

INSPECTION REPORT

BELVOIRDALE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Coalville

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119913

Headteacher: Ms A Pinnock

Reporting inspector: Shirley Billington
4343

Dates of inspection: 23-26 June 2003

Inspection number: 248060

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Scotlands Rd
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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Aquila

Date of previous inspection: 3 November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4343	Ms S Billington	Registered inspector	Music Foundation Stage Educational inclusion, including race equality English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The schools results and pupils achievements</i> How well are the pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
11096	Ms M Davie	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupil's attitudes, values and personal development</i> How well does the school care for it's pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
4341	Mr D Clegg	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
18596	Ms S Owen	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30144	Mr E Hastings	Team Inspector	English Geography Physical Education Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a large primary school with 304 pupils on roll. The number of boys and girls is roughly equal. There are 12 classes with between 19 and 28 children in each. The proportion of pupils that is eligible for free school meals is broadly average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups; a small number speak English as an additional language but these pupils are all fluent in English.

Twenty one per cent of pupils have special educational needs and six have statements of special educational need. This is an above average proportion. These pupils generally have learning, communication or behavioural difficulties; a few have specific physical problems.

When children start school, their levels of skills and understanding are generally below those normally found. The number of pupils that enter or leave the school each year is above that normally found.

The school is involved in several initiatives to extend parents' involvement in their children's learning and to cater for children with challenging behaviour. It gained Investors in People status in 2000.

Over the past two years there has been a high degree of staff turnover and some difficulties with recruiting permanent teachers. This situation has been resolved and the school now has an established team of teachers and support staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. Over the past two years a decline in standards has been halted. Seven year olds are now generally attaining average standards. There are indications of improvement in standards in Years 3 to 5, but these have not yet filtered through to Year 6. Teaching is generally good and this is leading to improvements in learning and helping the majority of pupils to achieve as well as they should. Leadership and management are good and focused on improving standards and the quality of education. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- ❖ Children in the reception class make good progress and achieve well
- ❖ Leadership is good and staff share a determination to improve standards
- ❖ Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good and they make good progress
- ❖ There is good provision to promote pupils' personal development
- ❖ Arrangements for pupils' care and welfare are good
- ❖ There are good strategies to encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning

What could be improved

- ❖ Pupils' skills in speaking and writing in subjects across the curriculum
- ❖ The rate of progress of higher attaining children in mathematics
- ❖ Pupils' investigative skills in science
- ❖ The amount of time for teaching subjects such as geography and history in Years 3 to 6

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 November 1997. Since then, improvement overall has been satisfactory although hindered by difficulties with staffing. Standards declined in the years following the last inspection and, although showing some improvement, are still not up to the levels that they were then.

All the weaknesses identified in the previous report have been successfully addressed:

- accommodation for pupils in Years 3 to 6 has improved
- there is guidance on planning for all subjects

- National Curriculum requirements are now met in information and communication technology (ICT) and design technology (DT)
- planning and assessment arrangements are consistent across the school
- provision for physical development for children in reception classes is now adequate

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	D	E	E
mathematics	E	E	E	E
science	C	A	E	E

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

The inspection found that overall standards are improving through the school, although the impact is not yet apparent by the end of Year 6. Challenging targets are being set for pupils' performance in national tests at the end of Year 6; these were not met in 2002. The overall trend for improvement in test results is in line with schools nationally.

The youngest children get off to a good start and are achieving expected levels in most areas of learning. The exception is in language and literacy where, despite good progress, children's skills are below expected levels.

By the age of seven, the majority of pupils are reaching average standards in reading and writing with a reasonable proportion attaining higher levels. Most pupils achieve average standards in mathematics, but higher attaining children do not reach the levels that they should. Standards in science are broadly average.

By the age of eleven standards are better than the 2002 test results would indicate, but are still below average in English, mathematics and science. Weaknesses in speaking skills and poor skills in writing limit pupils' achievement in English but also in subjects across the curriculum.

In subjects that are largely practical (art and design, DT, music and physical education), standards throughout the school are broadly average. In history and geography, standards are in line with expectations for seven year olds but below average for eleven year olds.

In ICT, pupils in Years 1 to 5 are attaining broadly average standards. Year 6 pupils have missed out on some earlier experiences and are working at below average levels. In religious education (RE) standards are average.

There has been no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls in national tests but currently there are many more boys than girls in the lower attaining groups. Pupils from minority ethnic groups generally make progress in line with their peers; some of the younger children are amongst the highest attainers in their classes.

Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their specific difficulties.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. Children in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2 have good attitudes to learning. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 are difficult to motivate and teachers have to work hard to get them involved in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils generally behave well in and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils generally form good relationships. Many pupils throughout the school eagerly take on responsibility. Some older pupils do not have good work habits and lack the ability to use their initiative or to work independently.
Attendance	Satisfactory and improved from below average levels. A few pupils have poor attendance and this affects their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good, although it varies from unsatisfactory to excellent. There are examples of good lessons in every subject and in year groups throughout the school. The most consistently good teaching is in the reception classes and this is a key factor in helping the youngest children get off to a good start. In Years 3 to 6, there is a need for a greater consistency in the quality of teaching and a raising of expectations of what pupils might achieve.

Teaching of reading is good overall and this is helping to raise standards. Teaching of mathematics is satisfactory, but there is a need to provide a greater level of challenge for higher attaining pupils to ensure that they achieve as well as they should.

In most lessons, teachers make good use of resources to involve pupils and to demonstrate new ideas. Pupils are generally well managed and clear about what they have to achieve in each lesson. Support staff are well deployed and make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.

Teaching of pupils with learning difficulties is good. They benefit from a high level of carefully targeted support and make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum is broad and covers all the areas that it should but there is a shortage of time for teaching in Years 3 to 6 This has an impact on the quality of learning in subjects such as history, geography, art and design and DT.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils get a good level of support on an individual basis and in class lessons. Their specific needs are identified and their progress is

	carefully tracked.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils are given individual support if they need it. They have full access to all that the school has to offer but teachers do not always ensure they participate fully in class lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There is very good provision to enhance pupils' social skills and a consistent approach to promoting moral values. The programme for personal, social and health education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are effective procedures to ensure pupils' safety and welfare. Assessment information is used well to identify those who may need extra support.

There are good arrangements to assess what pupils have achieved, particularly in English and mathematics. This is not yet being used to set targets for individual pupils or to ensure that they make a consistent rate of progress as they move through the school.

The school has good arrangements for informing parents about their children's learning and progress and encouraging them to support where possible.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and senior staff share a clear sense of direction and are focused on the need to improve standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are well informed, provide a good level of support for the school and are involved in making key decisions about its management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are good arrangements to check how well the school is doing but there is not enough focus on following up any weaknesses identified.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staff are well deployed and funding is used well to target areas of need.

There is a good level of teaching and support staff. Accommodation is good in many respects, but the limited space in the library and ICT suite has an impact on learning. Major spending decisions are considered carefully in terms of the effect that they will have on pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress • Behaviour is good • They are welcomed in school • Teaching is good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way the school works with them and keeps them informed • Arrangements for homework • Aspects of leadership and management

The inspection found that parents concerns are not justified. The school has got some good strategies for consulting with and involving parents and they have good opportunities to find out how their children are getting on. Homework arrangements are clear and homework is regularly set for the older pupils. The school is well led and managed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Results in national tests

1. Following the last inspection, pupils' performance in English and mathematics tests declined from broadly average to well below average levels. Over the past two years, there has been an improvement in results in reading, writing and mathematics for seven year olds so that, in the 2002 tests, performance was broadly average. Preliminary results from this year's tests show that standards in reading and writing are likely to be maintained. However, standards in mathematics are not as good as last year, because only a small number pupils have attained higher levels in the tests. Standards attained by eleven year olds have not improved overall and there is unlikely to be an improvement in this year's tests. Although there was a slight improvement in English results in 2001, pupils have not achieved as well as they should. This has been partly because of changes in the year group, but also because of problems with staffing.
2. The school has carried out a detailed analysis of pupils' performance in tests and used the information to identify areas for improvement. This is having a good impact, particularly in English, and most pupils in Years 3 to 5 are now making steady progress and achieving the sort of levels that they should.
3. Pupils' performance in tests in science have been more erratic than those in English and mathematics. Over the past three years, standards have varied from levels well above average to below average.

Inspection findings

4. The inspection found a more positive picture than the test results would indicate but there is still some work to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they should. Good teaching from a permanent team of teachers, together with strong leadership in English and mathematics, are key factors leading to improvement.
5. In the reception year, children make good progress in all areas of learning. The majority reaches expected levels at the start of Year 1 in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. Their attainment in communication, language and literacy is below expected levels, largely because, for the majority of children, speaking skills are limited and this has an impact on their progress in literacy.
6. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are making sound progress in reading and writing and attain average levels. In mathematics, higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged and do not achieve as well as they should. Average and lower attainers make sound progress but overall standards are below average. In most other subjects standards are broadly average. In religious education, standards are above expected levels.
7. In Years 3 to 6, progress is more erratic but in general, pupils are now making the sort of progress that they should. Overall standards remain below average in English and mathematics because pupils are still making up lost ground. As with the younger

pupils, higher attaining pupils are not achieving as well as they should in mathematics. Standards in science are below average because of weaknesses in pupils' skills in investigative and experimental aspects of the subject. In practical subjects such as art and design and design and technology (DT) standards are in line with expectations. In most other subjects, weaknesses in pupils' skills in writing and speaking limits what they can achieve and standards are below expectations. Standards in history and geography are also affected by the limited time available for teaching these subjects. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below expectations for pupils in Year 6 because of lack of earlier experience; in year groups lower down the school standards are in line with expectations.

The achievement of different groups

8. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from a good level of support and make good progress. Those with learning difficulties make good progress in relation to their starting points, although they are still performing at well below average levels in English and mathematics. Good provision for those with emotional and behavioural difficulties enables them to participate in all aspects of the curriculum and to make good progress.
9. Pupils with English as an additional language make progress in line with that of their peers. Some of the younger bilingual pupils are amongst the higher attainers in their classes.
10. Test results show little difference in the attainment of boys and girls compared to the national picture. Over the past three years, girls have done slightly better than boys in English and science tests at the age of eleven. However, there is a significant proportion of boys in the lower attaining groups throughout the school. The school has recognised the need to target those boys who may be under-achieving.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupil' attitudes to school are satisfactory overall and good for younger children in reception classes and Years 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs are positive about their work and this is helping them to make good progress. A significant minority of older pupils are often passive in lessons and have poorly established work habits, which means they find it difficult to get on with their tasks without a lot of extra adult support and this is having an impact on how much they are learning. Pupils throughout the school are very enthusiastic about taking part in extra-curricular activities, shown for example, by the good number who turned out for the 'green fingers' club to help get plants ready to sell at the summer fair.
12. Children in the reception classes are keen to come to school, enthusiastic and confident with school routines. This was shown particularly well when they changed sensibly for a PE lesson, aware of just how and where to store their clothes and then walked quietly over to the main building.
13. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrated excellent attitudes to learning in an art lesson because of the very helpful guidance their teacher gave them about how to tackle their tasks, regularly asking, "How could we do this?" Pupils throughout the school often demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning when they are involved in practical activities.

14. Occasionally, older pupils' attitudes to their work are unsatisfactory. This was evident in a Year 3 / 4 ICT lesson where the lack of sufficient computers in the suite meant that all pupils could not have 'hands on' experience throughout. The teacher did not take enough account of this when planning the lesson; some who were waiting their turn behaved poorly.
15. Behaviour is usually good in lessons and around the school. Despite the fact that some of the older pupils have difficulty settling to their work, they rarely misbehave or disrupt the learning of others. Pupils are generally polite, play together well on the playground and behave themselves in the dining hall. One permanent exclusion was made this year as a result of very poor behaviour.
16. Relationships are very good amongst all members of the school community. Teachers and pupils get on well and pupils appear to like working with one another. No evidence of bullying or harassment was observed during the inspection, and although this does sometimes happen, good systems are in place to deal with it effectively. Pupils take their responsibilities around the school seriously, for example helping to manage the projector and music in assembly or manning the reception during lunchtime. The school council takes its role seriously and recently raised an issue about pupils' general dissatisfaction with school lunches; as a result meals have been improved.
17. Attendance has improved in the last two years and is now broadly the same as the national average, after a period where it dipped below. Unauthorised absence has been reduced from being above the national average last year to below this year, which is a good improvement. This is as a result of regular monitoring and early involvement of parents to sort out any problems. A few pupils do, however, have poor attendance and this is having an impact on their attainment. A significant number of pupils are taken on family holidays during term time or have occasional days off without good reason, despite efforts by the school to discourage this practice. Parents make sure their children get to school on time and they are therefore making a good start to their day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. The overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, 51 per cent of lessons were good and a further 13 per cent were very good or excellent. However, there is some variation in the quality of teaching across the school. For children in the reception classes, teaching is generally good. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is good in most lessons but varies from being occasionally unsatisfactory to excellent. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is satisfactory overall but again varies from unsatisfactory in one lesson to very good. Good teaching is leading to improvements in standards and helping to ensure that pupils who have been underachieving make up lost ground. However, there is still a need to ensure a greater consistency in quality and to raise expectations of what pupils might achieve in some lessons.
19. In reception classes, teachers plan well for all areas of learning. Lessons usually have a good balance of direct teaching, group activities and opportunities for children to learn through well-organised practical activities. Basic skills are well taught, particularly in reading and number. Teachers make good use of questions and explanations to help children to extend their knowledge and skills. In a whole class reading session, for example, the teacher drew children's attention to the 'prompts' on display that reminded them what to do if they came to a word that they did not know. After reading the story with the children, she returned to the display and asked 'what

did we use?'; this reinforced their knowledge of strategies such as using clues from the pictures or letter sounds to make reasoned guesses at new words.

20. In lessons throughout the school, pupils are generally well managed. Teachers give clear instructions so that pupils know what they have to achieve. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 generally respond well and work with good concentration and effort. In other year groups, work habits are not always well established and pupils sometimes need a good deal of encouragement and some very direct instruction to get anything done. In addition, some pupils work very slowly and this, together with weaknesses in spelling and handwriting, mean that their written work is often of a poor standard. In most lessons, teachers make good use of resources to engage pupils' attention and to help their learning. Time is generally well used and lessons well structured, with introductions that give pupils an idea of what they are going to learn and review sessions used to reinforce teaching points. Support staff play a valuable role in many lessons; teachers involve them in planning and they often assess pupils' responses and understanding in whole class sessions. They provide good support for individual and groups of pupils, particularly those who have learning difficulties.
21. Teaching of English is satisfactory with some good elements and this is leading to improvements in standards, particularly in reading. Teachers make effective use of the guidance in the national literacy strategy to plan their lessons and pupils are introduced to a wide range of books and ideas to consolidate and extend their reading skills. Some good work is going on to encourage pupils to use their literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum, but there is scope to extend this further particularly in Years 3 to 6. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall but is too varied. There is some very good teaching, again with good use made of the national guidance for planning. In some lessons however, the pace of learning is too slow and pupils, particularly higher attainers, do not achieve as well as they should. In all other subjects there are examples of good teaching. Where there are weaknesses, these are generally in relation to teachers' inexperience or to external factors such as the cramped accommodation in the ICT suite.
22. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. They receive good quality support in whole class lessons and in small withdrawal groups at other times during the week. Teachers and support staff plan jointly the activities to be undertaken and work together effectively as a team. Good quality resources are used well and this ensures that pupils are interested and focused on learning. Good relationships have been established and the staff know their pupils and manage them well. Regular assessments of progress are made based upon each pupil's targets in individual education plans (IEPs).

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

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2 are good and are sound for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum meets all requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, for Years 3 to 6 teaching time is below that which is recommended and this limits the time available for subjects such as geography and history. This, combined with arrangements to teach some subjects in alternating 'blocks', has a negative impact on learning and standards.
24. The successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are making a positive impact on teaching and learning. Guidance for planning all

subjects is now in place which is an improvement since the last inspection. Some good cross-curricular links are being developed, for example through linking the teaching of literacy skills with work in geography. This is generally better established for Years 1 and 2 and there is scope to improve subject links when planning work for Years 3 to 6.

25. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all of the school's activities. No pupils are disapplied from participating in all aspects of the curriculum despite the high proportion with significant barriers to learning. The school has tried hard to provide an appropriate curriculum that will enable all groups of pupils to access work at an appropriate level and to develop good learning habits. The setting arrangements for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are successful in meeting the needs of these pupils. Regular opportunities are provided for additional support in other areas of the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs. Withdrawal arrangements are organised so that the pupils do not miss the same parts of lessons or the same subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties have every opportunity to participate in the good range of extra curricular activities.
26. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language are generally well integrated in group activities and there are good arrangements to support those who may need additional help. Just occasionally, staff lack awareness of the need to ensure that these pupils are enabled to participate fully in whole class activities and are not isolated, for example, in discussion.
27. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities which support a number of curriculum areas and help to develop personal and social skills. In addition, the curriculum is enhanced by special events and visits linked to pupils' studies. For example, Year 1 pupils visited a local farm to support some work in science. A breakfast club and homework club are open to all pupils and those who would most benefit from some individual support are actively encouraged to attend.
28. Good provision for personal and social education is a strong feature of the curriculum and puts a particular emphasis on boosting pupils' self esteem and personal expectations. The healthy schools initiative supports pupils' understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle including emotional as well as physical health. The school provides an appropriate programme for both sex education and drugs awareness.
29. Government funding has helped to support activities run with other schools which include a summer school scheme, residential visits and a sports festival held at local secondary schools. As well as building links between schools, these activities contribute to pupils' personal and social education. Learning is also enriched by visits from members of the local community. For example, as part of the Young Enterprise scheme, local business people give Year 6 pupils an insight into the business world and raise their expectations in life.
30. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with a particular strength in the provision that is made to help them learn to get along with others. However, the overall quality of provision is not as good as at the time of the last inspection when there were many strengths in this area.
31. Spiritual development is satisfactory. The school ethos continues to promote a climate in which teachers value individual pupils and promote their self-esteem and confidence. This is particularly evident in the way that contributions from pupils with special educational needs are valued. In a Year 5/6 English lesson, for example, when

a group of these pupils came up with a different way of sorting information about the Aztecs than their teacher had envisaged, she immediately responded, "Well, that's not the way I did it, but I like yours better!" In lessons, pupils are occasionally given good opportunities to appreciate the beauty of nature, for example in a Year 2 art lesson where they were working as 'mother nature designers' studying a wide range of plants. Children in reception also thought about what they value about their mums, painting her picture and writing a caption about what makes her special, for example, 'because she likes playing with me!'. Assemblies provide opportunities for collective worship and reflection.

32. Pupils' moral development is supported well by a clear moral code. Classroom and school rules help pupils to know how to behave and there is a very clear understanding amongst them of the consequences of breaking rules. The use of the 'golden time' system to encourage and reward their good behaviour is particularly successful. Pupils are very clear that, if they lose some of it because they have not been behaving as well as they should, they have the opportunity to try really hard and earn it back.
33. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to collaborate and develop social skills and this is a strength. Pupils in Year 2, 5 and 6 go on a residential visit to an activity centre, which places a strong emphasis on developing their ability to work as part of a team. A few pupils who find social interaction a bit difficult regularly work together in a small group, which encourages them to learn to share and work with others. The school council gives pupils the opportunity to have a say in how well they think the school is run. Pupils nominated as peer mediators try to keep an eye on behaviour and help to sort out small disagreements on the playground. Pupils are keen fundraisers, interested in helping those less fortunate than themselves by taking part in sponsored activities and organising bring and buy sales. They support charities such as Childline and a cancer charity based in Leicestershire. Teachers plan for pupils to work in pairs or groups in many lessons, which they usually manage well. For example, children in reception worked together really well in pairs helping each other to learn to tell the time.
34. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils celebrate their beliefs and customs in assemblies and performances, for example at Christmas and Easter. Subjects such as geography, music, art and RE help pupils to learn about how people live in other parts of the world, for example when they learn about life in Sri Lanka or are involved in an African drumming workshop. The school is aware of the need to improve this type of provision, particularly in relation to preparing pupils for life in a culturally diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. Procedures for taking care of pupils are good. The school's ethos helps to create a caring environment in which they are successfully learning to develop their social skills. Not enough is being done, however, to meet its aims of helping pupils to develop personal qualities such as independence, resourcefulness and perseverance. This is particularly evident with the older pupils and is having a detrimental impact on their attainment. Parents are very positive about their relationships with the staff and the ease with which they can discuss worries or concerns. They are also happy about the new fencing which makes the site much safer for their children.

36. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The headteacher regularly checks all of the registers and gets in touch with parents quickly or contacts the educational welfare service if there appears to be a problem. Letters are sent out to remind parents of the importance of not taking their children on holidays during term time. Registers are completed every morning and afternoon, but a small number is completed in pencil, which is not acceptable.
37. There are good strategies to manage behaviour and they are generally consistently applied. Teachers are very aware of the importance of encouraging pupils to try hard in order to raise their self-esteem and expectations, for example, by displaying posters with positive messages such as 'I can do it' and 'I have confidence in me!' Older pupils are given a good opportunity to take part in a junior citizenship activity, which places them in simulated difficult or dangerous situations for which they have to work out a solution.
38. The school pays great attention to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs are well supported, through careful planning involving all staff concerned with supporting individual children. The use of formal and informal assessments by the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and support staff ensures that pupils' specific needs are clearly identified and progress monitored. IEPs are of good quality, and provide specific targets that are small and achievable. The school has good contact with a range of professionals from external agencies who regularly visit and support their pupils.
39. Assessment systems are good and applied consistently by all teachers and in all subjects. Improved procedures to evaluate and record how well pupils are doing in reading are helping to raise their attainment. Standardised tests are beginning to provide a range of information about how well pupils are doing in relation to expectations and what they need to do to get better. This information is, however, not used well enough yet at classroom level to make sure work is clearly matched to pupils' needs. This is partly the result of staff turnover and the high proportion of inexperienced teachers that need guidance about how to interpret and use the information. A particular weakness is that data is not used well enough to make sure that each pupil is making consistent progress as she/he moves through the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. Parents are very positive about the information they get and feel welcome in school. Good, regular newsletters keep them up to date with information about school life. Parents are given good information about what their child will be learning so that they can help them if they wish. The home/school books and homework diaries are used as a good means communication to alert parents about anything they need to know. 'Home books' are used particularly well for reception children, giving detailed information about what the children have been doing in school and how parents can help them to practise their skills. Some parents take the guidance very seriously and write detailed and helpful information for the teacher about how their child has managed the task. Most parents think their child is getting the right amount of homework and the school does all it can to encourage their involvement.
41. Annual written reports give good, detailed information about how children are getting on, explaining where their strengths and weaknesses are and what they need to do to get better. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when the quality of reports was considered too variable. There are a good number of

opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress with their teacher as well as an open afternoon when they are invited to see their child's work. The governors' annual report gives interesting details about what has been happening over the past year and the prospectus gives new parents a good introduction to the school, but is missing the name of the chair of governor which is a requirement. Some of the statistical information, particularly about achievement in standardised tests is confusing because it is not clearly labelled.

42. The school goes to great lengths to ensure that parents whose children experience learning difficulties receive detailed information of targets and review meetings. Those parents who do attend greatly value the work of the school in supporting their children, and good working relationships are established. All parents receive reports of the review meetings and new targets that have been set, whether or not they have attended.
43. There is a range of good initiatives to involve parents in the school and in their children's learning. A structured programme is currently helping a small number of parents to become more familiar with how to support their children with their homework. The parents' forum gives them the opportunity to discuss any worries with a parent class representative, who will then discuss their concerns with the headteacher to try to sort them out. Parents of pupils entering Year 3 are interviewed to try to keep up the good contacts established with them from the reception year through to Year 2, as the school recognises that contact often drops off at this stage. Parents' views about the school are canvassed. The results of questionnaires are analysed and reported back so parents are fully informed about the outcomes and any action to be taken as a result. One of the suggestions they made to which the school has responded positively is the provision of more after school clubs. The school is well supported by the Friends and Families association, which puts on two major fairs, at Christmas and in the summer, to help raise extra funds to spend on resources for pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The school is effectively led and managed. The head teacher provides a clear sense of direction and purpose. Working closely with the senior managers, she has maintained a steady focus on the key areas that need improvements. In the last two years, the rate of improvement has been slowed because of significant problems in recruiting suitably qualified permanent teachers. This situation has now been resolved and the rate of improvement is picking up due to more stable staffing.
45. The school makes good use of assessment data about how well pupils are doing to prioritise those areas that need the most urgent attention. This has resulted in the sustained attention on raising standards in literacy and numeracy for eleven year olds. Using the performance data, groups of pupils who may need extra support are identified. There is also plenty of checking up on the quality of teaching through watching lessons and by looking at the work that pupils produce. Whilst this is having some impact on raising standards, it lacks rigour in following up specific weaknesses and making sure that these are addressed.
46. The management of subjects is generally satisfactory and plays some part in how the school moves forward. However, there is some variation in the quality of management due largely, but not exclusively, to the relative inexperience of several managers. The senior managers are fully aware of the need to support and develop management skills in all teachers.

47. The governing body works hard and provides the school with a good level of support. Governors play an appropriate role in shaping the direction of the school, being, for instance, fully behind the current drive to raise standards. Overall, the governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively, although there are some minor items missing from publications.
48. Governors have allocated additional funding to ensure that there is an adequate number of staff to support pupils with special educational needs. The head teacher assists the co-ordinator (SENCO) in the day-to-day management and deployment of support staff and has regular contact with outside agencies to ensure that appropriate advice and support is provided and acted upon. All pupils with learning difficulties get a good deal in this school because of good management and the good support provided.
49. Financial procedures are secure and the use of extra funding is carefully targeted at the key areas for improvement. The governors give consideration to achieving best value when making decisions about expenditure, for instance, regularly consulting with parents to ascertain their level of satisfaction, but they do not make comparisons with how similar schools allocate their budgets.
50. The accommodation is generally suitable and there is enough qualified staff to teach the curriculum. The school has enough resources overall although the ICT suite and the library are too small and this imposes some limits on what pupils achieve. Some of the older pupils are accommodated in mobile classrooms that are in a poor state of repair; the recent erection of a pillar in the centre of one room is creating some difficulties in organising teaching and learning in that class.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards, governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- (1) Improve pupils' skills in speaking and writing by:
- putting in place a structured programme for extending speaking skills in all subjects
 - improving skills in spelling and handwriting
 - extending opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across the curriculum
- (paragraphs 5,7,61,63)
- (2) Ensure that higher attaining pupils achieve as well as they should in mathematics by:
- raising expectations of what pupils might achieve
 - using assessment information to plan appropriate activities and to check that pupils are making the progress that they should
 - setting targets for the achievement of individual pupils
- (paragraphs 6,7,66,67)
- (3) Improve pupils' skills in the investigative aspects of science by:
- providing more opportunities for pupils to plan and set up experiments and record the outcomes
 - systematically tracking the acquisition of pupils' skills in this area
- (paragraphs 7,71,72,74)
- (4) Ensure that the curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is appropriately balanced by

- increasing teaching time to the recommended levels
- linking subjects to enable pupils to develop their skills in learning across the curriculum
- increasing the frequency with which subjects such as history and geography are taught
(paragraphs 23,24,83,87)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	31	19	3	0	0
Percentage	2	11	51	31	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	304
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	64

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	26	16	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	25
	Girls	13	16	15
	Total	34	39	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (80)	93 (87)	95 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	25
	Girls	16	14	16
	Total	39	38	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (76)	90 (96)	98 (80)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	24	20	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	20
	Girls	12	10	14
	Total	27	26	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (63)	59 (49)	77 (84)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	n/a	15	20
	Girls	n/a	10	15
	Total	n/a	25	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	n/a	57 (44)	80 (60)
	National	n/a	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	263	1	1
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	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	1	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	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.06
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22:1
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR] – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	314

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8.8

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)	0.1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-3
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	£
Total income	704837
Total expenditure	713155
Expenditure per pupil	2242.63
Balance brought forward from previous year	34784
Balance carried forward to next year	26466

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	318
Number of questionnaires returned	101

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	37	6	3	1
My child is making good progress in school.	44	48	6	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	53	7	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	52	12	5	3
The teaching is good.	47	46	2	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	42	12	6	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	25	7	5	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	32	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	31	41	15	7	7
The school is well led and managed.	30	47	13	7	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	45	5	3	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	41	13	5	11

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

Personal, social and emotional development

51. Children make good progress as a result of good teaching. All staff provide positive role models, treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. The children respond well to clear systems and routines. Almost all have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to try out new experiences and to contribute their ideas to discussions. They successfully learn to work as part of a group, amicably taking turns and sharing equipment. Small groups sometimes collaborate well, for example, when taking on roles in the 'café'. However, many children still prefer to play alongside rather than with others. Children show a growing understanding of the impact of their actions on others and will, for instance, spontaneously apologise if they accidentally hurt someone else. A good range of experiences, such as making divas for Diwali and celebrating Chinese New Year, helps the children to begin to appreciate a range of cultures and beliefs.

Communication, language and literacy

52. Teaching of this area is good and children make good progress overall, particularly in their early reading skills. There are good opportunities for children to develop their skills in speaking and listening in whole class and small group discussions and through a range of practical experiences. Listening skills are good and the majority of children show good understanding as they follow an adult's instructions or respond to questions. For many, however, responses are limited to short phrases or simple sentences and only a small number of children use a good range of vocabulary and speak confidently and clearly.

53. Literacy skills are promoted well through sharing stories, group reading sessions and good opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. A strong emphasis is placed on teaching commonly used words and letter sounds and encouraging children to use what they know to work out new words as they read. Children make very good progress in learning to read a range of simple books independently; many show a high level of interest in reading and an appreciation of the storyline. Higher attaining children read with expression and are beginning to show understanding of a range of punctuation such as question marks and exclamation marks. The majority of children are keen to write and, for example, make a long list of 'orders' in the café and write messages on postcards and captions for their pictures. Most still need a good deal of adult support to write a simple sentence; higher attaining children write two or three sentences independently.

Mathematical development

54. Teaching of this area is good and in some aspects very good. Staff make good use of incidental opportunities to raise children's awareness of number, for example, by looking at the figures on a clock face and finding matching digits and counting the number of children working in an area to see if there's room for one more. Most children are confident in counting and matching numbers to 20 and a few are very confident beyond this. Well organised activities help children to understand the relationship and pattern of number. In a short session in one class, all children were involved in setting out large tiles with numbers 1 to 30 in rows of 10. The teacher used

the display well to introduce the idea of numbers bigger or smaller than, for example, five, and to encourage awareness of number order by changing tiles around and asking the children to put them back in the correct order. Most children show an understanding of addition and subtraction in practical activities. They know the names of common two dimensional shapes and are beginning to use terms such as 'longer' and 'shorter' to compare two objects.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

55. Teaching is good, particularly in the early aspects of science and ICT. Children are encouraged to appreciate features and changes in the environment and to understand what plants need to help them to grow. Following a discussion of the life cycle of the butterfly, a teacher made good use of small models to reinforce the sequence of the caterpillar's development and reinforced key vocabulary to describe the stages of change. Children were delighted to show the simple books that they were making and to use terms such as 'cocoon' to explain what happened to the caterpillar. Children learn about growth and change through thinking about a baby's needs.
56. Regular use of the computer suite and access to computers in the classrooms ensures that children's skills in ICT progress to a good level. Most open up programs with minimal support and use the mouse well to give commands and change images.

Physical development

57. Teaching is good. Regular access to small play equipment and timetabled sessions in the hall provides children with a good range of experiences. The majority moves with confidence and control, showing awareness of space and of each other. In practising for sports day, the children followed the teacher's instructions well and patiently waited in their 'team' lines for their turn. Several threw a beanbag with some force, using under or over arm actions and most could hop a short distance in a straight line. Skills in using pencils, crayons and scissors develop well and many children show good control in drawing and cutting out shapes.

Creative development

58. Teaching is satisfactory and good in some aspects. In art activities, children learn to use a variety of materials to good effect, for example in making collages, printing and painting. There is limited opportunity, however, for children to make independent choices about how to represent their ideas and observations and to experiment independently with a range of media. Provision for music is good; children know the right techniques for playing a variety of percussion instruments; they can follow the teacher's directions and change pitch and duration as they play. Children are introduced to a variety of music and encouraged to express responses to what they hear. Role play areas, such as the garden centre, and opportunities to create a farm or a railway track extend children's imagination and creativity.

ENGLISH

59. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average in reading and writing, and reflect the improvements made in attainment over the last two years. Pupils make sound

progress overall, but better progress is made by the higher attaining pupils. At the end of Year 6 standards are below average but pupils are making satisfactory progress overall when taking their low starting point into consideration. Throughout the school pupils achieve better in reading than they do in writing. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good, because of the good quality support they receive and the good provision made for them. Although the school is working hard to raise standards, many pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not yet working at the level of which they are capable.

60. The school has adopted the national literacy strategy since the time of the previous inspection, and this has become embedded securely in daily lessons. Planning now follows a consistent format across the school. Target setting is another recent development that is supporting the effectiveness of teaching and learning, but has not yet had sufficient time to have a positive effect upon standards. Further support for the lower attaining pupils is provided through additional strategies and these are helping to improve their levels of achievement. Opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills, especially writing, in other areas of the curriculum are being developed but there is scope to extend this further, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
61. Pupils do not have well developed speaking and listening skills and standards across the school are below average. Many pupils have a limited vocabulary, and often use rather colloquial and ungrammatical English. The school has identified speaking and listening as an area for development and is extending opportunities in lessons for pupils to become engaged in conversation and discussion, in pairs, small groups and whole class activities. In some lessons, pupils' confidence and skills are extended through being required to answer questions using complete sentences. For example, in a good Year 2 lesson, pupils were producing a report on a residential trip that included a visit to the sawmills. They discussed their thoughts with their neighbours about whether the text they were studying was fiction or non-fiction. The teacher used questions effectively to guide their thinking. One pupil replied, 'It's non-fiction because the picture tells us what the people are doing'. In a Year 6 lesson pupils analysed and evaluated a selection of insect poems in groups and discussed their ideas sensibly. They found it difficult to offer much in the way of evaluation, but picked out words with which they were not familiar, including 'metamorphosis' and 'iridescent'. The teacher provided helpful meanings within the context of the poems to improve pupils' weak understanding of vocabulary.
62. Standards in reading are average by the age of seven but below average by the age of eleven. Pupils show an interest in reading and have many opportunities to read in school, to an adult, independently and in guided reading sessions; they are also encouraged to read at home. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils read confidently and with fluency and expression, but their choice of books does not always extend their reading widely enough or develop their comprehension skills. Reading diaries are particularly effective in creating a partnership with parents to support their children's reading at home and this is particularly helpful in Years 1 and 2. A number of the older pupils belong to the public library and they talk enthusiastically about books they have read and their favourite authors. Most tend to prefer works of fiction, but are familiar with the use of the classified system in the school library and are able to find information for themselves when engaged in their own research on topics in history and religious education.
63. There has been sound improvement in the writing skills of seven year olds and the higher attaining pupils make good progress. They write interesting stories and make good use of a range of connectives to extend their sentences, for example in writing

descriptions. In Year 2, pupils are given opportunities to write for a range of purposes, including stories in familiar settings, poems and instructional and report writing. Pupils have written imaginative and creative stories based upon the Roger Hargreaves' characters, and stories about animals in Africa. Pupils work hard to produce neat and careful handwriting and to form their letters correctly, although these are not always joined. Standards in writing by Year 6 are below average although there is evidence of some improvement. Pupils are given a wide range of writing opportunities, and their written work contains some interesting ideas and shows that they are beginning to use words for effect. For example, a Year 5 pupil wrote an imaginative account in the first person 'As his giant hands scooped down towards me I felt as though I was a wiggly worm and he was a bird soaring down to eat me whole'. Other written work includes character sketches, newspaper articles, biographical writing and expressing a viewpoint. Pupils produce some interesting ideas, but the overall effectiveness is restricted by their limited vocabulary. They do not write extended pieces and have few opportunities to word process their work. Presentation skills are a weakness and writing often contains grammatical errors. Handwriting is not well formed and is often untidy. Pupils are not secure in either their knowledge of regular words or the patterns of letters used in spelling, but spell in a phonetically plausible way, for example, 'frens' for friends.

64. Teaching is satisfactory overall and some elements are good, particularly the teaching of reading. The strongest teaching is in Years 1 and 2 where basic skills are taught effectively and teachers have high expectations of pupils' capabilities. Throughout the school, teachers have established good relationships with their pupils and, consequently, there is good management during lessons. Learning support staff and teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning especially those with special educational needs. Resources are well prepared and used effectively to support teaching and learning and ensure that pupils are interested and are motivated to take part in lessons. The recent introduction of targets is helping to focus on the next steps in pupils' learning. Questions and review sessions are used effectively to assess the level of pupils' learning in lessons and what needs to be given further attention. Teachers mark work regularly and the best practice identifies clearly how pupils can improve and make further progress. The additional time given to the teaching of literacy skills is used well and this is helping to improve pupil progress.

65. Leadership and management of English are very good. The co-ordinator has made a significant impact in the development of literacy during a comparatively short time in post because of her own high level of expertise. She shares good practice with her colleagues through in-service training and monitors planning and pupils' work. Work is going on to develop greater focus on the use of literacy skills across the curriculum and target setting for all year groups. Senior staff gain an overview of standards through analysis of assessment data. The school has rightly identified the areas of speaking and listening, writing skills and the use of ICT as areas for further development. There is still much to be done if standards are to be raised, but with strong leadership, there is good capacity for further improvement.

MATHEMATICS

66. Standards in mathematics are below average overall, mainly because higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged and therefore do not have the opportunity to reach the levels they should. However, lower attaining pupils are achieving well as the result of good teaching and effective support given by classroom assistants.

67. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have an understanding of addition and subtraction, double and halve numbers up to 20 and recognise simple sequences such as odd and even numbers. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have some understanding of place value, are secure in basic addition and subtraction and know how to multiply a two digit number by a single digit number. However, the majority do not have quick recall of number facts and operations; only higher attaining pupils successfully multiply by two digit numbers or have rapid recall of multiplication facts. Pupils are less sure about division. At times, higher attaining pupils throughout the school spend too long on work they can already do at the expense of moving on. This means they do not have the opportunity to attain at higher levels.
68. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but varies between very good and unsatisfactory. In the more successful lessons pupils are actively engaged in their work and resources, including ICT, are effectively used to support learning. Teaching in these lessons is stimulating, well pitched and holds pupils' attention. In a very good lesson, Year 5 pupils had the opportunity to develop their problem solving skills through collaboration and discussion. This was particularly effective in moving their thinking forward so they were able to spot patterns and relationships within the numbers. However, in some lessons opportunities are missed for pupils to share their thinking. Occasionally, when the class is working together, teachers rely too much on pupils responding individually to questions without using more methods that will involve them all. When this happens, too many do not have the chance to answer and consequently sit passively or become less involved with the work.
69. Some good questioning by teachers and assistants successfully builds pupils' understanding step by step. Lower attaining pupils and some average attainers benefit from this. In a very good lesson on symmetry with a set of lower attainers, the teacher used this approach, constantly reinforcing the main learning points and related vocabulary which kept pupils focused.
70. The subject is ably led and managed by a focused and determined co-ordinator. Guidance from the national numeracy strategy is used well to support planning and teaching. The school has successfully built on support given by the local education authority. Much work has been carried out based on a detailed analysis of data to identify what needs to be done to further raise standards. Monitoring has been carried out through observations and scrutiny of planning and the co-ordinator recognises that this needs to be more systematic and clearly focused. Procedures are in place to use information gathered from monitoring to inform teaching but the impact is only just beginning to raise attainment.

SCIENCE

71. Since the last inspection standards in science have declined although there is now indications that they are beginning to improve again. However, the current group of eleven year olds are not achieving as much as they should because they are not have not been given enough opportunity to practise and use their science skills. Lessons have concentrated too much on learning facts and not enough on how to do experiments and investigations.

72. As pupils move through the school, the progress they make is erratic because of a variation in the quality of the teaching. Overall teaching is satisfactory and some is good. In some lessons there is too much filling in worksheets at the expense of thinking scientifically. This inhibits the development of key skills such as accurately describing, predicting and drawing conclusions about what pupils have seen happen.
73. Year 2 pupils are reaching average standards. They have a sound grasp of the aspects of science they have studied. They are aware, for instance, of their five senses and enjoyed talking about the tests they had used to identify different substances through tasting and smelling. They have a growing understanding of how to make tests fair. The experiments about what seeds need to grow was very helpful in encouraging them to think about how they could make sure that the tests were fair. However, only the higher attaining pupils could give a convincing explanation of what they had done. Overall, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are benefiting from some good teaching that is ensuring that lessons are very practical; pupils are being encouraged to record their own results without always using a worksheet.
74. In some lessons in Years 3 to 6, there are also some good practical opportunities to experiment and investigate. This was evident in lessons with Year 5 who had investigated a range of electrical circuits; Year 6 pupils were designing and making their own switches and successfully testing them. Younger pupils in Year 4 enjoyed investigating what happens to different solids when put into water. They were very committed to making the investigation fair, ensuring that the amounts of water remained the same and that the same person stirred the water for the same number of times. Lessons such as these result in some good learning. The standards currently being attained by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are nearer to what is expected than those attained by pupils in Year 6. However, much of the work in pupils' books indicates that they do not have sustained opportunities to use and refine their skills in testing and drawing conclusions from the outcomes.
75. In discussion, Year 6 pupils struggled to talk convincingly about how to conduct simple experiments and needed considerable prompting to remember much of what they had been taught. Only the higher attaining pupils could explain clearly terms such as *evaporation* and *condensation*. In general, pupils were more confident talking about recent lessons about food chains and how animals adapted themselves to their environment.
76. The subject has been managed satisfactorily on a temporary basis for the last year. Some checking of what pupils are learning has been undertaken and there is an understanding about what the school needs to do to improve.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

77. Only three lessons were seen in art and design and two for DT. However, these lessons together with scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils indicates that standards in both subjects are just in line with national expectations in Year 6. In Year 2, standards are good. This is an improvement on the last inspection when attainment was below expected levels in both subjects.
78. By the age of eleven pupils have gained a satisfactory knowledge of tools and techniques used in both subjects. In DT they know about the processes and materials used to make musical instruments and in art they have learnt to use different

techniques and media to create effects such as shading. However, pupils find it difficult to talk about the work of famous artists or to express appreciation of their paintings. Year 2 pupils talk about colour, texture and pattern in the context of both subjects. They explain the process of designing and making, referring to DT work on display and are beginning to evaluate what they might do differently.

79. The quality of teaching in both subjects is good overall and in one Year 2 art lesson it was excellent. Lessons are well planned and prepared and explanations and demonstrations are clear. The best lesson was marked by a calm, productive atmosphere, ensuring that all pupils were engaged and absorbed in their work; they were taking pride in their results. These pupils were constantly challenged to think for themselves and helped to express their views through the high quality questioning. Teachers use praise and encouragement effectively but do not always put sufficient emphasis on evaluation and planning for improvements; opportunities are missed for pupils to talk about and evaluate their own work and that of others.
80. Structured planning for both subjects is in place and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Although the arrangement for teaching the subjects alternately each half term allows for more extended lessons, there is not always enough time for this to impact on pupils' understanding. This means some pupils have sketchy recall of earlier units of work in each subject and are not always clear between the two. DT is used well to support work in other subjects. In Years 1 and 2, DT is successfully linked with RE in work on 'Joseph's Coat'. Year 3 and 4 pupils drew on work covered in science on nutrition to design a healthy sandwich snack. There is limited use of ICT to support learning in the subject.
81. The curriculum is enriched with extra activities such as art clubs and art weeks. A successful six week art project using recycled materials was led by a member of a community arts group and ended with an exhibition which was open to parents.
82. An enthusiastic co-ordinator has taken responsibility for the two subjects within the last year and appropriate action plans are in place. Although some work sampling has been carried out, there is a lack of rigour in ensuring progression and consistency in learning to promote higher standards in Years 3 to 6.

GEOGRAPHY

83. The amount of time given to the teaching of geography is limited and consequently pupils lack the opportunity to systematically acquire skills, knowledge and understanding from Years 3 to 6. This is a different picture from the time of the last inspection when attainment at the end of Year 6 was judged to be in line with national expectations. However, average standards have been maintained in Years 1 and 2 where pupils are given greater opportunities and make appropriate gains in their learning.
84. Although only two lessons were observed during the inspection, pupils' work shows that there has been only limited coverage of the curriculum. It is better for Years 1 and 2 where pupils are developing their knowledge of places through tracking the locations of the travels of Barnaby Bear at home and abroad. Their knowledge of their own locality is developing and they write about where they can go and how they will get there. They are familiar with maps of the United Kingdom and know how to use a key. They learn about the countries of origin of items of food they eat and are able to locate where they come from on a map of the world. Teaching is imaginative and links

pupils' learning to their own experiences. For example, they look at recipes and examine them to find the ingredients countries of origin, for example, chillies from Mexico.

85. By the end of Year 6 standards are below average. Teaching is generally unsatisfactory and teachers do not have high enough expectations. Work is poorly presented, handwriting is untidy and poorly formed, and spelling is often inaccurate. The use of worksheets requires little of pupils and present little in the way of challenge to extend and develop their learning. As a result, neither geographical nor literacy skills are promoted well. Some use is made of pupils' mathematical knowledge when they produce bar charts of temperatures in various mountain environments. Use is also made of ICT, for example, to gather information on the topic of Chembakoli.
86. The co-ordinator is aware through her monitoring of pupils' work that insufficient time is given to the teaching of geography and that pupils are making insufficient progress as a result. She knows that improvements have to be made and she is already planning the next steps in that direction.

HISTORY

87. Only a limited amount of work was available during the inspection. There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about the overall quality of teaching. The work in pupils' books was of mixed quality and overall much of it was rather superficial, particularly for the older pupils. Weaknesses in pupils' skills in writing have an impact on the standard of recorded work in history. Too often, the recording of work in history is confined to completing a worksheet so pupils do not get the opportunity to improve their writing through the subject.
88. Pupils in Year 2 are attaining broadly expected standards. They have a growing understanding of how things change over time. Through displays of interesting objects, such as toys, pupils see how everyday objects develop over a period. Pupils write about the comparisons they have made although, overall, not enough use is made of history to extend their writing skills. They are sensibly encouraged to get a view of the past by talking to their own parents about what they experienced as children. This activity was used to explore the differences between visits to the seaside today and in the past. There is, however, little work about major historical events or characters.
89. History skills are not sufficiently developed as pupils move through the school, despite some very good teaching. Year 6 struggle to talk about the historical periods that they have studied. For instance, when they talked about the reasons that Henry VIII is famous, they struggled to get beyond the number of wives he had. Only the higher attaining pupils could recall important events such as the break with Rome. They had no real knowledge of other aspects of Tudor England.
90. Only one lesson was seen and this was very good. Year 5 and 6 pupils were given a wonderful experience as they enacted an archaeological excavation, carefully recording what they found and taking great care to 'plot' their finds. This lesson, as part of a series encouraging lower attaining pupils to improve their writing, was very successful in developing key historical skills and understanding at an appropriate level.

91. The subject is satisfactorily managed. The use of national guidance is helpful and visits and visitors enliven the curriculum. There is not enough monitoring of pupils' work and this is perpetuating the often superficial nature of the activities that they undertake.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

92. There has been a significant improvement in this subject since the last inspection. Throughout the school, the majority of pupils are now attaining standards that are in line with those expected. However, Year 6 pupils have had more limited opportunities to use computers than those lower down the school and have some gaps in their knowledge and skills. The main reasons for the improvements are better teaching and better facilities, although the latter needs further development. The ICT suite is too small and cramped and becomes far too hot during lessons. This makes a difference to how much pupils benefit from the teaching.
93. Year 2 pupils are comfortable logging off and on, saving and printing their work. They use ICT to research information and to help them with other subjects such as geography. They extend literacy skills by writing messages to Santa Claus and using a range of fonts. However, they do not have much understanding about the wider applications of technology such as its use for videos and other everyday situations. Some good teaching resulted in pupils extending their numeracy skills through ICT. Year 2 pupils learned to provide clear instructions to make a robot move through a series of actions to 'burst the balloons'. They got a real sense of achievement and success as they became more proficient and, despite some technical problems, by the end of the lesson they were confidently creating short sets of instructions.
94. Overall, Year 6 pupils have a sound grasp of using word processing and are familiar with how ICT is used to handle information. However, they are less familiar with using ICT to control movements and actions and sensing changes, for instance in temperature or humidity.
95. Some good specialist teaching of the oldest pupils is helping them to make up lost ground. A lesson in which pupils created a multi-media presentation, bringing together text, pictures and sounds, was well taught. A sharp introduction backed up with a clear demonstration ensured that pupils rapidly understood what they needed to do. Unfortunately, the cramped conditions in the suite, which resulted in some pupils standing in front of computers, together with high temperature and humidity, made it very difficult to maintain a high level of concentration. These conditions also contribute to less successful teaching. In some lessons, pupils struggle to keep focused and those who have to stand become distracted; this hinders the progress that they make.
96. The subject benefits from being well managed. Resource provision, despite significant restrictions, represents an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are now taught the full range of ICT and they are increasingly using the technology to learn in other subjects. The planned extension of the ICT suite is, however, much needed. Teachers are confident about teaching the subject. They have benefited from recent training and some new teachers are particularly proficient: they are used for some specialist teaching in Years 5 and 6 which is a good use of their expertise.

MUSIC

97. Only two lessons were seen but these, together with discussions with the co-ordinator, scrutiny of planning and assessments of pupils' skills, indicate that standards are broadly in line with expectations. Standards have not been maintained at the level they were found to be in the last inspection and provision for music is more limited. However, recent improvements to planning and resources are ensuring that pupils have a broad range of experiences in all aspects of the subject.
98. Year 1 and 2 pupils explore pitch, pulse and rhythm as they learn to use a range of percussion instruments. Some good links are made with work in other subjects as, for example, they compose work to accompany the story of Goldilocks and learn Viking songs to support work in history. Year 3 and 4 pupils explore the potential for music to convey mood and use a range of instruments to represent their ideas. Year 5 and 6 pupils learn to sing with attention to dynamics and phrasing. Study of a range of music successfully encourages them to appreciate the part played by different types of instruments and the structure of the piece in creating an overall effect. In a lesson with Year 5 and 6, some pupils made thoughtful suggestions in identifying the images created by diverse pieces including 'On a sleepy lagoon' and Kenyan dance music. A minority gave good explanations of terms such as 'dynamics' and 'texture' but none used this sort of technical vocabulary when describing the music to which they were listening.
99. No instrumental tuition is provided but all pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the opportunity to join the choir. The curriculum is enhanced by visiting musicians such as brass players and an African drummer. Older pupils join other local schools to participate in events at the De Montfort Hall in Leicester, most recently to perform the Pied Piper of Hamelin. These types of opportunities make a good contribution to provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

100. The school has maintained the sound standards found at the time of the last inspection. The national guidelines have been adopted as a basis for ensuring that all aspects of the subject are taught. A good range of extra curricular sporting activities extend pupils' experiences and contribute to the standards achieved. A significant contribution is made by the teaching staff, parents, outside agencies and professional sporting clubs to encourage participation and achievement in a number of different sports and activities. The school also engages successfully in competitive games and sports. There is adequate provision made for swimming, but less than half the pupils achieve the expected standard by the end of Year 6.
101. Pupils in Year 1 worked enthusiastically in a games lesson, learning how to hold a hockey stick correctly and to pass a ball to their partner. They enjoyed the activity and worked hard despite difficulty controlling the ball. As they continued to practise their confidence grew, their performance started to improve and they made progress. They began to pass the ball with greater accuracy. The majority of Year 2 pupils achieve the level expected for their age in the acquisition and development of skills.
102. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in athletics because of the good quality of the teaching. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' performance and consequently get good results. Lessons are planned in great detail and this ensures pupils get the best out of the time spent in practising skills and developing their knowledge and understanding. Pupils work hard, show good application and

demonstrate good team spirit through supporting one another. Good coaching ensures that pupils develop the correct technique in the positioning of arms and legs when running and learn to adapt their pace appropriately. By Year 6, pupils develop good problem solving skills and work together as a team to ensure successful achievement of their task. Good relationships between pupils ensure that their teamwork is successful because it is built upon trust and co-operation and the support they give to their team leader. Teachers manage pupils well and use them effectively to demonstrate the importance of working together. As a result, pupils learn well and reach the required standard for their age.

103. An appropriate amount of time is given to the teaching of PE, but on occasions in Years 1 and 2, the time allocated for outdoor activities is shortened because it overlaps with the afternoon playtime. This limits opportunities for pupils to extend their skills further.
104. An enthusiastic subject leader is well informed about standards of teaching and learning through her monitoring activities. She gives a good lead in organising extra-curricular activities and extending provision for a variety of sporting opportunities for pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

105. Discussions with pupils, work seen and lessons observed indicates standards are in line with expectations with some good features in Years 1 and 2. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school compare the principle features of Islam and Christianity. Year 2 pupils know about the different places of worship and have an awareness of the importance of certain rituals and ceremonies. Year 6 pupils are aware of the contribution made to society by people such as Ghandi and Florence Nightingale and have produced individual booklets about their lives as part of their work on 'Healing People'.
106. Indications are that the overall quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. In the two lessons observed, teaching varied from satisfactory to good. In the better lesson, good use was made of resources and artefacts to engage pupils and develop their understanding. Good relationships and focused discussions helped pupils to develop an understanding of the importance of certain rituals within the Muslim faith. Teaching was less effective in a lesson where the pace was too slow and pupils began to lose interest. Visits and visitors enhance the curriculum, for example, a story teller comes each year to tell a story related to the religion being studied at the time. These are positively received by pupils and help to develop their awareness of difference faiths.
107. The subject is led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator. There is helpful guidance on planning to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Themes link with aspects of personal and social development as well as different religions; these help pupils to recognise and come to terms with their own feelings. Planning is scrutinised to ensure continuity in learning as well as subject coverage. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

