.
121. Singing in the whole-school music practice and in acts of worship, was of a good quality. Pupils sang with obvious enjoyment, in tune and with very reasonable diction. They sang "Thank you Lord" and "All the world belongs to You" listening carefully to advice given by the accompanist, in order to make improvements to their singing. Although the accompanist played a selection of music by Elton John at the start of the practice, it was not till the end that mention was made of it and then quite briefly. As pupils appear to enjoy their music, more might have been made of celebrating this very current composer, which pupils would all know.
122. In the single lesson seen, taught by the music co-ordinator, pupils had good opportunities to listen to and discuss recorded music, experiment with percussion instruments and embark on simple compositions. The lesson was well planned and well organised, so that a good array of instruments was available and all pupils were given the opportunity to present their finished compositions to the class. The teacher's good subject knowledge helped her to ask and respond well to questions, whilst her enthusiasm and very good relationships with the pupils made the lesson very enjoyable and motivated all pupils to try their hand at both playing and composing. As a result, the standard of work was in line with that expected nationally.

123. The planning for teaching music across the school is satisfactory and work in some of the pupils' exercise books suggests that they are having a range of activities, which would cover most aspects of the requirements of the National Curriculum. In addition, some pupils pay for individual instrument tuition. These pupils sometimes have opportunities to perform in front of their friends at assemblies and school concerts. The remainder of pupils get similar opportunities to sing at concerts and in productions such as "David Copperfield".
124. The co-ordinator has updated the school's music policy, audited resources and monitored colleagues' planning. She has also had some opportunities to support colleagues in improving their knowledge and understanding of the scheme of work and giving them confidence to teach it. She has yet to have opportunities to monitor teaching and learning directly in classes, neither has she had the chance to develop assessment procedures for the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Only two lessons in gymnastics were seen during the inspection in the Year R/1 and Year 1/2 classes, where the young pupils attained at least in line with national expectations. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards and teaching in other aspects of the subject or by the time pupils reach the age of 11.
126. However, scrutiny of documentation, teachers' planning, photographic evidence and discussion with pupils show that all aspects of the subject are delivered in a structured, skills based programme of activities. All pupils, including the reception children, have regular weekly sessions in the main hall, which is well equipped with a range of large apparatus. Each class follows a detailed scheme of work which safeguards continuity and progression throughout the school. The pupils also have access to a range of additional activities, including competitive team sports.
127. Teaching was of good quality in the lessons observed. On entering the hall the young pupils travelled around in a quiet, controlled way, living up to the teacher's high expectations for good behaviour. They enjoyed the "warming up" exercises, and listened carefully to instructions; this allowed the change from one activity to the next to flow smoothly. They carried out floor movements well, changing direction, pace and sequences with a good level of skill and confidence. The youngest children rose to the challenge of setting out the mats and benches well, through a level of team work that did them proud. Whilst on the apparatus they concentrated well and persevered in improving their ability to move by pulling and pushing their bodies along.
128. Pupils have a positive attitude to the subject and enjoyed describing the range of activities offered to them. The subject makes a useful contribution to the pupils' personal development, particularly their social skills, perseverance and using their initiative, and in taking responsibility for developing their skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

129. Pupils' attainment is in line with what is expected both at the end of Year 2 and at Year 6, although the latter was judged through the scrutiny of previously completed work, as no direct teaching of religious education was seen in this year group.

130. The work meets the requirements of the previous locally agreed syllabus, although as yet, the school has not checked to see if it meets the requirements of the new syllabus. Local schools will be meeting shortly to discuss this.
131. Over the very recent past, the subject has been slightly neglected, due to the very clear emphasis being placed on the development of literacy and numeracy across the school. As a result, standards are not as good as they were at the last inspection. It is to be hoped that with the arrival of a new co-ordinator and a new agreed syllabus that both will provide the subject with new impetus.
132. Pupils in Year 1 and the reception children were seen re-enacting a wedding service, having previously watched a video of a service in church. They remembered some of the items of church furniture, such as the pews, and had a sound understanding of the events and people involved in the service. They knew who was the groom, the vicar and understood the exchange of rings. Some even remembered the signing of the register.
133. In a lesson in the Year 1 and 2 class, pupils had been split into small groups in order to read and re-tell some of the stories told by Jesus. They understood who Jesus was and that stories about Him appear in the Bible. Good links had been created with ICT, as each group was required to type up their stories using the class computers. Most groups had written their stories by hand and several were in the process of typing. Whilst most pupils were actively engaged in their tasks, one or two, who had finished their typing only had colouring to do during the lesson. As a result, they were not really challenged by the work and some became bored.
134. Work in books for pupils in Year 3 showed that they had looked at the ten gurus of the Sikh faith and had good opportunities to discuss and write about the Christmas festival as it appears in a number of different countries.
135. By Year 6, although pupils had learned a good deal about different faiths, their deeper knowledge of Christianity and the Bible has not moved at the same pace. Work in their class illustrates symbols used in the Sikh faith and is further supported by writing about Guru Nanak.
136. The presentation of work in the school changes between infants and juniors. In the infant classes, work on religious education is recorded alongside work on history and geography. As a result it becomes mixed up with too many different projects and topics and so loses its impact with pupils not able to see how information builds from lesson to lesson. In the junior classes, work is recorded in a separate book so that it is easy for pupils to see their knowledge and understanding growing and their work building systematically.
137. The subject does not yet act as a good vehicle for the promotion of pupils' literacy skills. Some opportunities are missed for pupils to write in different ways about their work. No examples were seen of diaries, poetry, persuasive writing and other forms of writing using religious education as the focus.
138. The school has yet to develop assessment procedures in order to check pupils' progress in their learning.