

INSPECTION REPORT

DESFORD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Desford, Leicester

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119921

Headteacher: Mr R King

Reporting inspector: Mr M Newell
10638

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th May 2003

Inspection number: 248063

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

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Kirkby Road
Desford
Leicester

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs R Camamile

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10638	Mr M Newell	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Science Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19365	Mr G Stockley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27568	Mrs C Davidson	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	
18027	Mrs S Mawer	Team inspector	Foundation Stage History Music	How well does the school care for its pupils?
29688	Mr M Brammer	Team inspector	Educational inclusion English Religious education Geography	How good are the curricular and other learning opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the village of Desford about 6 miles from Leicester. The majority of pupils live close to the school with a minority living in outlying small villages. The school currently has 220 pupils on roll, with 119 boys and 101 girls. The school does not have nursery provision and there are two intakes of children in September and then in January. There is a relatively high level of pupil mobility with 23 pupils entering or leaving the school during the last 12 months at other than the usual times. Most pupils are of white ethnic origin and there are no pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue. A small number of travellers' children attend the school. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals stands at approximately 4% and this is below the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average with the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need being above the national average. Assessment data shows that attainment levels of children soon after they start school cover the full ability range and are at an average level overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some very good features. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher. Much good and at times very good teaching is in evidence which helps to ensure that pupils achieve well by the time that they leave school. The school is successful in promoting a good range of learning opportunities for all pupils. Very good procedures are in place for assessing, tracking and nurturing pupils' personal as well as their academic progress. Parents are very supportive and appreciative of all that the school has to offer. Taking all factors into account, the school is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology and physical education by the time that they leave school.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and at times very good for children and pupils in the Foundation Stage, Year 3 to Year 6 and for some Year 2 pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are good.
- The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is very good with the school providing a good range of learning opportunities outside of the formal curriculum for all pupils.
- The school is a very caring and supportive school with very good procedures in place for assessing and tracking pupils' personal as well as their academic progress.
- The school has established a very strong and effective partnership with parents and provides parents with very good quality information.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. He is supported most ably by the deputy headteacher and an effective senior management team and Governing Body.

What could be improved

- The responsibility and initiative that pupils take for their own learning.
- The role that curriculum co-ordinators play in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- The quality of the marking of pupils' work.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the time of the last inspection in 1998. Following on from the inspection, the school set about tackling the identified issues in a rigorous manner. As a result, standards and curriculum provision have improved in information and communication technology and geography. The provision that the school makes for pupils with special educational needs has improved to such an extent that it is now a strength of the school. The school reviewed the length of the taught day for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 and this is now in line with nationally recommended time guidance. The school has improved procedures to monitor teaching and learning but recognises that there is scope for further improvement. In terms of the wider picture, the quality of teaching has improved and many of the strengths identified at the last inspection have been maintained and in some instances built upon. Evidence indicates that this is a school that is well placed to continue to develop and improve.

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

The above table shows that on the basis of the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, attainment was well above the national average in science and above the national average in English and mathematics. When compared to similar schools attainment is above average in science and below average in English and mathematics. However, when comparisons are made with pupils' prior attainment at the end of Year 2, attainment is well above average, clearly indicating that pupils have made good progress. Inspection findings show that attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average by the end of Year 6. All pupils including those with special education needs, make good progress and achieve well. Much of this is due to the good and at times very good teaching. The school sets challenging targets in literacy and numeracy and the school's trend of improvement over time is similar to the national trend. There is no significant difference in attainment or achievement of boys and girls and any differences in results by gender, or differences between test results and inspection findings can be explained by the differences in natural ability of the different groups of pupils.

Standards by the end of Year 6 are above the nationally expected level in art and design, design and technology and physical education. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. In all other subjects attainment is in line with national expectations and all pupils make satisfactory progress. There are subjects such as information and communication technology and music where elements of the subjects are above national expectations.

The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils show attainment to be above the national average in mathematics, average in science, below the national average in writing and well below average in reading. When compared to similar schools, attainment is average in mathematics and well below average in reading and writing.

Inspection findings show that standards in English, mathematics and science are at an average level. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress overall in English and mathematics, although it is good for some Year 2 pupils because of the good and at times very good teaching. All pupils make good progress and achieve well in science. Standards in art and design and design and technology are currently above the nationally expected level and all pupils are making good progress. Attainment in all other subjects is in line with national expectations with progress being satisfactory overall.

When children start school, assessment data shows children’s attainment covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall although it is at a weaker level in communication and language skills and in children’s knowledge and understanding of the world. There is a polarisation of attainment with the September intake of children showing a higher level of attainment than the group of children that start later in the academic year. Evidence clearly indicates that children of the earlier intake benefit far more because of the greater time that they spend in the Foundation Stage before transferring to Year 1. All children in the Foundation Stage benefit from good and at times very good teaching. By the end of the reception year attainment overall is in line with the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning apart from in communication skills where attainment is below average. There are however a number of children that have exceeded the Early Learning Goals in their personal and social development, mathematics and communication, language and literacy.

PUPILS’ ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and all that the school has to offer. Pupils are responsive and show a desire to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are well behaved, kind to one another and courteous to adults, all factors that have a positive impact on the quality of learning.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils work well together and good relationships amongst the pupils and with staff, contribute much to the happy atmosphere of the school. Not all pupils take enough initiative or responsibility for their own learning.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils clearly love coming to school and this is reflected in the attendance rates which are well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and at times very good. This ensures that all children make good progress in all areas of learning, achieve well and get a good start to their educational lives. A good emphasis is placed on developing children’s personal and social skills as well on improving children’s basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Many opportunities are provided for children to learn through practical, investigative and hands on learning experiences which all add to the fun and enjoyment of learning.

Teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is satisfactory overall although it is good in subjects such as science, physical education and art and design and design and technology. Teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory overall although it is consistently good and at times very good, as it is in other subjects, for some Year 2 pupils. When teaching is of this standard it is because it is vibrant, challenging and exciting. When teaching is satisfactory it is because it lacks a little sparkle or because management techniques do not fully capture the attention and concentration of all pupils.

Teaching in Year 3 Year 6 is good with very good features. Numeracy and literacy are generally taught well and at times very well. Reading and writing skills are taught in an effective manner. Work that is set is often focused, demanding and captures the full attention of the pupils. This is particularly true for the oldest pupils in school. The direct teaching of specific skills in other subjects of the curriculum is effective in really pushing on pupils' learning. Teaching ensures that the needs of the higher attaining pupils are met. A good contribution is made by support staff across the school who all make a valuable contribution to how well pupils learn. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. There are some very good examples of marking of pupils' work which clearly indicates what pupils need to do to improve, but this good practice is not consistent across the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is a good curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage and a broad and generally balanced curriculum for pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 which is enhanced well by a good range of visits and visitors, links with the community and a very good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are supported very well. Individual education plans are of a good standard. This is a fully inclusive school where the needs of pupils are met well which enables them to make similar progress to their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall with particular strengths in the moral, social and cultural development of the pupils which make a significant contribution to the personal development of all pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school cares very well for all pupils and provides a most secure, safe and happy learning environment. The individuality of pupils is recognised and celebrated. Very good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' personal as well as their academic development.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very good. The school has established a very strong and effective partnership with parents which impacts very positively on children's learning. The school provides very good quality information to parents and the annual reports on pupils' progress are excellent.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other	Good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management of the school. He has made a pivotal and significant contribution to the development and improvement of the school.

key staff	He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and an effective senior management team. The school has recognised the need for co-ordinators to play a more rigorous role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The Governing Body fulfils its statutory duties well and plays an important role in holding the school to account for the quality of education that it provides. Governors have a good grasp of the strengths of the school and its areas for improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Good target setting procedures are in place as are procedures for analysing test and assessment data with the information being used well to set priorities for development and improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses its funds and access to grants very well to finance identified educational priorities. Financial planning, budget monitoring and financial procedures are of a high standard. The individual skills of teachers and support staff are used well to advance pupils' learning. The principles of best value are applied very well when purchasing goods and services.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources.	Good overall. There is a good level of teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation is good and very effective use is made of available space to enhance pupils' learning. Resources are satisfactory overall and good in English, mathematics, music and physical education.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that their children enjoy school. • The good quality of teaching and the good progress that children make. • The behaviour in school. • The approachability of the school and the information that the school provides. • The partnership with parents. • The expectations that the school sets and the way the school helps children to become mature and responsible. • How well the school is led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework that is set. • The range of activities outside of lessons.

Inspection findings endorse many of the very positive views of the parents. The amount of homework that the school sets is similar to that found in many primary schools and is therefore judged to be satisfactory. In terms of the activities that the school provides outside of lessons, both the quality and range are better than found in many primary schools and are therefore judged to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment when children start school covers the full ability range and it is at an average level overall. Children are admitted to the school in either the September or January before their fifth birthday. This means that younger children, who make up about half the class, spend only about six months in the Reception class, while older children benefit from a full year. Whilst the younger children quickly adapt to school life, the short period of time they spend in the Foundation Stage means that some children do not have enough time to gain the early language skills in reading and writing and other key skills in other areas of learning. Children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage and achieve well because of the consistently good and at times very good teaching. By the end of the Reception year the majority of children achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning apart from communication, language and literacy. In nearly all cases it is the younger children who do not reach the expected standards. In contrast about a quarter of the older children who have had a full year in the Reception class exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in their personal and social development, mathematics and communication, language and literacy.
2. By the end of Year 2, on the basis of the National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments, pupils' attainment was above the national average in mathematics, average in science, below the national average in writing and well below average in reading. In reading and writing the results are suppressed because of the lower than the national average percentage of pupils reaching the expected level (Level 2). The percentage of pupils reaching the next higher level (Level 3) is well above the national average in writing and above average in reading, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools, attainment is average in mathematics and well below average in reading and writing. Inspection findings show that attainment by the end of Year 2 is at an average level in English, mathematics and science. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress overall in English and mathematics, although progress is good for some Year 2 pupils because of consistently good and at times very good teaching. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well in science. Differences between test results and inspection findings can be partially explained by natural ability differences in attainment of the differing groups of pupils but also because standards are improving as a result of the fact that the school is more accurately targeting the needs of children who spend less time in the Foundation Stage and have taken a greater amount of time to master early literacy skills. This is reflected in test results in 2002 where about a quarter of pupils did not achieve the nationally expected level in reading and writing. There is no significant difference in attainment levels of boys and girls that cannot be explained by natural ability differences.
3. Inspection findings indicate that standards in speaking and listening are at an average level by the end of Year 2. Pupils are attentive listeners and show a readiness to take part in class discussions and to ask and answer questions. Pupils are developing confidence to speak to larger audiences, such as in assemblies, although pupils' vocabulary in discussions is not particularly vibrant. Reading standards are at an average level. Pupils have acquired a satisfactory range of skills to help them tackle unfamiliar words and phrases. Higher attaining pupils read with accuracy, fluency and expression and show a good understanding of the text that they have read. Some

pupils are a little hesitant when reading, partly because they are not always provided with enough regular opportunities to read to their teacher or other adults. Writing standards are at an average level. Pupils take a pride in their written work. The higher attaining pupils write well and use a fluent expressive style of writing that pays good attention to correct punctuation, grammar and spelling. Although lower attaining pupils write at length their vocabulary lacks a little flair and imagination and the accuracy of their spelling and punctuation is inconsistent.

4. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2 standards in mathematics and science are at an average level overall with a good percentage of pupils on track to exceed the level expected of 7-year-olds. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress overall in mathematics with progress being good for some Year 2 pupils. All pupils make good progress in science. In mathematics the higher attaining pupils have well developed number skills and a good understanding of shape, space, measures and data handling. Lower attaining pupils have a secure knowledge of the properties of two-dimensional shapes, know how to collect data and use standard and non-standard measures with a reasonable degree of accuracy. The weaker elements are in the pupils' ability to solve word problems and their understanding of number bonds and multiples is less well developed than other areas of mathematics. In science pupils have developed a satisfactory knowledge of materials, physical processes and electricity and can classify similarities and differences between humans, plants and animals. Through the many practical and investigative activities that pupils are provided with they are developing a secure understanding of what constitutes a fair test but are less secure in using their scientific knowledge to guide and inform their predictions.
5. By the end of Year 2 standards in art and design, design and technology and physical education are above national expectations and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. In art and design and design and technology pupils are provided with opportunities to work with a good range of materials in interesting well-planned activities. The good quality of teaching ensures that pupils' artistic, designing and evaluating skills are developed in an effective manner. In physical education pupils are provided with opportunities to take part in a range of activities including dance, gymnastics and games where the direct teaching of specific skills and opportunities to refine their performance leads to higher levels of attainment than usually found for pupils of this age. Standards in information and communication technology, geography, history, and music are in line with national expectations. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress overall with progress within lessons good when pupils benefit from good quality teaching. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress overall.
6. By the end of Year 6 on the basis of the National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment is well above the national average in science and above the national average in English and mathematics. When compared to similar schools on the basis of eligibility for free school meals, attainment is above average in science and below average in English and mathematics. However, when comparisons are made with pupils' prior attainment at the end of Year 2, attainment is well above average in all three subjects clearly indicating that pupils have made good progress. Inspection findings show that attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and traveller's children, make good progress and achieve well by the time that they leave school. Any differences between inspection findings and test results can be explained by the natural ability differences of the different groups of pupils. There is no significant evidence to indicate attainment differences between boys and girls that cannot be explained by

natural ability levels. The good progress that is made by all pupils owes much to the consistently good and at times very good teaching, particularly for the older pupils. The school sets challenging targets in literacy and numeracy both for the pupils expected to attain the level expected of 11-year-olds (Level 4) and for the percentage of pupils expected to reach the next higher level (Level 5). The school's trend of improvement in the National Curriculum tests over time is similar to the national trend.

7. Standards in speaking and listening are above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils listen attentively to one another and to the teachers. Pupils follow instructions well and justify their views and opinions in a confident manner. In most instances pupils use a good level of technical vocabulary in the differing subjects of the curriculum, although there are occasions when teachers do not demand this often enough. Reading standards are above average. Many pupils leave school as confident, expressive and fluent readers. Many pupils use their reading skills to locate information quickly. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to read beyond the literal level and understand nuances in text and although many pupils clearly enjoy reading there are a small number of pupils who despite the best efforts of their teachers have a less positive attitude to reading. Writing standards are above average. Pupils are provided with a good range of opportunities to write for a variety of audiences and purposes and are directly taught the specific skills to enable them to write well. Pupils' work is usually well-presented and appropriate attention paid to the use of correct grammar and punctuation and accurate spelling. Less able pupils write at length and are beginning to use paragraphs but their grasp of sentence structure is not completely secure. Throughout the school there are some good examples of pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills being used in other subjects of the curriculum but this is an area that could be developed further.
8. Standards in mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6. In mathematics, pupils have developed good mental agility skills and have a good grasp of the four rules of number. Pupils have a good understanding of shape and space and make sensible and accurate comparisons between the imperial and metric systems of measurement. Pupils measure with a good degree of accuracy and are efficient at collecting and interpreting data. Pupils have developed a good level of mathematical vocabulary and put their number skills to good effect in problem solving activities. Pupils are not as secure or accurate in pencil and paper calculations as they are in other methods. The school is already addressing the issue. In science, pupils have a good level of scientific knowledge across all elements of the subject. Teachers provide pupils with a good range of opportunities to take part in investigative activities with the higher attaining pupils instigating their own investigations in an effective manner. Most teachers encourage pupils to use an appropriate technical vocabulary and many pupils respond in a positive manner. A minority of pupils still find some difficulty in putting their scientific knowledge to good use to help them make accurate predictions or to help explain why things happen as they do.
9. Standards are above national expectations in art and design, design and technology and physical education by the end of Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and traveller's children, make good progress and achieve well. In art and design pupils have well developed artistic skills and knowledge which they put to good use in completing their work which is of a good standard. In design and technology the emphasis that the teaching puts on the designing and evaluating of products as well as the making element results in pupils producing work that is both imaginative and well constructed. In physical education many pupils leave school with a good range of games skills as well as demonstrating good control and poise in their movement. In all three subjects much of the good progress that pupils make comes as

a result of the good quality of teaching. Although standards in information and communication technology and music are at an average level overall there are stronger elements such as word processing, graphical modelling and singing. All pupils make satisfactory progress with progress good within individual lessons when the teaching is of a good standard. Standards in history and geography are in line with national expectations with all pupils making satisfactory progress. In religious education pupils attain standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and make satisfactory progress.

10. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, especially in numeracy and literacy lessons. Pupils with a statement of special educational need and pupils with individual education plans have targets which are precise and attainable, and the trained expertise of learning support assistants ensures that all groups and individuals make similar progress to their classmates. Pupils who have specific physical needs are particularly well supported, both in class and during physical education lessons. Where specialist teaching is employed to support pupils' learning, individuals achieve well, both in lessons and over their time in school. Outside agencies, notably the Traveller Support Service, liaise very closely with the school and their mutually supportive role enables the pupils they support to settle happily, make good progress with their academic work and take a full and inclusive role in the school as a community. The pupils who are identified as most able are generally set tasks and activities that are challenging and demanding and which accurately meet their needs. This is particularly the case for some Year 2 pupils and the older pupils in Key Stage 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils have good attitudes to school, a similar situation to that reported at the time of the previous inspection. They enjoy school and generally work hard with enthusiasm and persistence. Pupils take a keen interest in the activities that are provided for them. They contribute well to class discussions, work well together and are always ready to lend a helping hand to a classmate who may be experiencing some difficulty with the tasks that they have been set. When presented with challenging and stimulating questions pupils offer thoughtful and confident responses. Pupils' good attitudes reflect the school's positive ethos and contribute well to their learning.
12. Pupils have successfully maintained the good behaviour noted at the previous inspection. In the majority of lessons seen during the inspection pupils' behaviour was good or very good. Only occasionally is behaviour not at this high level which is usually because teaching lacks the sparkle to capture the interest and imagination of the pupils. Pupils speak to one another and to adults in a friendly and polite manner. Pupils play well together at break and at lunchtime, and no aggressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. Pupils throughout the school, with special educational needs have equally good attitudes to school and respond well to the good levels of support from teachers, classroom assistants and classmates. No racism or other forms of oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection and there have been no recent exclusions.
13. Children in the Foundation Stage show a good enthusiasm for learning and the varied curriculum promotes good attitudes from an early age. There is a high expectation for children to show respect through listening to the teacher and one another. Children respond well to the models of very good manners and co-operation between the adults. Children are shown how to behave well and relate to one other when working in adult led activities or independently. Behaviour is good. Children learn from the adults who

help in showing them how to how to be kind, how to share and how to talk to one another.

14. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils carry out a variety of jobs around the school such as taking registers to the office, litter picking, tidying the library, and helping their teachers and other staff. The School Council meets regularly and gives pupils a real opportunity to influence what goes on in school as well as a chance to learn about democracy. However, there are currently not sufficient opportunities for pupils to take a greater level of initiative and to take more responsibility for their own learning and at times tasks that are set are over directed.
15. Relationships are good, both between pupils and between adults and pupils. Adults set a good example for pupils to follow and this helps them to develop into mature and responsible people as they progress through the school. Pupils show a good awareness of the needs and feelings of others and this impacts positively on the learning environment and ethos of the school.
16. Attendance is very good. It is well above the national average for primary schools and there is little unauthorised absence. A high level of attendance ensures that pupils are able to take full advantage of what the school provides and helps them to achieve well.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good with some very good features. Teaching in Year 1 to Year 2 is satisfactory with teaching in science, art and design, design and technology and physical education being good. Teaching for the Year 2 pupils in the single age class is consistently good and at times very good, as is the teaching for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6, with teaching particularly strong for the older pupils in school. Teaching observed during the inspection was good or better in just over eight out of ten lessons seen and very good in almost a third of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The support staff make an important and valuable contribution to how well pupils learn. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection. The willingness of staff to take on board constructive criticism indicates that teaching is well placed to continue to improve.
18. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is good with examples of very good teaching observed during the inspection. The main strength of teaching is the very good understanding of how young children learn and the way that challenging practical, and investigative activities are planned that motivate and enthuse the children. Such activities are planned and taught alongside activities where early reading, writing and mathematical skills are taught in a direct and effective manner. A good balance is achieved between whole class and group teaching and some free-choice activities, where children make decisions in their learning. However, on occasions the teacher makes the decisions as to where the children should work and this prevents children taking responsibility for their own learning. The staff have high expectations of what children can achieve both academically and in terms of their behaviour. A very strong feature of the teaching is the very good relationships between adults and children and the caring, secure and welcoming environment that has been created. All of these features help to ensure that the children enjoy coming to school, are very keen to learn and get a good start to their educational lives.
19. The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory overall in Year 1 to Year 2 with some good and very good teaching for some Year 2 pupils. Teaching in Year 3 to Year 6 is

good with some examples of very good teaching for the older pupils in school. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well across the school. Lessons are usually well planned and what pupils are to learn is often shared with the pupils. Early reading skills are taught in an effective manner although there are times when these could be reinforced further to remind pupils of the different strategies that they can use to tackle any unfamiliar words and phrases. Teaching is stronger for some Year 2 pupils where such strategies are constantly reinforced and writing skills are taught particularly effectively. In Year 1 to Year 2 handwriting and phonic skills are taught well to support and enhance pupils' progress. In Year 3 to Year 6, reading and writing skills are taught well. Teachers use the subject well to enthuse and motivate the pupils. Teaching is stronger for the older pupils where tasks set are often challenging. Higher order reading skills are taught well which enables pupils to skim and scan and to read beyond the literal level. Writing skills are taught in an effective manner which enables pupils to write well for a variety of audiences and purposes. There are some good examples, particularly in Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6, of pupils' writing skills being put to good use in other areas of the curriculum but this good practice is not as consistent across the school as it could be.

20. The teaching in mathematics is satisfactory in Year 1 to Year 2 overall with teaching good and often very good for the older Year 2 pupils. Teaching for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 is good with examples of very good teaching for the older pupils in school. The National Numeracy Strategy is firmly embedded in school practice and this has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and achievements. Many opportunities are provided throughout the school to put pupils' mental agility to the test in activities at the start of the lesson. Teaching is usually effective in the way that it explains new mathematical concepts. Such teaching has a positive impact on how well pupils learn. When teaching is at its best teachers demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. When it is not as effective, teaching lacks a little sparkle to captivate the pupils or activities do not meet the individual needs of pupils. The quality of teaching in science is good across the school and this enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress and achieve well. Lessons are well planned and tasks that are set are usually sufficiently challenging to push on pupils' learning. The strength of the teaching is that there is a good balance struck between the systematic development of pupils' investigative and enquiry skills alongside the pupils acquiring a good level of scientific knowledge across all elements of the subject. The older pupils in school are being increasingly provided with opportunities to initiate their own investigations. The area for development and improvement is for more emphasis in some classes to be put on encouraging pupils to use their scientific knowledge to make accurate scientific predictions or to explain why things happen as they do, particularly in their work on forces.
21. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology is satisfactory overall with features of good and on occasions very good practice. The computer suite is being used well to directly teach pupils an appropriate range of computer skills which the better teaching ensures are put to the test in relevant and challenging learning activities. There is some good evidence, although not as consistent as it could be, of pupils' learning being extended by using computers in other subjects such as mathematics, history and music. Pupils' attainment is assessed at the end of completed units of work but the information is not always used to inform planning for future work. Teaching in religious education is satisfactory. Evidence indicates that appropriate coverage is made to teach pupils about world religions as well as Christianity. Teaching is concerned with developing pupils' understanding of different beliefs rather than simply expanding their knowledge, although there are occasions when the challenge that teaching sets for pupils is greater.

22. The quality of teaching in art and design, design and technology, and physical education is good across the school and this enables all pupils to make good progress in their learning. In art and design teachers allow pupils to make choices, to evaluate their work and to work with a wide range of media. This is all done alongside the direct teaching of specific artistic skills. In design and technology the importance of the design and evaluation processes are taught well alongside the teaching of skills such as cutting accurately, measuring and the use of a variety of fixing methods. In physical education pupils are encouraged to be imaginative and creative and taught the skills to enable them to be more successful in games such as hockey or to how to make dance movements more elegant and precise. All this results in higher levels of performance than usually found.
23. The quality of teaching in music is good for pupils in years 3 – 6. Although no teaching was observed in Year 1 to Year 2, inspection evidence suggests that teaching for these pupils is at least satisfactory and probably stronger because the music specialist in school teaches music in these classes. The good teaching is characterised by a confident subject knowledge whilst less effective teaching is characterised by weaker subject knowledge. Teaching in history and geography is satisfactory throughout the school. Teaching is most effective when pupils are asked to carry out research, to act as historical or geographical explorers and is less effective when pupils are asked to complete undemanding worksheets.
24. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and support staff ensure that the work that is set for pupils closely matches the targets that are included in pupils' individual education plans. Provision and teaching for pupils with a statement of special educational need is also of a good standard. There is close liaison between class teachers and the special needs co-ordinator, in both planning and reporting of progress. As a result of this close working relationship, pupils generally make similar progress to their classmates. Teachers and learning support assistants have a good understanding of the requirements of individual education plans and show sensitivity in their response. For example pupils are well supported during class discussion sessions, when assistants engage in activities, interpreting questions and helping with calculations or responses. This means that pupils take a full and active part in all aspects of the curriculum. The work that is set for the most able pupils in school is usually sufficiently challenging to meet their individual needs and to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable. This is particularly the case for the older pupils at both key stages. On occasions the younger pupils at both key stages are not always set demanding enough tasks. The school is already aware of this and is tackling the issue. The quality of teaching for the small number of travellers' children in school is good. Where appropriate the school makes good use of the high quality support for these pupils from the local education authority. The school staff and specialist teaching from the support agency work and liaise together very well to ensure that pupils' needs are met and that their learning progresses at a similar rate to their classmates.
25. The quality of relationships across the school is good and this adds much to the quality of the learning environment and the ethos of the school. This is an inclusive school where the staff put much effort into seeking to ensure that the needs of individual pupils are met and in most instances their efforts are successful. In many lessons pupils are managed well and respond positively. Only in a minority of instances are the management techniques that are used less effective than they should be. Pupils generally respond very positively to pointers for improvement and to warranted praise. There are some very good examples in school where pupils' work is marked in a highly

effective manner. It is successful because it either clearly outlines what a pupil needs to do to improve or it clearly states why a piece of work is of a good standard. Such marking is not as consistent as it could be across the school and opportunities are missed, where marking is cursory, to enhance the quality of pupils' learning or to help them make progress at a faster rate. The examples of very good practice are more prevalent for the older pupils at both key stages. A high percentage of parents that responded to the questionnaire sent out before the inspection felt that the quality of teaching and the progress that children make are good. Approximately 11 per cent of parents are not happy with the amount of homework. Inspection evidence indicates that the amount and range of homework tasks that are set are similar to those found nationally and are therefore judged to be satisfactory.

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

26. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is broad and balanced. This reflects the position as it was at the last inspection. All subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education are included. When the very good provision for extra curricular activities, personal, social and health education and a number of stimulating visits are taken into account then the school gives the pupils a good quality and range of learning opportunities. Since the last inspection the school has successfully addressed the key issues contained in the report by producing a scheme of work in geography and by reviewing the length of the school day for pupils in Key Stage 2 to bring it closer in line with the recommended time. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully and make a positive impact on the pupils' learning. All subjects have good quality policy documents and schemes of work are based on national guidance.
27. The quality of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. Planning is thorough and fully reflects the agreed areas of learning for children of this age. There is a good range of broad and balanced activities provided, although better facilities and equipment are required for physical development to meet the full range of activities required for this age. There is a very good focus on helping children to acquire early literacy and numeracy skills.
28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The quality of records and the standard of individual education plans are high. Reviews are carried out regularly. Teachers and learning support assistants keep exemplary records of work they carry out with individuals and groups. Teachers are responsible for the composition of individual education plans in consultation with the special needs co-ordinator, and all staff plan effectively to maintain these. Particularly good use is made of a powerful software package, which enables pupils to practise, consolidate and improve literacy and numeracy skills. This programme can be carefully tailored to match individual education plans, and careful progress records can be maintained. This aspect of the special needs curriculum is having a significant impact on the progress made by pupils. Good links are made with the local upper school in liaison over transfer of pupils who have a statement of special educational need and currently a number of pupils use the computer facilities at the upper school to continue work towards the targets on their individual education plans. Appropriate provision is made for the higher attaining pupils and in most instances the work and activities that are set for these pupils are sufficiently demanding and challenging, although at times work could be more demanding for some younger pupils in school. Good provision is made for travellers' children. The school and good quality support agencies from the local

education authority work together very well to ensure that the children have full access to the curriculum and are able to take an active role in the life of the school as a community. Overall the school has good procedures for ensuring equality of opportunity and is most successful in its aim to be an inclusive school.

29. The school's extra-curricular provision is very good. A wide range of sporting and other activities is on offer each week at lunchtime and after school. These are not restricted to the older children and they are well supported and popular with the pupils. The school benefits from the services of external specialists who supplement the efforts of the school's own teachers. The school reviewed its extra-curricular provision recently and has introduced a wider range of activities in order to focus on pupils' interests and hobbies.
30. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. A comprehensive scheme of work covers all aspects of this curriculum area and each class has a timetabled lesson every week. There is some flexibility in the programme to allow the school to focus on any topical issues that arise, and there are special weeks when issues such as racism and healthy eating are tackled well. Sex education is provided for the older pupils with the support of the school nurse. The School Council meets regularly with the headteacher and this helps pupils to understand the nature of consultation and democratic processes. Members of the council interviewed the short-listed candidates for the post of headteacher recently, having been well briefed about employment and equal opportunities law beforehand. The school is currently reviewing its policy for drugs education in consultation with the school nurse and the local education authority.
31. The school's links with the local community make a very good contribution to pupils' education. There is a strong involvement with the village community. The school organises the annual village gala day and pupils play a significant role by taking part in the walking parade. They dress in historical costumes depicting events from the village's past and also take part in country dancing and other displays. Pupils also participate in other local events, such as the village quiz, and they put on concerts to entertain local pensioners. They have also carried out surveys for the parish council. There are good links with the local churches and pupils take part in a range of local sporting events such as football tournaments and cross-country competitions. Some pupils perform in the Desford Colliery Youth Band. All these activities help to promote a strong link between the school and the local community and add much to pupils' social development.
32. The school has successfully developed links with a number of local businesses. A local packaging company recently provided a significant sum of money that enabled the school to purchase some additional software for pupils' use. The school's most significant achievement, however, is the reading partnership established with a local company in which employees visit the school twice a week to hear pupils reading. As well as giving a valuable boost to pupils' reading opportunities, the arrangement has also helped to raise some pupils' self esteem and provided sympathetic listeners for pupils facing personal difficulties.
33. There are good links with the local providers of early years' education in the area. There is regular liaison, particularly when pupils transfer into the school, and the pre-school children spend time regularly in the Reception class, which prepares them well for the move. There are appropriate links with the secondary school to which the vast majority of pupils transfer at the end of their primary education. Pupils are well prepared for the move. There are meetings with staff from both schools and all relevant academic and

pastoral information and documentation is transferred. The secondary school provides two open days for pupils and parents and pupils spend two days at the secondary school towards the end of the summer term. The headteachers of the secondary school and the contributory primary schools meet half-termly to discuss transfer procedures, curriculum issues and current developments, all of which help to make the transition from primary to secondary education smooth and effective.

34. The provision for the pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good and it is satisfactory for the pupils' spiritual development. Overall, provision is good. This level of provision has a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes and behaviour and on their personal development and has been maintained at this level since the time of the last inspection.
35. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies are very well planned by the headteacher and opportunities are provided for reflection. For example, pupils make their own response to the prayer of St Francis. In its termly calendar the school notes those areas that will enhance spiritual development like an Easter Service in the Free Church. Moments of awe and wonder are recorded, for example when Year 6 pupils record the effect that a visit to a Hindu temple had on them. Moments of stillness and quiet are respected and enjoyed. Pupils are encouraged to develop self-confidence and to feel good about themselves. However, there are less well planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual development to be overtly promoted in some subjects of the curriculum.
36. The provision for the pupils' moral development is good. The teachers and non-teaching staff are good role models for the pupils. They praise good behaviour and listen carefully to what pupils have to say. The school rules are displayed prominently in the classrooms and the reward scheme that allows pupils to become "knights" has caught their imagination. The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils was praised in a letter from the Hilltop Residential Centre. Some of the literature that the pupils study like traditional tales in Year 3 where good is rewarded and evil is punished help to reinforce a sense of moral values. Regular opportunities for discussion in class allow pupils to raise any issues of concern for them. The anti-racism week, which included a talk given by a Leicester City footballer, enables pupils to consider current issues. The very good provision that the school makes for personal and social development supports the pupils' moral development well.
37. The provision for the pupils' social development is good. Many pupils in school have the opportunity to go on a residential visit. There are many examples of pupils working well together in lessons in pairs or in small groups. Good causes are supported and a large amount of money was raised for Age Concern. ECO week provided an opportunity for pupils to be aware of and evaluate the school environment. The Poetry Club visited and performed for staff at the Caterpillar Factory to say thank you for the support they give the school. The very good range of extra-curricular activities provide good opportunities for pupils' social development as do the very good links that the school has established with the local community.
38. The school makes good provision for the pupils' cultural development. When pupils study the work of different artists it helps them to develop an awareness of their own cultural heritage. The good visits that the school plans to support learning in history, geography and science enhance pupils' cultural awareness. The last inspection report noted that the provision to help prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse society was under-developed. The school has addressed this through the study of other faiths and

religions and by drawing on the experience of parents. Recently the pupils heard a talk about family life in Iraq which did much to widen pupils' cultural awareness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school takes very good care of its pupils and this is an improvement on the position reported at the time of the previous inspection. The headteacher and the governing body take a keen interest in health and safety matters and there are robust procedures in operation to ensure that all necessary safety checks are carried out. In addition, the experts from the local education authority carry out a very thorough health and safety audit annually. The procedures for child protection are very good, with all staff regularly and fully briefed on their responsibilities and the signs to look out for.
40. There are very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. The headteacher plays a leading role in this aspect of the school's work with considerable success. He undertakes a half-termly review of attendance statistics and sets targets for attendance levels. The school requires a detailed justification to support holidays taken in term time and parents are made very much aware of the detrimental effect on their child's education of taking such holidays, including the disruption to work before and after the actual period of absence. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance have improved since the time of the previous inspection, when they were judged to be satisfactory.
41. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good and an improvement since the previous inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory. Adults working in the school explain clearly to children what is and is not appropriate behaviour and very effectively promote appropriate behaviour by means of positive procedures. Staff are very good at promoting the school's ethos of tolerance, consideration and respect by the examples they set for the children and in the way they approach behaviour management generally. The popular "Knights of Desford" reward scheme is proving very successful in improving pupils' behaviour and encouraging effort. Pupils can gain both personal and team awards and these can also be achieved for work at home, such as keeping a bedroom tidy or getting ready for school without being reminded. The school recognises the value of successful relationships with parents in promoting good behaviour.
42. The school monitors pupils' emotional and behavioural development very well, using a nationally recommended scheme. The records are reviewed regularly and where monitoring indicates that the appropriate improvement has not been achieved, the school provides additional support for the pupil. The information contained in the pupils' records enables teachers to make very detailed and specific comments in the personal development section of pupils' annual reports.
43. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress from Year 1 to Year 6 are very good, while the use made of assessment to guide the teaching and learning is good. This shows a significant improvement from the satisfactory systems in place at the last inspection. As well as analysing very effectively the results of national and other tests, the school also successfully measures the emotional and behavioural development of pupils. The results are used to provide support for pupils who are not achieving as well as they could both academically and socially and to identify any further developments needed in the teaching. Teachers also use the results to set individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics. These procedures are very

good and are gradually being extended to give pupils more opportunity to set and review their own targets.

44. Pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is regularly assessed and monitored by the teachers through formal tests based on the work covered. Teachers measure the progress against National Curriculum levels and identify individual strengths and weaknesses as well as gaining an overview of class achievement. These procedures are very good because they help teachers to have a clearer knowledge and understanding of what pupils can and cannot do in their learning. The successful use of this assessment information is a strong factor in the good progress made in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The procedures for assessing other subjects are good, with formal assessments carried out at the end of a topic and used effectively to measure progress. The use made of the assessment information is generally good with the school recognising the need to ensure that the information gained from these assessments is used to ensure that work is consistently matched to the differing abilities of pupils.

45. In the Foundation Stage, assessment procedures and practices are satisfactory. The teacher in the Reception class has identified the need to improve the ways in which assessments are used to guide the teaching and planning. At the moment informal judgements are made of how well the children are doing, but there are no formal written assessments to measure progress or to help to plan the next stage of learning. A good start has been made in keeping regular assessments on how well the children are doing in their reading. These assessments are gradually being extended to other areas of learning. Good procedures are in place for assessing the needs of pupils with special educational needs and the information is used well to ensure that support is targeted to where the need is greatest.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The responses to the questionnaire and the comments made at the parents' meeting confirm that parents are very pleased with the school. They are particularly pleased with the fact that the school is helping children to become mature and responsible, the fact that the behaviour is good and that the school is well led and managed. Parents had no major concerns about the school, and the inspection findings support parents' views.
47. The school has effective links with parents that support children's education well. There is a genuine open door policy and parents feel comfortable about approaching teachers or the headteacher with any issues or worries. The school encourages parents to be full partners in their child's education and the majority of parents respond well, supervising homework and listening to their child reading. A significant number of parents help out in school on a regular basis, supporting class teaching or carrying out other useful jobs around the school. The school regularly surveys parental opinion on a range of issues connected with the life of the school and where possible takes parents' views into account when making changes. A strong and vibrant parent-teacher association organises many social events that raise valuable extra funds to supplement the school's own budget. Overall parents make a good contribution to children's learning at school and at home.
48. The school provides three opportunities each year for parents to have a formal discussion with their child's teacher. In the autumn term there is an opportunity to discuss how well the child has settled into the new class and to agree the main targets for the coming year. In the spring term parents are updated on progress and targets are reviewed for the rest of the year. In the summer term a written report is provided, together with an open afternoon session where parents can see their child's work and talk to the teacher. A more formal meeting can be arranged for those parents who request it.
49. The written reports of pupils' progress are excellent. They successfully combine narrative with checklists to explain fully to parents what their child has achieved during the year, what the child will need to focus on next year, and how well he or she is performing in relation to national expectations. The reports are also very successful in reporting on pupils' personal and social development as well as their academic development. The school provides other information of good quality for parents, including a comprehensive starter pack for those new to the school. A current area for development recognised by the school is to plan more carefully when and how information is sent out to parents so that they have a greater awareness of what events are happening and when they are taking place.
50. The quality of liaison with parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Close personal contact is maintained and more formal meetings are well attended. Opinions of both parents and pupils are sought during termly and annual reviews, and there is significant weighting given to these opinions in the construction of new education plans.
51. The links with parents are very good in the Foundation Stage, with a positive and welcoming approach. Regular meetings take place where parents can discuss their children's progress. Home-school diaries are used well to share important information about the progress being made in reading. These are supplemented with good information on how reading is taught in school and how it can be developed at home. The Reception class teacher values highly the very good support parents give to their

children's reading at home and the benefits this brings to their progress. Regular newsletters are also sent home with suggestions of how the skills being taught in school can be developed further at home. Parents are always very willing to help with visits, send in resources for lessons or help in class. A strong and effective partnership has been created between home and school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The school is well led and managed. The quality of leadership and management provided by the headteacher are very good. He provides the school with very good educational direction and his leadership is very strong, purposeful and effective. The headteacher has played a significant and valuable role in developing and improving the work of the school and the quality of education that it provides. He has an excellent grasp of the school's strengths and the areas for development. He has a very good understanding of how to set realistic, achievable and measurable targets for school improvement and a very astute awareness of the differing strategies and management styles and techniques to ensure that these targets are successfully achieved. The continued improvement of the school owes much to the qualities of leadership and management that the headteacher brings to the school and the manner in which he leads has earned him the full respect of staff, pupils, governors and parents.
53. The headteacher is supported very well in the management of the school by the deputy headteacher. Together they form a powerful and effective partnership which ensures that the needs of all who learn and work at the school are met. They meet on a regular basis to constantly discuss priorities for school improvement. Their discussions are also concerned with reviewing the success of strategies they have adopted to achieve aims and targets and to gain a good overview of the work of the school. The deputy headteacher has played a significant role in the development of the school. The school also has an effective extended senior management team which includes two other staff members as well as the head and deputy. Meetings with the extended senior management team occur on a regular basis and are used to discuss issues pertinent to school development and to the pastoral welfare of staff and pupils. Any identified issues for improvement are then fully discussed at staff meetings before they become embedded in school practice. This helps to ensure that all staff are able to take a full and active role in the decision making process. Regular key stage meetings then monitor to check that any decisions that have been carried out relating to modifying school or classroom practice are carried out and the outcomes then fed back into the senior management team meetings to assess the overall impact of decisions.
54. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school but recognises that there is scope for further improvement in these procedures so that they have a bigger impact on further helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning and the standards that pupils attain. Most of the formal monitoring of teaching has been carried out by the headteacher and deputy headteacher in addition to observations carried out by the school's adviser. Formal written and oral feedback is given after these observations and any pointers for improvement then form the focus for later observations. Many of these observations have taken place in the core subjects. There have been occasions when subject co-ordinators have carried out lesson observations but this has not occurred on a regular and systematic basis. Subject co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and there are occasions when the teaching staff work together to scrutinise pupils' work and identify areas for development and improvement. Such scrutinies do not occur on a regular enough basis. The school has accurately identified the need for subject co-ordinators

to play a more active role in monitoring, supporting and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in subjects that they have responsibility for so that they can have a bigger impact on helping to raise standards further.

55. The school has good procedures in place for analysing test and assessment data. Much of this is led by the headteacher. He analyses test data and leads the target setting process across the school together with the assessment co-ordinator and other members of the senior management team. This process is used very effectively to monitor the progress of year groups and groups of pupils and has rightly picked up on the fact that test results in certain years showed quite significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. The school has carried out numerous activities to assess why this was the case and the evidence indicates that this was due to the natural ability differences in the groups of pupils from year to year. Inspection findings and evidence fully support and endorse the school's findings. The very effective procedures that the school has put in place for setting targets for pupils and then carefully monitoring pupils' progress have played an important and significant role in helping to raise standards.
56. The school has put in place very good procedures for performance management and for the professional development of teaching and non-teaching staff. The headteacher ensures that the strategies for performance management are carried out in a most effective manner to have their biggest possible impact on the quality of learning in the school. Teaching and non-teaching staff are provided with many opportunities to attend in-service training on a regular basis. Teaching staff have attended courses covering all subjects of the curriculum with non-teaching staff being provided with equally good opportunities which add to the quality of pupils' learning in the classroom and to the smooth and efficient running of the school. The provision that is made for professional staff development establishes a strong link between the school's needs, those of the individual and, where appropriate, performance management targets.
57. The Governing Body carries out its duties well and plays an important role in the management of the school. Many governors visit the school on a regular basis. Some of these visits are formal ones whilst others are informal. Formal visits are always recorded and the outcomes fed back to the full Governing Body. Many governors are linked up to co-ordinators with responsibility for differing subjects or other aspects of school life. Meetings between governors and co-ordinators are becoming an increasingly more common feature of school life. The Chair of Governors meets with the headteacher on a regular basis to discuss the life of the school and emerging issues that are of importance to the leadership and management of the school. The committee structure is effective and ensures that all governors are provided with every opportunity to contribute to the management of the school. In addition working parties are set up to examine aspects that may not come under the remit of a specific committee. A recent example was the setting up of an effective and successful working party to look into educational inclusion. Governors regularly attend training courses which give them a good insight into regional and national initiatives and how they may impact on the performance of the school. The governors are kept very well informed by the headteacher, particularly relating to issues such as standards and the performance of the school. Relationships between the governors and staff are of a high standard and this adds much to the ethos, team spirit and sense of community that pervades the life of the school. All these factors help to ensure that the Governing Body has a good grasp of the strengths and areas for development for the school, plays an active role in setting priorities for improvement and is effective in holding the school to account for the quality of education that it provides.

58. The School Improvement Plan is a high quality document and accurately identifies the areas that need to be tackled to move the school forward. The planning provides a good overview of the next steps forward toward school improvement as well as carrying out a review of previous stated priorities. The driving force behind the plan is the desire to further raise standards. All issues have appropriate time scales, costings and procedures to monitor progress. All staff and governors are given every opportunity to contribute to improvement planning and this heightens the whole school's awareness of what needs to be accomplished to provide an even better quality of education for all pupils.
59. The school has made good progress since the time of the last inspection in 1998. The issues that were identified for improvement were tackled in a rigorous and systematic manner. This resulted in improvements in curriculum provision in information and communication technology and geography and in ensuring that the length of the school day for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 met recommended time stipulations. The school was required to improve the provision that it made for pupils with special educational needs and this was implemented in such a manner that provision is now a strength of the school. The school has made improvements in procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and learning but recognises that there is still scope for further improvement. Many of the previously identified strengths of the school have been maintained and in some instances improved further. The commitment of all the staff indicates that the school is well placed to continue to improve.
60. The quality of leadership by the special needs co-ordinator is very good. She maintains and supervises records of high quality and is always available for discussion to support carers and parents and also teachers and learning support assistants. The allocation of support and hours given to assistants is well managed. All learning support assistants, whether general classroom assistants or supporting those with special needs, have had a high level of training and use their experience well. The governor responsible for special needs in the school is knowledgeable and well informed and provides good support for the co-ordinator. The management of the Foundation Stage is good. The co-ordinator is effective in the way that all adult staff's skills are put to best use and in ensuring that induction programmes are carried out well so that children can make a smooth and trouble free start to their educational lives. The provision for travellers' children and for higher attaining pupils is managed well so ensuring that the needs of these pupils are usually met in an appropriate manner. The Governing Body's policies for equal opportunities and racial equality are fully implemented throughout the school and monitored closely by the senior management team. The school complies fully with requirements to report racist incidents, although such incidents do not occur often. The school is rightly proud of its assertion that it is an inclusive school.
61. The quality of financial management is very good. The school's budget is very efficiently managed by the school secretary, the local education authority bursar and the headteacher. The finance committee of the Governing Body meets on a regular basis and plays an important role in the setting and monitoring of the school budget. Spending is closely linked to the educational priorities that are identified in the School Improvement Plan. Long term financial planning is in place and good procedures have been established to assess the impact on standards and on learning of major spending decisions. The school makes very good use of access to different funding opportunities such as Seed Challenge, Lottery grants, and local businesses and trusts. Any monies obtained are used very well, for example, in improving the outdoor accommodation or in purchasing books or computers. The school makes equally good use of other funds such as standards fund and special needs funding and ensures that the money is used to impact positively on the quality of pupils' learning. Financial procedures are very well

established. The day-to-day monitoring and management of the school's expenditure are very effective, as is the day-to-day administration by the school secretary who provides a very welcoming first point of contact for visitors to the school.

62. The school's financial management is very good in applying the principles of best value. The school constantly and rigorously compares its results and performance against all and similar schools. Parents' views are often sought on major policy decisions which could have an impact on how parents and school can work in better partnership with one another. The School Council provides an opportunity for pupils' views to be expressed, listened to and where appropriate acted upon. The school is well aware of the need for a competitive approach when purchasing goods and services. The most recent auditor's report noted that the school's financial management is excellent and any minor recommendations have been fully implemented. Taking all factors into account, the school is providing good value for money.

63. The school has a good match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. There is an appropriate number of qualified and experienced teachers. The teaching assistants are experienced and well trained and they provide very valuable support to teachers. Accommodation is good. There is an adequate number of classrooms for the number of pupils, together with a range of other rooms that are well used for small group work. There are two halls, two libraries, an art area, a medical room and a computer suite, although the shape of it is not ideal for the teaching of information and communication technology. The reception area is spacious and attractively set out, although the secure outside areas are not large enough for children to use large wheeled toys successfully. The grounds are spacious and attractive, with seating and an adventure playground area that is popular with the children. The playground surface is in good condition and is well marked out for a range of activities, including a large draughts game. Wheelchairs can access the whole site. Learning resources are satisfactory overall with good provision in English, mathematics, music and physical education. The school has remedied the deficiencies in resources for information and communication technology, geography, history and religious education reported at the time of the previous inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to further improve the quality of education that the school provides, the Governing Body, headteacher and staff should:

1) enhance pupils' personal development by:

- consistently providing opportunities for pupils to undertake personal study and research;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to take initiative and responsibility for their own learning.
(paragraphs 14, 23)

2) improve procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in subjects where they are not adequately developed to have their biggest impact on helping to raise standards by:

- ensuring that co-ordinators are provided with opportunities to monitor teaching and learning across the school in order to disseminate the good practice and to tackle any weaknesses;
- the regular scrutiny of pupils' work.
(paragraphs 54, 59, 100, 105, 111, 117, 123, 128, 140)

3) ensuring that the marking of pupils' work consistently outlines to pupils what they need to do to improve or clearly states why a piece of work is of a good standard.

(paragraphs 25, 86, 92, 99, 116, 122, 145)

In addition, the school should consider including the following issue:

- ensure that work is consistently matched to the needs of individual pupils.
(paragraphs 20, 24, 44, 127)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	14	23	8	0	0	0
Percentage	0	31	51	18	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	220
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	34

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	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	10	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	9	10
	Girls	10	10	15
	Total	20	19	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77(83)	73(80)	96(97)
	National	84(84)	86(86)	90(91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	12	16	13
	Total	22	26	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85(87)	100(97)	88(97)
	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	27	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	25	26
	Girls	16	14	19
	Total	39	39	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81(88)	81(83)	94(98)
	National	75(75)	73(71)	86(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	25	26
	Girls	16	15	19
	Total	38	40	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79(79)	83(76)	94(93)
	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	197	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2	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	1	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	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	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)	8.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.5
Average class size	27.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	168

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.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	428 957
Total expenditure	409 692
Expenditure per pupil	1862
Balance brought forward from previous year	(5 469)
Balance carried forward to next year	13 796

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	219
Number of questionnaires returned	92

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	34	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	40	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	42	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	46	10	1	0
The teaching is good.	64	33	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	37	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	26	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	22	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	59	40	1	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	40	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	39	8	1	2

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

64. The good provision for the Reception class children in the Foundation Stage has been maintained since the last inspection and improvements have been made to the planning for language and literacy, which was an area of weakness. The children are now receiving a well-planned curriculum. The Foundation Stage is well managed with good learning opportunities and this gives the children a good start to their educational lives.
65. The school has one Reception class of 28 children. Most children benefit from some pre-school education ranging from play school to full time nursery. They are admitted to the school in either the September or January before their fifth birthday. This means that younger children, who make up about half the class, spend only about six months in the Reception class, while older children benefit from a full year. Although the younger children quickly adapt to school life, they take time to settle. They achieve well in the short period in the Reception class, but the reduced time has a detrimental effect on the progress of some of them. Many need more time, particularly to gain early language skills in reading and writing but also to attain the Early learning Goals in other areas of learning.
66. Children's attainment when they start school covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall. Children make good progress in lessons through effective teaching. By the end of the reception year they achieve well and the majority attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning apart from communication, language and literacy. In nearly all cases it is the younger children who fail to reach the expected standards. In contrast about a quarter of mostly older children exceed the required standards in their personal and social development, mathematics and communication, language and literacy, where the teaching is particularly strong.
67. The quality of teaching is good overall. A significant strength of teaching is the very good understanding of how young children learn and the effective planning of challenging activities that shows clearly what the children are expected to learn. This leads to good progress because the children are well-motivated and enthusiastic. A good balance is achieved between whole class and group teaching and some free-choice activities, where children make decisions in their learning. At the moment however it is usually the teacher who directs the children to where they should work. While this is necessary in some activities, more opportunities are needed at times for children to choose where to work in order to promote more responsibility and independence. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and the Reception class teacher is gradually improving the ongoing written assessments to make them more useful in measuring the children's progress and guiding the teaching and learning. A good start has been made in the assessment of reading. All adults manage the children very well. They have high expectations of what children can achieve both academically and in terms of their behaviour. A particular strength is the very good relationships between adults and children and the secure and welcoming environment that has been created and because of this the children enjoy coming to school and are very keen to learn. Leadership and management of the Foundation stage are good and ensure that curriculum provision is closely matched to the needs of all children, including children with special educational needs and travellers' children.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. The teaching is very good in this area of learning because of the strong emphasis on the development of these skills. As a result all children make good progress. By the end of the Reception class almost all attain the Early Learning Goals and about a quarter achieve beyond the expected levels. Good daily classroom routines help the children to settle quickly and children feel confident about what they can achieve. There are photographs everywhere of the children playing and working in the classroom and this helps them to feel secure. They are encouraged to work independently in many activities and because of this they gain very good levels of self-confidence. However, the teacher, on occasions makes the decisions as to where the children should work, a few are not as independent as they could be or take enough responsibility for their own learning. Resources are good for role-play and as a result the children are keen to learn and concentrate very well. Many examples were seen during the inspection of children initiating their own ideas, and sharing resources. For example in the 'Post Office' they worked together to sort the letters for delivery and in the outside area planned their own road safety exercise with the 'crossing patrol officer' leading the proceedings. The children are very responsible in clearing up quickly together at the end of an activity and make sure that equipment is sorted and put away correctly. The teaching is particularly successful in helping children to behave well and work harmoniously. During the inspection children behaved in an exemplary way and showed a very good level of care and concern for one another. This is because adults provide very good role models, always treating one another and the children with respect and courtesy.

Communication, language and literacy

69. In spite of good provision, teaching and progress, most of the younger children will not achieve the Early Learning Goals in reading and writing by the time they leave the Reception class and attainment overall is below the expected level. This is because they have not had enough time to experience and consolidate all of the early language skills that are taught in the reception year. About a quarter of the older children achieve beyond the expected standards. Most achieve the required standards in speaking and listening and although a few are not speaking fluently yet, nearly all are good listeners. They are given many opportunities to improve their speaking and listening skills effectively through role-play, re-telling news and in class sessions for literacy and numeracy. Activities are well planned to promote a greater fluency and confidence in speaking. Adults are skilled at questioning children at the right time to extend their spoken language. For example the teaching assistant in helping the children to make sweets to sell in the 'Post Office' also supported them in developing their vocabulary, so that they were using sentences such as 'I am blending in the oil' and 'adding my own decorations'. Because speaking and listening sessions are well planned, the children are now at the stage of listening attentively in lessons, asking relevant questions and waiting for their turn to speak. They often make up stories in role-play and this has a positive impact on their spoken language especially when adults are present. Most children confidently initiate and engage in good levels of conversation with each other and adults.
70. Good quality teaching ensures that an appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of early reading and writing skills. Many activities across these areas of learning are based on stories in order to capitalise on the reading and writing opportunities. There is a good balance between providing time for children to read and write freely and the planned teaching of skills. The children are successfully introduced to elements of the Literacy Strategy and the guided reading and shared writing sessions are used effectively to help them learn to read and write. For example during

the inspection the children read a letter from a giant and discussed how they would write their reply. The teacher made sure that the children had plenty of 'thinking time' to share their ideas with a partner. Most of the older children could read and write the familiar words and short sentences about the giant and had a good understanding of the meaning of the story.

71. Children form their letters correctly with the more able children beginning to use capital letters and full stops correctly. Most of the younger children are in the early stages of their reading and writing. They enjoy sharing books and recognise and read some of the words and phrases from picture clues and their good knowledge of letter sounds. They write their own names, but are not forming the letters correctly yet. Most are now moving on from making marks on paper to writing lists and labels for the classroom, with some recognisable letters. Everywhere there are displays of words and sentences for children to read and write and frequent opportunities in role-play to practise sounds and learn new words. The books made up of the children's own photographs are particularly well read. However, more could be done to improve the reading area. At the moment there is not enough seating to encourage children to stay and share books together. The children take books home to read with parents and a home school diary is used well to communicate information and progress. Regular newsletters are also sent home with suggestions of how language and other skills can be developed at home. For example the newsletter contains details of books that are being taught in the literacy lessons and gives suggestions of follow-up work such as asking the children to re-tell the stories to their parents. The school values highly the support parents give with reading at home and the significant contribution that this makes to the progress that children make.

Mathematical development.

72. There is a very good practical focus to activities and particularly the development of mathematical language. This is another area of learning in which teaching is good and enables all children to make good progress. By the end of the reception year most children attain the Early Learning Goals and about a quarter exceed expectations. Attainment overall is at the expected level. The few who do not meet requirements are nearly all the younger children. During registration children count who is present in different ways and often sing and recite counting rhymes to reinforce their knowledge of numbers in simple problems. Most children are confident with numbers to ten and are given good practical ways to practice their counting. For example they know that when ten letters are posted and six are taken out that there are four letters left in the post box. The more able children are at the stage of making sensible estimates of how many cubes are needed to fill in the picture of 'Postman Pat's' van. The children have good opportunities to count forwards and backwards in tens to and from 100 and using addition and subtraction to give change up to 20 pence in the 'Post Office' and the more able children are secure in understanding numbers up to twenty and beyond.
73. The good quality of teaching ensures that there are very good opportunities for the children to learn about measuring, direction, pattern and shape from the good range of resources available. Valuable sessions take place in the sand and water to introduce the concepts of capacity and measurement. These role-play activities are often supported by good levels of adult intervention and are effective in extending children's knowledge and understanding about comparative sizes and the associated vocabulary. The local area is used well to give children a meaningful context for their learning. The children visit the village and afterwards describe the journey and the directions they travelled. The teacher uses a large map of the village to help them to successfully

follow the route and use terms such as 'round' and 'under' and 'towards' and 'back'. This is just one example of the practical work that is taught successfully.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. The teaching is good and all children make good progress. Attainment is at an expected level by the end of the reception year with most children attaining the Early Learning Goals. Activities are well planned for the children to learn about the world in which they live. Visits into the village where the school is situated help to give the children a good understanding of where they live. They learn well about the features and landmarks of the village and afterwards place them accurately on a large-scale map. They talk confidently about the shops, traffic signs and the landscape around the village and use the correct vocabulary.
75. The children have made good progress in learning about living things. This has included a visit to the school grounds to observe signs of spring. The children planted their own seeds and watered and measured their growth. In sharing their ideas with adults and one another they learn about the growth and care of plants. Children are given opportunities to learn about the life of children in other countries and for example were asked to write a prayer for the children of Iraq. Two of the children read the prayer confidently in assembly to the rest of the school. They also take part in assemblies and concerts to celebrate religious festivals. These activities have successfully extended the children's beliefs and understanding of the wider world and different religions. They learn about the features and needs of young babies and how they grow and change when one of the teachers brings her baby to the classroom for them to see. Their understanding of the past and present is good because they keep a daily calendar and update it each day. Most of them know the days of the week, some know the months of the year and many children have a good awareness of the different seasons and the events that happen in each.
76. The children have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the computers that are used regularly in the classroom and in the computer suite. They guide the mouse skilfully to make pictures for their Mother's Day cards and some of the more able children write their own messages using the keyboard as well as logging on. All children print their work independently. These early skills prepare the children well for the next stage of their learning in information and communication technology in Year 1.

Physical development

77. By the end of the reception year the majority of children attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. Although the teaching is good, the progress made by children is only satisfactory. This is because the two small outdoor play areas, although used for activities across the areas of learning, are not large enough for wheeled vehicles or climbing equipment. The children therefore miss out on the regular opportunities of being able to move freely and imaginatively. The teacher for the Foundation Stage is fully aware of the restricted nature of the present areas and is looking at different ways to improve the provision. In the meantime she makes good use of the hall several times a week for physical education and uses the school grounds in the summer months. In the games lesson observed, the children changed quickly for the session. There is a good focus on helping them to recognise changes that happen to their bodies through exercise. They feel their heart and talk about the reasons for becoming hot and sweating. Through good teaching, they make shapes imaginatively and show good levels of confidence, control and co-ordination. When asked to work together to make shapes at different levels, they co-operate well, discuss their ideas and work with a

good degree of effort and energy. Progress is accelerated when the teacher demonstrates different movements for the children to try and encourages them to improve the way in which they move. These lessons help the children to develop their skills but do not compensate for a lack of daily exercise and the opportunities to use a wide range of equipment that is appropriate for their ages. Nearly all handle pencils, scissors, brushes and other tools with good control and confidence.

Creative development.

78. The quality of teaching in this area is good and all the children make good progress. By the end of the reception year most children reach the Early Learning Goals. The staff use every opportunity to capture the children's interests and imagination through art, music and role-play. They mix their own paints for self-portraits and choose different materials to make their village houses. They observe carefully and draw pictures of spring flowers and different fruits and vegetables, adding a lot of detail and expressing their own ideas. They explore the differences between man made and natural materials when they make their own teddy bear pictures. There are regular opportunities to model with clay and dough and the children have access to a good selection of modelling and cutting tools. The role-play areas are changed frequently to keep interest levels high.
79. The children regularly take part in music making sessions and are making good progress. They confidently join in the good range of songs and rhymes they have learnt and use the tune of 'The Wheels on the Bus' to write their own words for a song about their visit to the village. They are also working on a simple pictorial score for their own composition of village sounds with instruments, some of which they have made themselves. Already many of the older children are working on some elements of the National Curriculum at Level 1 and this is because they benefit from the skills and confidence of the teacher who is also the music co-ordinator in the school. There are good facilities for the children to listen to music and opportunities to use the percussion instruments and keyboard more creatively to make up their own accompaniments to songs and stories.

ENGLISH

80. The 2002 end of Year 6 test results show that the pupils' attainment in English is above the national average and is below average when compared with similar schools. Further analysis reveals a stronger performance by pupils of above average ability with those attaining Level 5 being above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level, Level 4, was in line with the national average. Inspection findings show that attainment is above average and pupils, including those with special educational needs and travellers' children, make good progress. This is an improvement on the last inspection when attainment was judged to be average. The 2002 end of Year 2 test results indicate that the pupils' attainment in writing was below the national average and well below average in reading. When compared to similar schools attainment was well below average in reading and writing. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well above average in writing and was above average in reading. There were a significant number who did not reach the expected level and this depressed the overall results. Inspections evidence suggests that attainment is at an average level and that all pupils make satisfactory progress overall although some Year 2 pupils make better progress because of the good and at times better teaching they receive. The improving pattern of attainment by the end of year 2 and the difference between test results and inspection findings can be partly explained by the differences in natural ability of the groups of pupils and also as a result of the fact

that the school is more accurately targeting the needs of children who spend less time in the Foundation Stage and have taken a greater amount of time to master early literacy skills. The school has invested a great deal of time and effort in examining the differences between the attainment of boys and girls. The school has instigated initiatives such as looking at reading resources and writing stimuli that may impact on how boys and girls learn. The school concluded after these initiatives that differences in attainment were as a result of natural ability differences. Inspection evidence supports the school's findings.

81. Standards of speaking and listening are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and are above average by the end of Year 6. In most lessons pupils of all ages and abilities listen well and this is seen in the appropriate answers they give to questions that are asked. A large majority of pupils are keen to take part in class discussions in Year 1 and Year 2 and work well when in pairs or in small groups. Pupils have good levels of confidence when what they are to say has been prepared and this is seen when pupils take part in assembly. Although pupils are confident speakers their vocabulary lacks a little sparkle or vibrancy. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average. Pupils are very attentive listeners to both teachers and classmates. Pupils are able to express themselves well in both formal and informal situations. The good quality of teaching generally ensures that pupils use a vocabulary that is specific to different subjects although there are occasions when some teachers do not demand this often enough.
82. Standards of reading are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and are improving because of the targeting that the school carries out of the children that have taken longer to acquire early reading skills because of the limited time they spent in the Foundation Stage. The National Literacy Strategy is implemented effectively. The pupils are taught phonic skills and different strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and phrases to support their reading so that pupils in Year 2 build words with 'ir' like 'thirsty, thirty and dirty'. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and accurately and have a good understanding of what they read. They talk about their favourite authors and their reading is supported by membership of a local library. Lower attaining pupils read with a sense of meaning and observe sentence punctuation. Pupils' individual reading records show good support from home in most cases but a number of pupils would benefit from reading to their teachers more frequently in order to further practice and refine their reading skills. Pupils make good progress in Year 3 to Year 6 and standards of reading by the end of Year 6 are above average. A large number pupils in Year 6 read at a good level and are seen reading books by established authors like J R Tolkein, J K Rowling and Jacqueline Wilson. They also read non-fiction and enjoy poetry. They have good skills to enable them to retrieve information that supports their progress in other areas of the curriculum. This includes the use of reference books and the Internet. The pupils keep a reading diary and many write detailed comments in it. Lower attaining pupils read accurately for the most part and understand what the passage means but they do not have such positive attitudes to reading with a minority being quite reluctant readers.
83. Standards of writing at the end of Year 2 are at an average level. The pupils' good attitudes and behaviour are evident in the pride they take in the appearance of their work, which is helped by regular handwriting practise. Higher attaining pupils write well, when for example, telling the story of 'crying wolf' they include direct speech and paragraphs. They are used to using different styles and are given opportunities to practise such as writing a letter of apology from the wolf for eating Red Riding Hood. Average attaining pupils write at length but are not yet consistent with their spelling and punctuation. Lower attaining pupils have increased confidence in the amount they write

but lack a sense of the structure of a sentence and their vocabulary lacks expressiveness.

84. Pupils make good progress overall in Year 3 to Year 6 and standards of writing at the end of Year 6 are above average. Pupils write in a range of styles and some of the best writing is of a very good standard. Pupils are beginning to develop an imaginative and evocative vocabulary, for example, a higher attaining pupil writing a poem about a caged animal notes, 'heartbreak in sunken eyes'. Higher attaining pupils use paragraphs and direct speech to good effect and put forward their opinions clearly. Lower attaining pupils can write at length and are beginning to use paragraphs but their grasp of sentence structure is not completely secure. Some use is made of computers for pupils to draft and edit their work but this is an area that could be developed further.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Year 1 to Year 2 although teaching for some of the older Year 2 pupils is good and at times very good. Teaching in Year 3 to Year 6 is good overall with examples of very good teaching for the older pupils in school. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and implement the National Literacy Strategy well across the school. Lesson aims are shared with pupils so that they know what they are to learn. Relationships are of a good standard and so pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. Pupils show good levels of concentration and perseverance and respond well to work that is challenging and demanding. There are occasions however for some Year 1 and Year 2 pupils when the work is not challenging enough or the teaching is not imaginative enough to capture the full attention of the pupils. In these instances pupils are not particularly well motivated. There is a good level of support throughout the school for lower attaining pupils from well-motivated and well-trained teaching assistants. There are examples of pupils being enabled to access whole class sessions because of quiet and timely explanations from a teaching assistant. There is careful teaching of the skills of handwriting and phonics to support the pupils' progress.
86. Reading and writing skills are generally taught in an effective manner, particularly for the older pupils in both key stages, but some younger pupils in school would benefit from reading more often to adults in school to further improve their reading skills. In a very good literacy lesson in Year 5 / Year 6 the teacher promoted higher reading skills by asking pupils to scan a passage rapidly and then to note the main points they have learned. The acquisition of these skills play an important role in the good standards that many pupils achieve in reading and writing by the time that they leave school. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall. Encouraging comments are often made but there are relatively few examples of pupils being told how to improve either to better meet the lesson's learning objectives or their own targets. Older pupils are aware of the standard they have attained and what they expect to achieve in national tests. There are good examples of extended writing being used to support learning in history and religious education but this could be developed further.
87. The use of paired and group work and the range of literature studied makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The very good links established with a local factory help to support the reading of a significant number of children. The poetry club has performed at the factory to say thank you for the help the school has received. These initiatives as well as having a positive impact on pupils' reading development add another dimension to pupils' personal and social development.
88. The leadership of the subject by the headteacher and other members of the senior management team is very good. The monitoring of teaching and learning has been

thorough and has made a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching and learning. The school uses a good range of assessment material and the results are carefully analysed both internally and with the help of outside consultants. The information is then used very effectively to identify areas for development and to inform the target setting process for year groups and for smaller groups of pupils. Teaching assistants are well trained and there is additional record keeping, for example of phonic skills, to help to track the pupils' progress. This has all helped to lead to an improvement in standards. A good relationship with the local secondary school means that some pupils who need additional support are able to go with a teacher to use interactive software in their computer suite outside normal school hours. The school library is a well-organised resource with a sufficient range of books to support the curriculum. The school has arranged a Reading Partners course for parents to help them to give their children more effective support and this has proved to be a successful initiative. Resources are satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

89. On the basis of the National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils in 2002, attainment was above the national average and at an average level when compared to similar schools. National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils in 2002 showed attainment to be above the national average and below average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that attainment by the end of Year 2 is at an average level overall with a good percentage of pupils on track to exceed the level expected of 7 year olds. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and travellers' children, make satisfactory progress with older Year 2 pupils making good progress because of the good quality of teaching. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average with a good percentage of pupils on track to exceed the level expected of 11 year olds. All pupils are making good progress because of the good quality of teaching. This is particularly the case for the older pupils in school. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
90. By the age of seven the higher attaining pupils are confident with making number bonds to one hundred, using their knowledge of multiples of ten and number bonds to ten. The pupils' facility with using numbers is enhanced by the use of well prepared games that make learning fun. They are able to give change for 50p and understand what coins can be used to make £1. The most competent pupils measure accurately to the nearest centimetre and most tell the time, identifying o'clock and half and quarter past the hour. There is a good range of work covered across all aspects of the curriculum and pupils are beginning to investigate problems written in words and complete them in a satisfactory manner. Pupils' knowledge of space, shape and measure is satisfactory overall and most pupils handle data in a satisfactory manner, although pupils find a little more difficulty in interpreting the data they have collated. Pupils use an appropriate mathematical vocabulary when talking about their work. For some pupils however the understanding of number bonds and multiples is less well developed, and for Year 1 pupils the teaching does not always ensure that the first steps of recognition of coins is firmly established. In these instances pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
91. By the end of Year 6, pupils are achieving well in all areas of the curriculum. Those identified as being most able are particularly well challenged at the end of the key stage, working satisfactorily with Year 7 numeracy objectives. They transfer knowledge effectively from one situation to another. For example, extending their understanding of transformations, competently describing combinations of translation, reflection and

rotation. Other pupils work competently with co-ordinates in all four quadrants. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of negative numbers and due to well designed tasks, are making good progress in manipulating metric measures of length and weight. Most pupils make sensible comparisons between the imperial and metric system of measurements. The pupils' ability to handle and interpret data is good. The development of mathematical vocabulary is good and pupils are effectively encouraged to use their number knowledge to solve problems discussing a variety of methods. Pupils' mathematical understanding is also reinforced by the appropriate use of games and relating knowledge to real life problems. The school has identified a need to improve the pupils' ability to carry out accurate pencil and paper calculations, as this element of the subject is not as strong as other elements.

92. Teaching overall in Year 1 to Year 2 is satisfactory, although it is good and at times very good for older Year 2 pupils. Teaching in Year 3 to Year 6 is good and at times very good. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They often use imaginative ways to investigate the topic and incorporate practical activities to aid learning. As a result, pupils learn basic skills well and there is a due emphasis placed on work with numbers. Generally teachers plan well for their classes, ensuring that groups are well organised and given suitable work that challenges their abilities. Where teaching is not as good, these group activities do not always challenge the higher attaining pupils sufficiently or ensure through questioning that lower attaining pupils have learned effectively. In all lessons, teachers deploy their support staff well. These well trained staff take appropriate responsibility and the pupils in their care, usually those with special educational needs or lower attaining pupils, make good progress. Pupils with statements or individual education plans learn well because work closely matches their targets. All children in the school like to work hard and become closely involved in activities. In the best lessons they are totally engaged with their tasks because these are interesting and challenging, and they learn well. Pupils only lose interest or motivation on the few occasions when work is not challenging enough. Computers are used in some lessons to support learning and in those cases, learning is enhanced. For example, the use of spreadsheets to consolidate number work and the use of a paint programme to review concepts of transformation. This good practice is not as consistent as it could be. However, mathematically-linked activities do take place in the computer suite, for example the use of sensors to produce tables and graphs and simple data handling programmes for younger pupils. This consolidates work done in the class, by enabling these young pupils to make pictograms of animals in the zoo. Some good examples are in evidence of the effective marking of pupils' work which leads to improvements in pupils' work but again this good practice lacks a little consistency across the school.
93. The management of this subject is strong, purposeful and of a good standard. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths of the subject, as well as areas for development. Good procedures are in place for analysing test and assessment data and for tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school and for setting targets for improvement. A limited number of lesson observations have been carried out with plans in hand for more observations to take place and for more regular scrutinies of pupils' work so that good practice can be disseminated and any weaknesses tackled. The many opportunities that the subject provides for pupils to work collaboratively enhance pupils' social development. Resources for the subject are good and are used well to enhance the quality of pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

94. On the basis of the 2002 national Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment is average overall, with the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (Level 2) being slightly below the national average and the percentage of pupils reaching the next higher level (Level 3) being above the national average. The results of the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils in 2002 show attainment to be well above the national average and above average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show attainment to be at an average level by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Any differences between test results and inspection findings can be explained by the natural ability differences in the different groups of pupils. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and this together with the good quality of teaching throughout the school results in all pupils, including those with special educational needs and travellers' children, making good progress and achieving well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
95. In Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are provided with a good range of opportunities to carry out scientific experiments and investigations, although their results are not always recorded. Pupils are encouraged to question the results and to evaluate what makes a fair test. This type of approach gives the pupils a secure grasp of the skills necessary to carry out scientific experiments and to consolidate their scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of the different properties of materials and recognise which materials are more waterproof than others and readily explain why one material may be better suited for a particular purpose than others. Pupils have a secure understanding of how water turns into steam and then back to water. The higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of the concept of reversible and irreversible change. Pupils know how to build a simple circuit and have a satisfactory knowledge of sound and how it travels. Through practical work pupils are gaining a sound knowledge of the names of parts of plants, the conditions needed for plants to grow and developing the ability to classify different plants and insects into different categories. When talking about their work pupils use an appropriate scientific vocabulary. Pupils' knowledge of forces is a little less secure as they only have a basic knowledge of pushes and pulls and the factors that will help or prevent movement over different surfaces. Although pupils are confident in carrying out practical investigations not all pupils use their scientific knowledge to best effect to inform their predications.
96. Pupils continue to develop their scientific knowledge and skills well in Year 3 to Year 6 with progress accelerating in Year 5 and Year 6 because of the often very good teaching which capitalises on many opportunities that are provided for pupils to learn through challenging investigative activities. By the end of Year 6 the higher attainers are instigating their own investigations and do so well as evidenced when setting up an investigation to determine the factors which help washing to dry most quickly. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils are expected to put their scientific knowledge to the test in planning out investigations, predicting outcomes and in drawing conclusions. Although pupils do this readily the work of some pupils is descriptive rather than explaining why events happen as they do and this is an area for further development. Pupils record their findings using a variety of different methods such as tables, graphs and charts as well as in text form. Pupils have a good understanding of the solar system and of the different phases of the moon. Many pupils are secure in their understanding of sound and have a good knowledge of solids, liquids and gases, knowing for example that gases spread in all directions and are the most difficult to control. Pupils talk articulately about reversible and irreversible change and know how to construct quite complex electrical circuits. Pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of the major body organs, their purpose and how they function. Pupils' knowledge of forces is at a satisfactory level but is not as strong as their knowledge of other elements of the subject. The school is addressing this issue by ensuring that

work on forces is covered in a more systematic and rigorous manner across the school as over time this may not have been the case.

97. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and thoroughly enjoy taking part in practical and investigative activities. Pupils work well together and are always ready to help out a classmate that might be struggling. Throughout the school pupils handle resources with care and maturity and show a good awareness of health and safety issues. Pupils listen with good levels of attentiveness within lessons and behave well. Pupils enjoy being set challenging tasks and activities and show good levels of concentration and perseverance. The good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils together with their desire to do well make an important contribution to pupils' learning and to the good progress that pupils of all abilities make.
98. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and provides many opportunities for pupils to learn through practical and investigative activities. Experiments are well planned, resourced and organised and the teachers' incisive questioning is effective in getting pupils to think things through for themselves. Occasionally however questioning is of a more closed nature and as a result pupils' knowledge and understanding are not sufficiently challenged. Good attention is paid to pupils' previous learning. An example of this was seen in Year 2 where pupils' knowledge of plants was put to very good use to help determine the best conditions that would be needed to make beans grow most rapidly. The best teaching evaluates what has been learnt in lessons and uses the information to guide and inform future lessons. Scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that this is a constant feature in many classes.
99. Teachers are often prepared to let pupils find things out for themselves and this enhances pupils' learning. A good example of this was seen in Year 4 when pupils were constructing electrical circuits. The teacher circulated around the different groups offering measured advice whilst at the same time expecting the pupils to solve their own problems. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and particularly good for the older pupils in school. In lessons explaining the functions of the major body organs the pupils asked challenging and demanding questions. The strong subject knowledge of the teachers enabled them to deal with the questions in a very effective manner, and in doing so took pupils' understanding to a far higher and technical level. Support staff play an important role in supporting the learning of pupils with special educational needs and make a good contribution to the quality of their learning and the progress that they make. There are some good examples of information and communication technology being used to enhance pupils' learning in the subject but on occasions opportunities are missed. The subject is not always effectively used as a vehicle for furthering pupils' writing and literacy skills. Good examples were seen of the marking of pupils' work being used effectively to explain to pupils what they need to do to improve or outlining why a particular piece of work is good. This good practice is not consistent across the school.
100. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall with some strengths. The co-ordination is shared by two teachers who work together well and have a good grasp of the strengths of the subject and the areas for development. Both teachers provide a great deal of informal and useful guidance to colleagues and this has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning. There have only been limited lesson observations and scrutinies of pupils' work and the school has accurately identified the need for the co-ordinators to play a more active role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Plans are in hand for this to happen when the subject is an identified area for development on the School Improvement Plan in the near future. Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress,

although there is no moderated portfolio of pupils' work to help both staff and pupils identify precisely what is needed to attain at a particular level. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The subject provides many opportunities for pupils to work together and teachers often draw pupils' attention to the beauty of the natural world. Resources are satisfactory overall and used well to enhance the quality of pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Standards in art and design are above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and travellers' children make good progress and achieve well due to the good quality of teaching across the school. Standards and the quality of curriculum provision have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
102. By the age of seven the great majority of pupils have made good progress in developing their drawing skills and are confident in using a good range of media such as paint, pencils, crayons and pastels. Pupils use watercolours, oil pastels and collage to create pictures in the style of Monet. This work is of a good standard. The pupils also have very good opportunities to use their sketchbooks, recording sculptures seen in the school grounds, which they will later use as part of a 'favourite place' project. Ample opportunities have also been given to pupils to experiment with their own mounting. The use of a variety of different shaped paper and newspaper mounts is very effective. Pupils explore the range of colours that can be created by mixing paint and they successfully investigate the textures that they can achieve using different materials. Pupils have well developed sketching skills and often produce observational drawings that are of a good standard. Pupils appreciate the good features of their work and that of their classmates and are becoming increasingly effective at evaluating the work of others and in expressing preferences and suggesting ways in which work may be improved.
103. Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through Year 3 to Year 6. By the end of Year 6 pupils have developed a good level of knowledge and understanding in art and design. Sketchbooks continue to be used effectively to explore and develop ideas for use in later work. The pupils experience a good range of two-dimensional work and develop good expertise in using different creative media, showing a good awareness of the visual and tactile qualities in the materials and processes they use. Pupils learn effectively that the resulting quality of pictures is often dependent on a combination of media. This is particularly marked at the end of Year 6 when pupils use their sketch books well to plan a picture depicting movement. They analyse carefully shapes and forms, but also identify what combination of media they will use to create desired effects. For example the use of water colour and oil pastels or collage. Younger pupils also employ this technique when creating pictures of great impact in the style of Monet, using tissue collage as well as other colouring methods. The pupils study the work of various famous artists, like Van Gogh, Degas and produce work in the style of these artists. The finished work is often of a high standard and the work is attractively displayed around the school as are displays which depict work on line and form, in paper and graphite.
104. Teaching and learning throughout the school are good. Lesson planning is clear and there is a good understanding of the requirements of the subject. Teaching places a good emphasis on the development of artistic skills as well as the broadening of pupils' artistic knowledge. Pupils learn well in experimenting with techniques before producing

a final product. Throughout the school pupils are encouraged to design, experiment and reflect on their plans. For example, the 'Favourite Place' for Year 1 and Year 2 incorporates the idea of interpreting feelings of happiness, safety and cosiness whilst choosing natural materials to interpret these emotions, as well as depicting 'the place'. The oldest pupils experiment with colour and media to interpret movement before planning a final picture, using a moving figure. Classes are well organised and materials, both paper and media, give pupils choice which underpins their ideas and interpretation. As a result of all these positive features that are present in the teaching, the pupils enjoy art and apply themselves well to both planning and producing finished products of which they can be well satisfied. Pupils show high levels of interest and always behave well in lessons. The sensitive approach made to this subject and the thought involved in curriculum planning makes a significant contribution to the spiritual development of the pupils. Computers are used in an appropriate manner to support and enhance pupils' learning. At the time of the inspection, there was less evidence of work being done in three dimensions or in large scale individual work.

105. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory with some elements being stronger. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of strengths and areas for development in the subject, which includes further opportunities for three-dimensional work. The co-ordinator provides much informal guidance and support for colleagues but as yet has not had sufficient opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. This is to happen when the subject is an identified area for development on the School Improvement Plan. Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and are used well to enhance the quality of pupils' learning experiences.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and travellers' children, make good progress and achieve well during their time at the school. This owes much to the good quality of teaching. Standards and provision have been maintained at this good level since the time of the last inspection.
107. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of the design process. Pupils know and understand well that they need to research, draw their own ideas and plans and then try out methods. For example, they look at a collection of puppets then make their own plans, learning how to label and list the materials required. They make and evaluate carefully what they have done. This careful recording of the process is one of the strengths of the subject and is reinforced by carefully labelled displays in the classroom. Pupils handle tools well and have a good knowledge of different methods that can be used to join different materials together and fully understand that some materials are better suited for a particular purpose than others.
108. Pupils continue to make good progress in Year 3 to Year 6. The teaching continues to put a good emphasis on the designing and evaluating aspects of the subject as well as the making. Pupils have a good understanding of the link between the product and its intended use. Pupils are imaginative and creative in their designs which also are realistic with the finished products showing a good resemblance to the original design. By the end of Year 6 pupils measure and cut wood accurately to construct rigid frames to support the cam movements for their moving toys. They make attractive pop-up books to illustrate stories written for the children in the reception class. The finished products are of a good standard. Pupils use paper and card well to make moving parts

with levers, sliders and folded pop-ups. All areas of the curriculum are covered including attractive textile work, making draw-string bags with eye-catching appliqué designs and large group pictures with stitched motifs. At present the development of food technology is less well represented across the school.

109. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. They have good levels of concentration and take a pride in their work. They maintain their attention to ensure that products are finished well and that they evaluate what they have done effectively, acknowledging what might be improved. Pupils are enthusiastic and are always ready to help one another. Pupils handle resources well and show a good awareness of health and safety issues. All these factors make an important contribution to the quality of learning and to how well pupils achieve.
110. The quality of teaching is good across the school. The teaching ensures that pupils put much effort into the designing and evaluating aspects of the subject. Skills of cutting and joining are taught in a direct manner and as a result pupils carry out tasks with a good degree of care and accuracy. Teaching is at its best when pupils are then provided with exciting projects where they can put these skills to the test. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to motivate and enthuse the pupils. Some teachers capitalise well on the opportunities that the subject offers to enhance pupils' literacy and numeracy skills but this good practice is not consistent across the school by for example asking pupils to write a short critique of their finished product or by writing a set of design instructions for a classmate to follow.
111. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner with some good features. The role is shared by two co-ordinators who have a good grasp of the strengths of the subject and the areas for development. The co-ordinators scrutinise teachers' planning and provide much informal help and guidance to colleagues but have not yet been provided with opportunities to formally monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. There are effective assessment procedures in place and the information is being increasingly used to guide and inform planning for future projects. An example of this is the way in which the school has set up blocks of teaching time for particular projects which mean that pupils undertake projects over a more intensive but shorter time span as opposed to carrying out projects for a short amount of time over a number of weeks. This initiative has had a positive impact on standards. The many opportunities that the subject offers for working together and sharing resources has a positive impact on pupils' social development. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and are used well.

GEOGRAPHY

112. Standards in geography are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and travellers' children, make satisfactory progress. This represents good progress since the last inspection when attainment was judged to be below the expected level at the end of each key stage.
113. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory level of geographical knowledge and understanding. They describe physical and human features of places and recognise and make observations about those features that give places their character. Pupils express views in a satisfactory manner about their locality and recognise the features which help or hinder in making where they live look attractive. The pupils work with the teacher to place photographs accurately on a large plan of the school and its grounds

and recognise landmarks in a satisfactory manner. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the wider world and Desford's place in it. Pupils are keen to talk about their work but do not have a particularly well developed level of geographical vocabulary.

114. By the end of Year 6 standards remain at the nationally expected level. Pupils readily identify and name major features of the British Isles such as ranges of mountains, surrounding seas and major cities. Pupils name many capital cities of Europe. They use the index and map references satisfactorily in an atlas to locate named places. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how the geographical position of a country affects its climate and influences the way residents live and work. They are aware of how industries such as tourism are important for the economic survival of certain cities and countries. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how different colours on maps may indicate different climates. Pupils show sound mapping skills and understanding of how human activities can cause changes in places and local economies. Pupils use the Internet to research about local climatic conditions. The development of the pupils' ability to use an appropriate geographical vocabulary remains an area for further development.
115. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. Pupils enjoy learning about different countries of the world. They are keen to find things out for themselves. Pupils behave well in lessons and work together well. Pupils are always ready to offer their views and opinions whilst respecting the views of others. These factors contribute much to the quality of learning.
116. Although the teaching observed during the inspection was good, teaching over time is satisfactory. This is mainly because at times there is too little differentiation when the same topics are being covered by different year groups. The best teaching ensures that when similar topics are being covered there is a higher level of challenge or the tasks that are set require a higher degree of geographical questioning or interpretation. This good practice is not consistent across the school. There are some good examples of computers being used to support and enhance pupils' learning. For example in a lesson in Year 5 / Year 6, the pupils make a presentation of work they have done about mountains after carrying out research on the Internet. Teachers prepare resources well, such as when photographs were taken of features in the grounds and in the classroom for the pupils to use to develop their skills in reading a plan. The teaching ensures that an appropriate emphasis is given to developing pupils' geographical skills such as mapping skills alongside the systematic development of geographical knowledge. There are some good examples of the subject being used to enhance pupils' literacy and numeracy skills whilst on other occasions opportunities are missed. Marking of pupils' work is not consistently used as a vehicle for explaining what pupils need to do to improve.
117. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory with good elements and this has contributed to the raising of standards in the subject since the last inspection. Key issues then were to raise standards of attainment and to produce a scheme of work for the subject and the school has been successful in addressing both these issues. The curriculum is enriched by the geographical elements of the residential visits that are made by all year groups. These help to make a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and provides much informal help and guidance to colleagues. However, insufficient opportunities have been provided for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school or to scrutinise pupils'

work in order to have a bigger impact on helping to further raise standards. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and are used well to enhance the quality of pupils' learning.

HISTORY

118. Pupils' attainment in history is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have gained a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the past and progress for all pupils including those with special educational needs and travellers' children is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
119. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have developed a satisfactory understanding of chronology with a few of the more able pupils recognising some similarities and differences between recent history and the past. This was a weaker aspect of pupils' knowledge in the last inspection and has now improved. This improvement was well illustrated in a lesson in Year 2, on holidays at the seaside when pupils used pictures to identify the things that have changed and those that have stayed the same. In this exercise they also learnt to carry out simple research from books and photographs about old cameras and penny-farthing bicycles that were regularly seen at the seaside. Other studies have been carried out into houses and toys through the ages. Time lines are often used in these topics to help pupils gain more awareness of how the past can be divided into different periods of time and as a result pupils have a satisfactory awareness and understanding of chronology. In studying famous people, pupils have gained a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the period in which Florence Nightingale lived. They plot her journey to the Crimea and there is a good focus on retelling the events in her life as well as describing the conditions in the hospitals. There is much more evidence now of pupils recording their work than was seen at the last inspection. This has not only helped to improve their knowledge and understanding of different periods of history but it is also extending their literacy skills well.
120. By the end of Year 6, pupils have built up a satisfactory knowledge of the features of past societies but their understanding between historical events and what is happening today is patchier in some of the topics studied. For example although the older pupils in school have gained a satisfactory insight into the different way of life between Athens and Sparta and describe important events in Ancient Greece, their understanding has not been sufficiently developed as to how the ideas of the Greeks are used by us today. In all topics the pupils have good opportunities to carry out research using different sources including the Internet. This means that pupils learn to find things out for themselves. A very good example of historical enquiry was the reporting of the battle between Persia and Athens. Not only did the pupils' report describe in detail the events that happened, but it was made more interesting with a series of illustrations to highlight the events that took place. Pupils' learning in the upper junior classes is also enhanced when they write their own play for the story of Perseus and Medusa and perform it on stage to the rest of the school. The enquiry and interpretation of history although satisfactory, does not always go far enough in considering the reasons why things happened as they did. For example in the topic on the Vikings in the lower junior classes, although pupils learnt some important information about this period of history, there was not enough focus in the teaching on helping pupils to understand the reasons why people left their homeland and wanted to invade and settle in another country.
121. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. Pupils put a lot of effort into their work and are keen historical investigators. They take a pride in their work and show a desire to do well. Pupils work well together and are always ready to help out a classmate who may

be struggling. Behaviour in lessons is often of a good standard. These factors make an important contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.

122. The quality of teaching is satisfactory across the school with elements of good practice. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is at least satisfactory and good use is made of the resources available to them including the use of information and communication technology for research purposes and recording information. The teaching is at its best when pupils are asked to carry out historical research and find things out for themselves. It is also effective when it is used as a vehicle for developing pupils' literacy skills. There are some good examples of well-written reports and stories such as the biography of Archimedes in the upper junior classes. However at times pupils are asked to complete simple worksheets or colour in pictures that add little to pupils' quality of learning. Although there are some examples of pupils' work being marked in a way that clearly outlines what is needed to improve, this good practice does not feature enough in teacher's marking at the moment.
123. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the post but is keen to move the school forward. At the moment the planning is monitored by the co-ordinator and support is given to teachers over the content of lessons and the resources needed. Time is being allocated for the co-ordinator to observe some teaching later in the year and to examine the work of the pupils. This will help her to gain a secure grasp of the strengths and the areas for further development in order to improve provision further. Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and the subject makes a good contribution to the social and cultural development of the pupils. Resources are satisfactory and good use is made of historical visits to further the quality of pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are at the nationally expected level with some elements of the subject at a higher than expected level. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and travellers' children, make satisfactory progress. There has been significant improvement since the last inspection. This is due to the provision of suitable hardware and computer programmes, the extensive reorganisation of the curriculum instigated by the current subject manager and improvements in the quality of teaching in the subject.
125. By the end of Year 2 pupils are used to having lessons in the computer suite, building on the good experiences established in the Foundation Stage. They improve their mouse and keyboard skills using select, drag and drop and most contribute to the construction of a pictogram graph. Pupils use the keyboard in a satisfactory manner and confidently name items of computer equipment such as screen, mouse and icons. They successfully use a keyboard to type and assemble text when writing information, with the higher attaining pupils putting together more complex sentences. Pupils are beginning to merge text and pictures more effectively. Pupils are less secure of the applications and uses of information and communication technology in the wider world. By the end of Year 6 pupils are competent in using spreadsheets, which they employ in mathematics. They have had experience of, and carry out tasks well using control mechanisms to set up light sequences and they use temperature sensing equipment in science to produce graphical results and tables. They have good expertise in the use of a graphical modelling programme, to create plans of the school and make suitable improvements. Pupils show good skills in word processing, in editing their work, in changing the font, colour and size of text and use computers appropriately for research

purposes. They have had fewer experiences with the use of e-mail and in processing data and these elements of pupils' learning are not as strong as other aspects. The use of classroom computers to support skills learned in designated information and communication technology lessons is not consistent throughout the school.

126. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and this has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils are attentive and show a real desire to learn new knowledge and skills. They show good levels of interest, enthusiasm and productivity and are often disappointed when the lesson comes to an end. Lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and for supporting one another and pupils do this very well and this adds another dimension to their personal and social development. Behaviour in lessons is often of a good standard and this helps to create an effective learning environment.
127. Teaching overall is satisfactory although during the inspection examples of good and very good teaching were seen. Each teacher has been provided with a detailed and helpful guidance manual, which effectively matches teaching outlines for each unit of the curriculum, and gives advice as to the use of suitable software programmes. As a result of this, and additional in-service training, teachers have become more confident in the subject, and an improvement in skills has now been established and indicates a continuing improvement in standards. The organisation and management of pupils in the computer suite are good and there is usually a good balance between directed learning, to acquire new skills, and time to practise and experiment. Planning for lessons is clear and follows the school's detailed curriculum advice. However, as yet the assessment that takes place at the end of units is not always used as effectively as it could be to guide and inform future lesson planning or to ensure that work is consistently matched to the differing abilities of the pupils. Nevertheless, pupils with special educational needs, who are usually supported by learning support assistants or teachers, make good progress in extending their skills, supported by high quality questioning and sensitive intervention. Careful provision has been made so that teachers are able to help pupils consolidate their learning, by providing particular times for work linked to other subjects. As a result, there is good evidence of computer work in science, some in mathematics with older pupils, and also research in history and geography. The unit of work designated to investigating music has also been used effectively.
128. Leadership in this subject is good. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the strengths and areas for development in the subject and provides a great deal of guidance for colleagues. The co-ordinator has played an important role in developing documentation to support teaching and learning and this has impacted positively on the drive to raise standards. Plans are in hand for the co-ordinator to be provided with more opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning across the school. A portfolio of moderated work is proving increasingly effective in helping teachers to develop a greater knowledge of what is required for pupils to achieve at a particular level. There is generally adequate hardware and resources are used well, particularly in the computer suite. However, the use of classroom computers to support skills learned in designated information and communication technology lessons is not consistent throughout the school.

MUSIC

129. Inspection evidence shows that pupils by the end of Year 6, including those with special educational needs and travellers' children are making good progress, and reach the

required standards expected for their age. Similar judgements were made at the last inspection. Although limited opportunities were available to see teaching and learning in Year 1 and Year 2, evidence from planning, assemblies, talking to pupils and other evidence clearly indicates that standards are at least in line with the nationally expected level.

130. The music co-ordinator is responsible for teaching all the music in the Year 1 and Year 2 classes. The evidence from her teaching of music in clubs after school and discussions with her as co-ordinator confirms a good understanding of the National Curriculum programmes of study. She has been responsible for the comprehensive planning in these classes, which covers all elements of performing, composing, listening and appraising. There are two music clubs for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 and about thirty pupils attend. The pupils are in the early stages of learning to play the recorder and ocarina. They have made a promising start and their progress is good. They are taught effectively by the co-ordinator and she is providing a good level of support. Her teaching is helping them to read music and play the instruments correctly. They are now playing simple tunes together with a limited number of notes. In the recorder playing there is evidence of above average attainment from about half of the twenty pupils who are learning in Year 2. Assemblies were also observed in which the pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 sang tunefully along with the rest of the school. They also listened very attentively to the music played in the assemblies.
131. By the end of Year 6, pupils sing confidently and well together. In assemblies the singing is tuneful, although phrasing and expression need further development. There is also a choir and a weekly singing practice. In order to challenge the pupils further in singing rounds they move from two to three part-singing which the pupils perform well. In the choir, pupils often sing in two parts and perform together on special occasions in school. By the end of Year 6 pupils not only sing well but they also have a secure understanding of the difference between 'discord' and 'harmony' and the notation and changes in pitch of a round. In composition, pupils follow a well-planned series of lessons that steadily builds on their skills through the school. By the end of Year 6 pupils explore different sounds made by untuned percussion instruments for a space journey and write and perform their own songs with an accompaniment. These compositions are of a satisfactory standard. Recently pupils experimented with repeated patterns on both tuned and untuned instruments and performed their compositions in groups with a good awareness of maintaining the beat and contrasting the different sounds. Only a few of the pupils are at the stage of adding a melody with notation on the tuned percussion. There are many planned opportunities for pupils to listen and discuss a variety of music from different times and countries and their appraisal skills are at an expected level.
132. The quality of teaching is currently good. Evidence indicates that over time teaching has been at a satisfactory level. There are several teachers who show good levels of skill in music and although relatively new to the school are slowly beginning to improve attainment and the satisfactory levels of achievement. The good teaching is characterised by a confident subject knowledge, which provides pupils with the support they need to make good progress and extend their learning. Where subject knowledge and expertise are not as strong, pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Planning is good and improved resources are used effectively to teach important skills. In the upper junior classes time is spent helping pupils to breathe correctly and this results in an improved tone to the singing. In order to challenge the pupils further in singing rounds they move from two to three part-singing. Another good feature of the teaching in the upper junior classes is the way in which the theory and structure of music are taught alongside the playing and singing.

133. Music enjoys a high profile in the school due not only to the current good quality of teaching but also through links with other subjects, instrumental lessons, clubs and productions. Resources have been improved to include instruments and taped music from other countries. These opportunities and improved resources make a good contribution to developing pupils' social and cultural awareness. Effective links are made with science and design technology when pupils make musical instruments. All classes in the school regularly add musical accompaniments to stories and poems and take part in drama and musical presentations. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology when pupils record their compositions, use keyboards and carry out research on the Internet to learn more about orchestral instruments. Most of the pupils who are learning instruments have the opportunity to join the school band. They regularly play in assemblies and this not only gives them the opportunity to play together but it enables the rest of the school to hear and enjoy live music.
134. The co-ordinator is providing good levels of leadership and managing the specialist role of teaching all the infant classes very well. She also has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in provision in Year 3 to Year 6 through her lesson observations there. She has introduced new planning and assessment procedures and carefully monitors their effectiveness. The procedures for assessment are good but at times more use could be made of the assessment information to plan work at a challenging enough level for all pupils. There is a good commitment to further improvements to the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. Standards in physical education are above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The good quality of teaching across the school together with the positive attitudes and good behaviour of the pupils help to create a positive learning environment where all pupils, including those with special educational needs and travellers' children, make good progress and achieve well. Improvement has been good since the time of the last inspection.
136. By the end of Year 2 pupils show good levels of agility and poise. Pupils move around the hall showing a good awareness of space and the needs of others. Pupils show good balance and body control. They move using a good variety of methods including, hopping, twisting and turning. Pupils take off and land well when jumping and put together a sequence of movements well. Pupils are good at interpreting music and respond well to changes in mood or tempo in music. They show good levels of creativity and imagination and create original body shapes and stances when the music stops. Pupils recognise the importance of warm up and cool down activities and the importance of exercise for a healthy lifestyle.
137. Pupils continue to make good progress during Year 3 to Year 6 and by the time that pupils leave school they have developed good skills in physical education. Pupils fully understand the importance and benefits of taking part in physical activity and know the role that fitness can play as part of a healthy lifestyle. They know that vigorous exercise causes the pulse and heart rate to increase and fully understand the importance of warm up and cool down activities. Pupils have good ball skills and many throw balls with a good degree of power and accuracy. In netball they pass and move with a good level of skill and understand the contribution that dodging and marking play in competitive ball games. In hockey pupils show good levels of stick control and dribble,

pass and shoot well. Pupils put these skills to good effect in small competitive games. In these games pupils show an equal measure of sportsmanship and competitiveness. Pupils have a good awareness of space when playing games and show good levels of co-ordination when throwing and catching. Standards in swimming are above average by the end of Year 6 with almost all pupils able to swim at least 25 metres and many pupils able to swim well in excess of this distance. The school enjoys significant success in inter school competitions in rugby, cricket, netball, football and athletics. Residential visits that the school takes part in offer opportunities for pupils to take an active and enjoyable role in outdoor pursuits.

138. Pupils throughout the school show considerable enjoyment and enthusiasm in physical education lessons. They listen carefully to instructions and are keen to demonstrate, trying hard to improve their performance. Pupils behave well and are ready to take on board comments to help them improve. These positive attitudes help to create a good learning environment and contribute much to how well pupils learn and progress.
139. The quality of teaching is good across the school. Teachers' planning clearly shows that over the course of the year all elements of the subject are taught in depth. The school uses the specialist teaching of the subject co-ordinator in Year 3 to Year 6 to effectively teach the subject to classes other than her own. The co-ordinator uses her subject knowledge and expertise well to motivate and enthuse the pupils. Throughout the school the teaching is good because teachers directly teach specific skills in a direct and purposeful manner. In hockey lessons the pupils are taught how to hold a stick, how to pass and how to dribble. The pupils are then given sufficient time and opportunities to practise and refine their skills. Teacher interventions are timely to further improve pupils' performance levels. Lessons are well planned and resourced and management of pupils is good. These factors all help to ensure that lessons are brisk and little time is wasted. A very good feature of teaching is that pupils are kept physically active throughout the lesson and this impacts positively on improving pupils' fitness levels. In a good dance lesson for pupils in Year 2 the teacher chose the music well, which enabled the pupils to be imaginative and creative in their interpretations. The manner in which the teacher taught pupils how to jump and land with elegance added much to the quality of learning. The use of exemplars of pupils' performances improves the performance of the whole class. The school makes good use of outside coaches in areas such as football and netball and the skills, enthusiasm and expertise of the coaches add another dimension to pupils' physical development.
140. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has put together a good scheme of work which ensures that all elements of the subject are covered well and provides individual lesson plans for colleagues. The fact that the co-ordinator teaches in some classes other than her own enables her to get a good grasp of how well pupils are doing. Plans are in hand for her to monitor teaching and learning for the younger pupils in school when the subject is an identified priority area on the School Improvement Plan. The school has received awards from a national body for the level of physical activity that pupils are involved in and is currently seeking the Gold Award, which is the highest level that can be achieved. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' progress and good use is made of this information to guide and inform planning. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities which add another dimension to pupils' learning experiences and to pupils' personal and social development. Resources for the subject are good and the quality of accommodation is very good. In addition to two halls the school has very good hard and soft surfaced play areas which are used well to help develop pupils' skills in physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

141. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected in the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and travellers' children, make satisfactory progress. This reflects the position at the last inspection and progress over time has been satisfactory.
142. Pupils in Year 2 record the work they have carried out both in words and in pictures. When given opportunities they take part in periods of quietness and stillness, illustrated very well in collective acts of worship. They talk about feelings in an appropriate manner using words such as happy and sad. Pupils understand well that there are times that are special to them and also times like Christmas and Easter that are special to many people. Pupils show a satisfactory understanding of places of worship. They know that there are stories connected with religions and pupils have made a presentation in assembly that covered the story of creation, Abraham and Sarah as special people, the Jews' holy book and what happens on the Jewish Sabbath.
143. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a secure understanding of the religions they have studied. Pupils understand the significance of Baptism as a rite of passage in the faith. They have a good understanding of the fact that there are differences within faith groups and recognise the importance of different symbols for different faiths. They recognise the similarities and differences between different faith groups. Pupils show a readiness to listen to the beliefs and thoughts of others and show them respect. The pupils know that the Bible is a very popular book and relate this to the fact that this is because Christianity is spread around the world. Some know that the stories of Noah and Jonah are to be found in the Old Testament. The pupils work well together in pairs reading six extracts from the Bible and identifying each as a particular example of the different genre to be found in the Bible. This contributes well to their social development as they reflect on which piece was the most interesting and why. Pupils understand in a satisfactory manner the concept of pilgrimage through learning about the Muslim Hajj and show a good understanding about some of the main beliefs of Islam and the characteristics of Hinduism.
144. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject. They listen attentively in lessons and value and respect the opinions of others. Pupils are keen to learn about different faiths and religions and show a good level of respect when talking about the differing beliefs, faiths and cultures of others. Behaviour in lessons is often good and this adds to the quality of the learning environment.
145. Teaching overall is satisfactory. Planning shows that pupils receive a good balance between learning about other world faiths as well as Christianity. Opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on the beliefs and characteristics of different faiths and to examine the great similarities that there are between different religions. Teachers handle discussions well and with good levels of sensitivity. Teaching provides pupils with sufficient time to reflect on what they have read or listened to before making their responses. Pupils are always ready to contribute to discussions because they know that their views will be listened to and respected by teachers and classmates. Good examples were in evidence of the subject being used to enhance pupils' literacy skills when for example pupils were asked to write at length about a visit to a temple or about aspects of the Christian story, whilst on other occasions opportunities are missed. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory although there are occasions when marking is cursory and does not provide enough guidance to pupils as to what is needed to improve.

146. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The headteacher, as co-ordinator, plans lessons very carefully for each class, monitors teaching and learning well and has a very clear grasp of the strengths and areas for development in the subject. Individual teachers evaluate their lessons and assessments follow each unit of work. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as opportunities are provided for pupils to work together and to make visits like the one to a Hindu Temple in Leicester. The resources for the subject are satisfactory and are used well although the use of computers to enhance pupils' learning is not as consistent as it could be.