

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLLIERS WALK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hinckley

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119927

Headteacher: Mr R Hewins

Reporting inspector: Sue O'Sullivan  
31525

Dates of inspection: 31 March – 3 April 2003

Inspection number: 248064  
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Holliers Walk Hinckley Leicestershire
Postcode:	LE10 1PL
Telephone number:	01455 632556
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr Nigel Scarborough
Date of previous inspection:	12 January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Sue O'Sullivan 31525	Registered inspector		How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Jenny Mynett 9334	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Pauline Martin 2904	Team inspector	English Art and design English as an additional language	
Ken Hobday 21372	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Music Physical education Special educational needs	
Sonia Bosworth 30573	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Inclusion	
Derek Pattinson 19120	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Beryl Richmond 32142	Team inspector	Geography History Religious education	How well are pupils taught?

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>31</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Holliers Walk is a large primary school with 513 pupils on roll, aged 4 – 11, housed in mainly Victorian buildings. The school serves a stable community and most pupils live in Hinckley or surrounding villages. There are 57 children aged five and under. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is average. Sixty-nine pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, 13 per cent of the number on roll. Seven pupils have statements of educational need. The proportion of pupils with special needs is below the national average. There are 11 pupils for whom English is an additional language. Their mother tongue is mainly Bengali or Punjabi. The proportion of pupils registered for free school meals is lower than in most schools. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school other than at the usual times is small. Since the previous inspection the overall number of pupils on roll has fallen.

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

The school provides its pupils with a sound education in a caring and inclusive environment. Inspectors' findings show that pupils reach average standards in all subjects except in science where standards are above average by Year 2 and Year 6. In physical education, in Years 1 and 2, standards are above expectations. In history, standards are below expectations by Year 6. In national tests in 2002 pupils at the age of 11 attained results that were well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. Teaching is satisfactory overall but is good in reception and Years 1 and 2. Leadership and management are sound overall with areas for improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards in science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and in physical education in Years 1 and 2 are above average.
- Planning, teaching and assessment in the Foundation Stage are good.
- Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good.
- The provision for pupils' moral, social and personal development is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good.
- Relationships between pupils, teachers and support staff are good.
- The school provides a supportive and caring environment and teachers know their pupils well.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is good.

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

- Standards in history by the end of Year 6.
- Aspects of strategic planning and management.
- Assessment of pupils' standards and progress.
- Teachers' expectations of and provision for higher-attaining pupils.
- Provision to prepare pupils for living in a multi-cultural society.

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

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

The school was last inspected in January 1998. Since then sufficient action has been taken to move the school forward. All the key issues raised have been addressed, some successfully and some still require further action. The action taken has improved the work of the school by better planning for school development: by some, but still insufficient, monitoring of pupils' standards and progress; by raising teachers' awareness of the potential achievement of higher-attaining pupils; and by monitoring teaching. The quality of teaching has improved, significantly so in reception classes and in Years 1 and 2, but not sufficiently in Years 3 to 6. Further improvements are needed in monitoring, evaluating and taking action to improve all teaching, in assessing pupils' standards and progress, in improving curricular planning to improve provision for higher-attaining pupils, and in aspects of strategic planning. The governors meet statutory requirements in relation to performance management.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	C	A	B
Mathematics	D	B	B	D
Science	C	C	B	C

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

Inspectors' findings show that most children in the reception classes are on course to achieve the goals expected of them by the age of five. By the age of seven, pupils achieve above average standards in science and physical education and average standards in English and mathematics. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and music, pupils' standards match those for their age. By the age of eleven, pupils achieve above average standards in science and average standards in English and mathematics. In history standards are below average. In art and design, design and technology, geography, information and communication technology, physical education and music, pupils' standards match those expected for their age.

Overall, pupils enter the school with average levels of attainment and make steady progress as they move up the school. There are no significant differences in the standards boys and girls achieve. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in reception classes and satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. Potentially higher-attaining pupils do not all reach the higher standards that should be expected of them.

The trend of improvement over the last three years in the standards achieved in tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is similar to the upward national trend. In 2002 standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 were average in reading and writing when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. In mathematics they were well below average. At the end of Year 6 standards in national tests in 2002 rose faster than the national trend in English and science and were above average in English, average in science and below average in mathematics when compared with similar schools. The school exceeded its target in English but fell a little below in mathematics. Targets set for 2003 are realistic and challenging.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy their life in school and are enthusiastic learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are friendly and considerate.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Punctuality in the morning is mainly good.

Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour are important strengths of the school and contribute well to the sound progress they make. The ethos of the school successfully promotes the inclusion of all its pupils. The school needs to ensure that attendance is correctly recorded in registers. The late arrival of some pupils in the morning disrupts their and others' learning.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and pupils make sound progress in their learning. Teaching is better in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory but guided reading is not yet taught well. Speaking and listening skills and handwriting have improved. The quality of teaching of numeracy is good. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy well and pupils are making steady progress. Strengths in the best teaching include good planning in year teams and a good variety of strategies and resources to make learning interesting and relevant to all pupils. Teachers manage the pace of learning well and manage pupils' behaviour skilfully. They know their pupils well and establish good relationships with them in the two years they remain with a class. Support assistants are generally well used. Pupils with special educational needs are often given effective support. Some individual education plans need clearer definition of the steps that lead pupils to meet their targets over time. Teaching is less satisfactory when not enough account is taken, in planning work, of what pupils already know so that some pupils are not working at appropriate levels. This is partly because ongoing assessment of pupils' progress is not well established. Marking is inconsistent and does not do enough to show pupils how they can improve their work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for learning. The links made between subjects help pupils to understand the connections and enliven their learning. Extra-curricular provision is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Teachers and class assistants provide good support. Some individual education plans need more detailed steps towards longer-term targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils make as good progress as their peers and are well integrated into the life of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal, moral and social education is good and is a strength of the school. Provision is satisfactory for spiritual development. There is little provision to prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society but overall provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Care for pupils' welfare and personal development is good. This continues to be a strength of the school.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school has established satisfactory partnerships with parents. Many parents are involved in the life of the school and make a good contribution. Some aspects of the school's communication with parents need to be improved.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development is good and pupils respond well to the good provision for moral and social development. Their behaviour and good relationships reflect the caring ethos of the school. The range of extra-curricular clubs, sports, residential visits and exchanges with a French school, is good and pupils enjoy these opportunities. The school is aware of the need to improve education for life in a multi-cultural society.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and key staff provide sound leadership in promoting the school's aims and values. Responsibilities are appropriately delegated to senior and middle managers but they do not have enough time to carry out all their monitoring duties. Strategic planning to identify and manage the implementation of the school's priorities needs to be improved.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively and are strongly committed to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has thorough procedures for analysing pupils' performance in tests in English, mathematics and science. It does not have fully effective systems for monitoring teaching and learning in all subjects and aspects of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Financial resources are well used and the headteacher and governors work well together to manage funding to meet the school's educational priorities. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

Staffing is adequate but the absence on long-term sick leave of two teachers currently causes difficulties. The headteacher and governors have taken appropriate steps to resolve this within the near future. Indoor accommodation is satisfactory but provision for sports is limited and there are no green spaces for pupils' recreation. There is no outside area specifically for children under five and this is unsatisfactory. Resources are satisfactory across the curriculum.

The leadership and management of the headteacher, senior staff and governors are sound although there are areas to be improved. There is a strong commitment to the school among the staff and they work well together. Management responsibilities are appropriately delegated to senior and middle managers but they do not have enough time to carry out all their responsibilities as effectively as they should. In particular, monitoring of standards and teaching within subjects by senior managers and subject co-ordinators is variable. In some subjects, such as mathematics and English it has resulted in improved teaching. In others it has been only partially effective. Aspects of management, such as strategic planning and the effective implementation of action for school improvement are areas for improvement. Governors and senior managers apply the principles of best value effectively.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like the school.</li> <li>• Pupils make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework given.</li> <li>• Communications from the school about activities and pupils' progress.</li> <li>• Extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Aspects of leadership and management.</li> <li>• Closer links and working with parents.</li> </ul>

The parents of 83 pupils (16 per cent) responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire and 23 parents attended the meeting with inspectors. Parents hold positive views about most aspects of the school. Some concerns were expressed. The inspection supports most of the parents' positive views and some of the concerns.

Inspectors feel that the amount of homework is satisfactory but its use is sometimes inconsistent. The team agrees that communications with parents could be improved and better links fostered. Extra-curricular activities are judged to be good. The team recognises that there are some issues relating to the leadership and management of the school that need to be addressed.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter the school with levels of attainment that vary from year to year and between individuals, but which are average overall. By the time they leave the school at the age of 11, pupils' standards are average except in science, where they are above average. They are below average in history. Overall, pupils make steady progress as they move up the school. These standards are comparable with those found at the previous inspection.
2. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve well as a result of well-planned lessons and good teaching. Most children are on course to meet the levels expected in relation to most of the early learning goals<sup>1</sup>, by the end of the school year. Children with special educational needs make good progress because their work is well adapted to their individual needs.
3. The standards attained by pupils by the end of Year 2 in national tests in 2002 were average in reading and writing compared with all schools. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3<sup>2</sup> was average. When compared with similar schools, pupils' results were below average in reading and writing and well below average for the higher level. The trend over the last three years shows that standards in tests in reading have fallen slightly while standards in writing have risen slightly. Both are now close to the national average. Standards in mathematics in the 2002 tests were well below average in comparison with all schools and with similar schools. There have been fluctuations in the school's results in mathematics over the last three years. Overall the trend over this period has been below average. Teachers' assessments in science show that in the last two years standards in science by the end of Year 2 have risen and are now above average.
4. Inspection findings show a mainly similar pattern in all three subjects by the end of Year 2, although standards in mathematics have improved and are now average as a result of improvements in teaching. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making good progress in science and satisfactory progress overall in English and mathematics. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because they receive effective support and teachers usually address their individual needs satisfactorily. In physical education standards are above average. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and music standards are average and are in line with expectations for pupils of this age. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
5. Pupils' standards by the end of Year 6 in national tests in 2002 were well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science compared with all schools. In comparison with similar schools pupils' results were above average in English, average in science and below average in mathematics. Over the last three years standards in tests have risen in line with the rising national trend in all three subjects, with a sharper rise in English and science in 2002. The proportions of pupils reaching the higher level<sup>3</sup> were

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<sup>1</sup> The early learning goals are the levels in all the areas of learning that children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. The areas of learning are the government guidelines for the curriculum for children in nursery and reception classes.

<sup>2</sup> Most pupils are expected to reach Level 2 by the end of Year 2. Some pupils will reach the higher Level 3 which is the expectation for most pupils by the end of Year 4.

<sup>3</sup> Most pupils are expected to reach Level 4 by the end of Year 6. Some pupils will achieve the higher Level 5.

well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. The school acknowledges that the Year 6 group in 2002 contained a greater proportion of higher-attaining pupils than the current Year 6 and attained above average results. In 2002, the school exceeded its targets in English and science but results fell a little below target in mathematics. The statutory targets set for 2003 are realistic and challenging.

6. Inspection findings show that standards by the end of Year 6 are currently average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards are below average in history. They are average and in line with expectations for this age in art and design, design and technology, geography, information and communication technology, music and physical education. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
7. Pupils make sound progress in Years 3 to 6 although higher-attaining pupils do not currently achieve as highly as their potential suggests they should. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls. The pupils for whom English is an additional language are fluent English speakers and are making as good progress as their fellow pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress through the school. They are often given extra support of good quality but sometimes the tasks they are given do not match sufficiently well their capacity to learn.
8. Standards in literacy are being effectively developed through an emphasis on reading, writing and speaking skills in English and in other subjects, such as geography, religious education and history. Numeracy is being developed well in mathematics and in science, and satisfactorily in history, geography, art, and design and technology. Pupils are developing competent skills in the use of information and communication technology through the use of computers and laptops in several subjects, as well as through discrete teaching.

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

9. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development are good. Pupils' attitudes to school and their learning are good. Parents feel that the school is working hard to promote good attitudes and values and for the vast majority of pupils this is having a positive effect. Pupils are enthusiastic and usually display good attitudes both in lessons and around the school. The effective management skills of teachers ensure that a good working atmosphere is maintained in the classroom and enable pupils to settle quickly to the tasks set for them. They are usually attentive, listen well to instructions and to each other and are keen to respond to questions. However, their capacity for sustained concentration is sometimes limited and where the pace of lessons drops some pupils can become restless and distracted.
10. Pupils have positive views about their school which they have shared both in response to pupil questionnaires and during conversations with the inspection team. They enjoy coming to school where they *'have many friends'*. They spoke of the *'good teachers... who are nice and friendly'*, and lessons, such as the extra booster classes in English, were singled out for praise by those pupils who take part in them. Pupils talked about the various playgrounds and long lunch breaks, and were enthusiastic about the various school visits and after-school clubs – *'it's not just come here, work and then go home'*.
11. The youngest children in the reception class show a confident and mature approach both to their work and within their relationships with each other. They listen attentively to the teachers and concentrate well on their different tasks and activities. The good facilities and sensitive staff interventions help the children work and play well together. They are

developing good social skills as they happily share their toys and resources, learn different skills and acquire new knowledge.

12. Behaviour in the school is good. Pupils are well aware of the school code of conduct with the majority of pupils behaving well, both in their lessons and around school. Parents think that the behaviour of pupils is good - *'being nice to each other... and behaving well'*. The school has focused on developing a climate for learning and implemented a behaviour management system to support this. Where this is consistently applied, most pupils respond well. However, there are a few pupils who demonstrate very challenging behaviour. In these instances, other pupils have learnt to ignore disruptive behaviour and get on with their work. In most cases, teachers effectively manage pupils and 'contain' difficult pupils. The school uses exclusion as part of its behaviour management programme only where there are serious incidents of aggression and violence. There were two pupils excluded last year, one permanently.
13. Pupils value the reward system and feel it encourages them to work hard and behave well. Pupils are very friendly and polite, happy to talk about what they are doing and show their work to visitors. During discussions with pupils they reported that the school was a safe and secure place with few incidents of oppressive behaviour or bullying. Where incidents happen they feel confident that they are taken seriously and problems will be dealt with, although some teachers tell them *'you are old enough to sort it out yourself'*, or lunchtime supervisors have told them to *'just ignore it'*.
14. Overall, relationships in the school are good, both between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves. The school works hard to promote tolerance, kindness and appreciation of others to ensure pupils do not feel excluded. There is no racism in the school and pupils from different backgrounds integrate amicably together. A number of pupils have been identified as having behaviour-related special educational needs. The effective use of the school's behaviour management systems means these pupils are well integrated into the classroom and involved in school activities. Pupils work well together in pairs and during small group activities, where they learn to co-operate, negotiate and compromise. This harmonious atmosphere promotes a good working environment and makes a positive impact on learning.
15. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are encouraged to develop their investigative skills and to evaluate their results. However, there are few opportunities provided to enable them to make choices and take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils willingly undertake roles of responsibility around the school acting as class monitors. However, pupils in Year 6 do not feel that they have significantly more responsibilities as the oldest in the school. A small group runs a lunchtime club for reception children and there is a canteen committee involving a small number of pupils. During the course of the year, pupils run a number of fundraising events for charities. The school is currently investigating the possibility of introducing a school council to give pupils more of a role in getting involved in the decision-making processes of the school.
16. The overall level of attendance in the school is satisfactory. At 95.1 per cent overall this is above the national average, but this figure includes higher levels of unauthorised absences than in other schools. The higher proportion of unauthorised absence is due in part to a small number of pupils taking extended holidays in term time. However, the school is not recording lateness in the correct way, which would increase the unauthorised figure further. Punctuality in the morning is mainly good although there are a small number of parents who are not ensuring that their children arrive at school on time each day. Some of these pupils frequently arrive very late in the mornings and miss the start of lessons each day. This means that they do not know what is going on and interrupt the lesson for the rest of the class.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. In 95 per cent of lessons teaching is at least satisfactory whilst in 55 per cent it is good or very good. The proportion of very good teaching across the school is 13 per cent. This is a significant improvement overall since the previous inspection but there are variations across years.
18. In the Foundation Stage teaching is never less than good and is often very good. In Years 1 and 2, 75 per cent of teaching is good, with 13 per cent very good. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching in only 42 per cent of lessons is good although almost all teaching is satisfactory. In these years only 10 per cent of teaching is very good. In four lessons teaching was unsatisfactory. Overall, the proportion of very good teaching is low apart from in the Foundation Stage, where one third of teaching is very good.
19. The monitoring of teaching undertaken by the senior management team has been a priority for the school since the previous inspection. It has included setting targets for improvement and this has helped to raise the quality of teaching, especially in reception to Year 2. It has contributed to better teaching in mathematics, science and physical education where pupils' standards have risen since the previous inspection. The school needs to make this monitoring more effective in raising the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 and in all subjects. There is no teaching and learning policy to guide teachers towards consistent practice and this is unsatisfactory.
20. In the Foundation Stage teaching is good with some very good elements and few weaknesses. The quality of teachers' planning is very good. Teachers have clear objectives for each lesson and area of learning and record carefully what learning has been achieved and what needs to be done next. This enables all children, including those with special educational needs, to make steady progress, especially in literacy and numeracy. They manage their classes very well. They know their children very well and cater well for their individual personalities. They maintain children's enthusiasm for learning. Some individual learning goals receive less attention. Sometimes this is because teaching is in terms of traditional subjects and these do not encompass the full range of early learning goals. There are too few ways for children to work and respond more independently. When children make their own choice of activities these are not always recorded.
21. The quality of teaching in literacy is satisfactory across the school. Teachers follow the National Literacy Strategy in its aims and objectives. They structure their daily literacy lessons well in conformity with the Strategy. Teachers draw from the Strategy's guidance to complement and increase the range of teaching strategies used. Teaching is particularly effective in developing pupils' skills in speaking and listening. The teaching of reading is satisfactory. However, guided reading sessions are not taught well.
22. The quality of teaching of numeracy is good, although one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. Most teachers have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and use it well to provide well-structured lessons in which pupils have opportunities to develop calculation skills and consolidate learning through interesting activities. Most pupils enjoy their work in mathematics. Whilst teachers assess pupils' attainment satisfactorily in mathematics, their progress is not tracked systematically enough for individual targets to be set, in order to give pupils a clear idea of what they need to do to improve.
23. Teachers in each year group generally plan effectively together to ensure that pupils in each class benefit from similar, and sometimes shared, lessons. This enables teachers to

provide some specialist teaching within a year group and this benefits pupils' learning. However, there is no common format across the school for planning, in particular of weekly plans for literacy and numeracy, but also in other subjects. Consequently, it is difficult to plan consistently for the progress that pupils are expected to make except in terms of content of lessons. This makes it difficult for teachers to monitor the progress of individual pupils against agreed objectives, such as developing understanding and skills in each subject. Some teachers plan lessons in such a way that pupils are able to respond in a variety of ways according to their ability. This ensures that all pupils are included in the lesson and can succeed. In other lessons teachers do not provide work at different levels of challenge. For example in a history lesson in Year 6, the teacher gave all pupils the same task to do irrespective of what they already knew and could do, and consequently some pupils were not challenged enough while others found the task too difficult. Where pupils are set for particular subjects, for instance in mathematics in Year 6, teachers take more account of what pupils already know and can do, through the setting arrangements. Within sets, teachers need to plan more work that extends all pupils' capabilities.

24. Most teachers provide pupils with special educational needs with work that is satisfactorily matched to their ability and attainment. They deploy learning support assistants appropriately to help and this help is often good. They make use of individual education plans to plan work effectively so that pupils make satisfactory progress. However, the targets in some plans are not sufficiently well defined in terms of pupils' needs. This makes it harder for teachers to provide varied and interesting work, at the appropriate level, so as to motivate pupils. Teachers' care in involving pupils with special educational needs as much as possible in the work of the class is contributing well to the satisfactory progress pupils make. Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from the opportunities to be taught in small groups. In this way their spoken English and understanding are improved and they make satisfactory progress. Higher-attaining pupils within this group are taught in appropriate ability groups where necessary and sometimes do not make enough progress.
25. Teachers use a good range of resources to motivate and encourage pupils as well as to consolidate and enhance their learning. Good examples of this are the use of washday artefacts, including a washtub, scrubbing board and dolly, for a Year 2 history lesson and religious artefacts used in a Year 6 lesson that taught pupils about Islam. However, teachers do not always give pupils enough resource support. For instance, in mathematics lessons when pupils are asked to calculate mentally or play a number fact game, some pupils need the visual aid of a number line, hundred square or multiplication square before they feel confident enough to participate fully. These are not always made available. Whilst there have been improvements in pupils' skills in information and communication technology, computers are under-used in recording and researching in some subjects.
26. In some lessons, teachers question pupils well to deepen their understanding, and use questions of differing levels of difficulty to ensure that all pupils have an opportunity to answer. In a Year 2 religious education lesson, the class teacher questioned pupils well about three of Jesus' parables. In answering, pupils showed that not only could they retell the stories and empathise with the characters in the stories but that they understood the underlying meaning of the parables as well. However, in other lessons, for instance in a mathematics lesson in Year 2, nearly all the teacher's questions needed a factual one word answer and did not challenge the pupils to explain and reason. Pupils did not have the opportunity to develop their use of correct mathematical language. In another lesson in Year 5, the teacher gave a pupil the answer to the meaning of an unknown word during a whole class session and missed the opportunity to challenge pupils to work out its meaning.

27. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always conform to the school's policy. Not all work is marked. Whilst marking is mainly supportive of pupils' effort it often does not indicate to pupils what they have to do to improve. This is because the teacher has not defined clearly enough exactly what the pupil is expected to learn or what skill the pupil is developing through the piece of work set.
28. In many subjects, teachers do not have detailed enough information on pupils' attainment which they can use to plan work that is suitably challenging and takes account of what pupils have already learned. Whilst teachers' knowledge of their pupils is sufficient to do this in Year 1 and 2 classes, it is unsatisfactory in the Year 3 to 6 classes. The summing up part of the lesson is often too brief and teachers do not allow enough time to find out whether pupils have really achieved the objectives for the lesson. In some cases, the lesson objectives are too broad and, therefore, pupils' progress against those objectives cannot be measured. Teachers do not usually ask pupils to assess what they have learned in a lesson and pupils do not have a clear understanding of the next steps they need to take. Some teachers display the learning objective for the lesson on the classroom board, and explain it to pupils. This good practice is not consistently applied across the school and consequently pupils cannot refer to it if they need to in the lesson.
29. Teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve are usually pitched at levels of average attainment. While this is satisfactory for many pupils, expectations are sometimes not high enough for higher-attaining pupils who often need more challenging work. Teachers usually make clear their expectations in terms of behaviour and of what pupils have to do during the lesson. Some teachers give pupils clear guidance on how long they have for a task and this helps to keep a good pace to the lesson. However, this good practice is not universal. When the pace of lessons slows unduly, pupils make less progress and achieve less. Teachers use some good strategies to ensure the involvement of all pupils in lessons. For instance, they provide pupils with white boards and pens so that they can all answer the questions posed by the teacher. Insufficient use is made of other resources that encourage all pupils to participate in lessons, for instance letter and number fans.
30. Teachers usually manage pupils well, although this was not as effective as it should be in a few lessons because the teacher did not use appropriate strategies. In most lessons behaviour is good and pupils are keen to learn. Pupils work together well and co-operate effectively with each other. They enjoy lively, active lessons that provide a good balance of teaching and pupil activity to consolidate learning. In such lessons they listen well and work with concentration. Some learning support assistants give very good support for behaviour. This was observed in mathematics and religious education lessons in Year 6. The learning support assistants deal with any potential interruptions to the lesson very quickly and consequently allow the teacher to teach without interruption and other pupils to learn.
31. The use of homework to support pupils' learning is satisfactory but it is inconsistent across year groups and subjects. For instance, in Year 4 each teacher uses a different system to support reading at home.

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

32. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets statutory requirements in all subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education. There are schemes of work for all subjects that set out the knowledge, understanding and skills pupils are expected to acquire as they move up the school. In English and mathematics the school follows the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. Since the previous inspection the school has adopted national schemes of work in many subjects and this has helped to improve teaching, for instance in design and technology where teachers previously lacked confidence. Planning by year teams ensures that pupils in the same year receive similar work. However, planning does not provide sufficiently well work at differing levels to meet the needs of pupils of all levels of ability within classes. This is particularly so for higher-attaining pupils but also sometimes for lower-attaining pupils. Work is usually matched appropriately to the needs of the majority of pupils enabling them to make at least sound progress.
33. The curriculum places satisfactory emphasis on the development of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills within English, and good emphasis on the development of number skills within mathematics. In some subjects, such as science and physical education, curricular planning provides for the progressive development of skills. In other subjects, such as history, there is little planned development of skills. There are good links between subjects, which help to make the curriculum more relevant for pupils. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology through other subjects.
34. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage of learning are good, and take account of the early learning goals. Children take part in a wide range of planned and carefully-structured activities and experiences, which give them a good start to their education.
35. The curriculum is soundly organised to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs within their class. When a pupil is withdrawn for extra help, the school takes great care to ensure that the pupil has access to the learning missed. These supportive arrangements enable pupils to make satisfactory progress over time and they are included well in the work of their class. Work is usually matched successfully to their needs in English and mathematics, and this helps them to develop literacy and number skills. Work is satisfactorily matched to needs in most other subjects. The school conforms to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Individual education plans for pupils with statements of special educational need match their needs satisfactorily. However, some individual education plans for pupils on the School Action Plus stage do not specify clearly enough the short-term steps that would help pupils to know the progress they were making towards overall targets. The school is aware that improvements are needed to make the plans for some pupils more effective in terms of their targets and how they will be met. The school plans to introduce an improved format and procedures for these in the summer term. The provision and support for pupils who are identified for School Action is satisfactory. Teachers and assistants work with care and consideration for all pupils with special educational needs.
36. A good number and range of well-led clubs and activities appeal to the interests of pupils. Clubs, such as netball, basketball, cross-country running, tag rugby, choir, orchestra, recorder, guitar, country dancing and French clubs, are well supported and greatly appreciated by pupils. Visits, such as to the National Space Centre, and annual residential visits for each of Years 4, 5 and 6, one of which is to Dieppe in France, and a visit to Florence for some pupils, extend pupils' learning. Visitors, such as an expert on snakes,



who visited the school during the inspection, help to make learning exciting for pupils. Links with schools in Germany, France and Ireland, as part of the Comenius project, are helping to enrich the experience of some pupils.

37. Most teachers make every effort in lessons and activities that support the curriculum to ensure that the contributions of all pupils are valued and celebrated. Pupils with special educational needs are included well in lessons and in the life of the school. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language and these pupils are also fully involved in the work and life of the school. All pupils are learning to respect one another and work well with each other. The school provides educational opportunities for all pupils, whatever their age, ability, background or ethnicity, to help them make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils of average ability, who form the majority, benefit most because work for them is almost always well matched to their needs. Potentially higher-attaining pupils do not make as much progress across the curriculum as they should although their progress is always at least sound.
38. Teachers give good emphasis to pupils' personal, social and health education. From an early age, pupils learn the importance of listening to the views of others and begin to discover how their actions can affect others, for instance through discussion about bullying. They develop an awareness of the need for rules based on safety, protection and fairness. Sex education is included in the school's health education programme, in line with agreed policy. Older pupils learn about the use and misuse of drugs. The health education programme makes pupils aware of a healthy diet, hygiene and exercise for maintaining a healthy life style.
39. The community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. For example, occasional links with a local supermarket help to bring learning alive for pupils and the fire service visits to talk about aspects of safety. There are no regular links with industry or business to help pupils to understand the world of work. There are well-established links with the schools to which pupils transfer at eleven. Links with local primary schools are good. For example, there are regular sporting fixtures from which some pupils benefit.
40. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development. The school promotes pupils' spiritual development satisfactorily. There are satisfactory opportunities, in both assemblies and lessons, for all pupils to gain insights into values and beliefs and the impact they make on people's lives. In some assemblies and lessons, there are opportunities for quiet moments of reflection and singing. However, although assemblies are well planned, not all comply with the statutory requirements and this is a minor weakness. Often, a sense of wonder is created in lessons, for example in the hatching of chicks, the stimulus of a live snake in a Year 2 lesson, the creation of pupils' own imaginary world in information and communication technology in a Year 3 lesson and in the creation of a 'bottle submarine' as a stimulus for Year 4 pupils' writing. Pupils have opportunities to reflect upon their own feelings.
41. The school successfully promotes a clear moral code consistently throughout all aspects of the school. The recognition of right and wrong underpins the code of conduct displayed around the school, which refers to relationships and looking after property. Each class has its own reward system of stickers or certificates and these are awarded for acceptable behaviour. Adults in school provide good role models for pupils. Many assembly themes and lessons for personal, social, health and citizenship education have a moral theme. These provide opportunities for pupils to listen to the points of views of others and to contribute their own. Pupils have a keen awareness of the environmental issues promoted through geography. For example, pupils in Year 4 are planning to collect paper for recycling and have considered conservation of the rainforests. Regular fundraising initiatives encourage pupils to have a better understanding of those less fortunate than

themselves in the wider community. Pupils have raised money for national events, such as 'Red Nose Day' and 'Blue Peter' projects and to enable proper toilets to be built for boys and girls in Goa.

42. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils are taught to appreciate the rights and responsibilities of individuals within the school and in the wider social setting. There are many opportunities in school for pupils to develop their social skills. Throughout the curriculum, pupils of all ages are given ample opportunity to relate to each other when they work in small or large groups. Teachers and other staff encourage the independence and responsibility of some older pupils but more pupils could be given such responsibilities. Some Year 6 pupils run a weekly midday club for Foundation Stage pupils. Other pupils help in the library, answer the office phone and help in the canteen organisation at lunch times. The rich and varied programme of extra-curricular activities and educational visits provides many further opportunities for pupils to develop social skills.
43. The provision to enrich pupils' cultural development has strengths and is sound overall. There is satisfactory provision for the appreciation of the richness and diversity of other cultures through aspects of many subjects of the curriculum, particularly religious education and geography. The library has an appropriate selection of books relating to a variety of cultures, including stories from around the world. Pupils learn about their own heritage through aspects of history throughout the school. The studies of Hinckley are used well to support pupils' knowledge of local cultural traditions. The school provides sound opportunities for pupils to compare their own culture to other cultures around the world through extra-curricular music, sport and maypole dancing, visits to museums, visiting groups of musicians and visitors. Although pupils study the work of famous artists, there is still insufficient opportunity to visit galleries or to work with artists and craftspeople. The school is beginning to take an active part in the Comenius Project to increase pupils' awareness as citizens of Europe. Strong links are being made with three schools in Ireland, France and Germany and exchange visits made with a French school. Pupils have created a book about Hinckley and its surroundings to share with pupils in other countries and have received one from the French school. There are good examples of pupils for whom English is an additional language contributing their cultural experience to class learning, for example in religious education when discussing marriage ceremonies. At present, the school does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to explore life in multicultural Britain

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

44. The school's provision for pupils' care, welfare and personal development continues to be good and remains one of the strengths of the school. Teachers and support staff provide a very caring and supportive environment for pupils, and seek to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities. The system of teachers remaining with their classes for two years helps to ensure close contact with pupils so that they get to know them very well. They pick up any concerns very quickly and provide targeted support where they see it to be needed. Pupils' personal development targets are identified on charts in a number of classrooms. There are satisfactory systems in place to support the personal development needs of pupils with special educational needs and they make sound progress. The school makes good use of external agencies to assess pupils with special educational needs, although it has yet to implement some advice on individual behaviour plans.
45. Pupils are aware of the school's code of conduct and this is reflected in the good behaviour in the school. The behaviour policy gives clear guidance on suitable rewards and sanctions and is respected and valued by most pupils. The small numbers of pupils who demonstrate more challenging behaviour are usually well supported and contained,

through effective teaching strategies and by applying consistently the well-defined behaviour management system. Some unsatisfactory management of behaviour was seen. Procedures to monitor and eliminate oppressive behaviour or bullying are discussed in assemblies and during the personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils are aware of the procedures and know who to go to if incidents occur.

46. Attendance is above 95 per cent. Procedures for monitoring punctuality and attendance need to be improved. The school registers are kept in the classrooms during the week and during the inspection were not being monitored effectively to ensure completion in accordance with statutory requirements. Parents are informed in the school prospectus about their responsibilities for ensuring that their children attend school regularly, and most parents call in promptly to inform the school when their children are ill. The school awards certificates for 100 per cent attendance as an incentive to promote improved attendance levels.
47. Well-established systems are in place to provide for the health and welfare of pupils. There are effective measures to meet the medical needs of pupils and a sufficient number of staff are qualified to provide first aid and to take care of pupils who may fall ill during the day. The school has good links with the various support agencies and these specialists attend as necessary. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The school has an appropriate policy in place identifying the correct procedures and guidelines for child protection, although there has been no recent updating of staff to ensure that all are fully apprised of the necessary procedures and recent legislative changes relating to child protection issues. The headteacher and one of the deputies are the designated members of staff with responsibility for child protection issues.
48. The procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils are good. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and effective guidelines in place to address the issues of safety and security of pupils in and around the school, or when out on visits. The health and safety governor and headteacher undertake regular health and safety checks and risk assessments, as well as reviewing the security arrangements around the school.
49. The school's assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance has improved since the previous inspection, especially in English, mathematics and science, but remains unsatisfactory in key aspects. The school analyses thoroughly data from national and other tests in English, mathematics and science and uses this information well in medium term planning. It informs the placing of pupils in groups for setting, in identifying pupils who could benefit from 'booster' classes and is used in setting class targets. Procedures for observing, measuring and recording what pupils know, understand and can do on an ongoing basis in relation to National Curriculum levels of achievement and using the information collected to inform planning of lessons, were not effective at the time of the last inspection. In mathematics, these procedures and their use are now satisfactory but remain insufficient in English and science because they are not followed consistently. They are unsatisfactory in all other subjects. This means that work is not always planned appropriately for pupils as their prior learning has not been sufficiently assessed or taken into account when planning lessons. In particular, the work of higher-attaining pupils is often not challenging enough. Pupils' progress in English and science is not tracked in enough detail in order to ensure that pupils make sufficient progress and that targeted support is provided when needed. The assessment policy is still in draft form and has not been agreed with all staff and ratified by the governing body. The action plan for assessment needs to be included in the school development plan and implemented by all.
50. Overall, the requirements for setting school targets are met satisfactorily. The governing body agrees these targets annually. Target setting on an ongoing basis for classes and individual pupils is variable in that in some subjects it does not happen, and because the

targets are sometimes too general. In some classes, pupils have individual targets for mathematics, English and behaviour but this is not consistent practice across the whole school and needs to be developed. The progress of pupils with individual education plans is assessed against the targets in these plans. However, the plans vary in quality and some need better-focused targets. The results of National Curriculum and other, non-statutory tests are analysed and appropriate curricular targets set in English, mathematics and science. There is no discrete analysis of the achievement of the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. As these pupils are fully integrated into the work of their class, their progress is assessed in the same way as that of other pupils. The school now needs to implement a more systematic approach to curricular target setting that is regularly monitored. Marking is inconsistent across the school and does not explain clearly to pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Some teachers display the learning objectives for their lessons on their class boards, and share these with pupils. However, this good practice is not consistently followed by all teachers. Some teachers do not use the summing up part of the lesson to assess whether pupils have understood and achieved those objectives. Consequently, pupils' own knowledge of their learning is not well developed.

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

51. The school continues to provide satisfactory partnerships with parents. Parents mainly expressed positive views about the work of the school, both in the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the meeting held for them before the inspection. However, there are a small number of parents who feel concerned that the school does not fully value parental contributions. They feel parents are not able to make an effective contribution to their child's education because there is no clear channel of communication nor are there regular opportunities for them to express their views. At the parents meeting, there was general agreement that more could be done to establish stronger links with parents and that communication with the school is not as good as it could be. Inspection evidence supports this view. The parent governors are aware of these concerns and are seeking ways to foster better links with the other parents.
52. The majority of parents are content with the standards being achieved, although some are unsure about the National Curriculum levels their children are attaining. They feel teaching is good and their children are expected to work hard, but that higher-attaining pupils are not always being challenged sufficiently. Inspection findings support these views. A number of parents reported that they are not very comfortable approaching the school with questions, concerns or issues and feel these are not addressed well. In addition, they feel they are not kept sufficiently well informed about the progress their children are making. However, the school feels it operates an open door policy and there are sufficient opportunities for parents to meet class teachers at the three formal consultation sessions a year. Parents receive progress reports at these sessions and are informed about their child's individual learning targets. The annual reports to parents are mainly sound in identifying what their children know, understand and can do.
53. A number of parents also expressed concerns about the amount of homework given, the range of activities offered outside school, and some felt the school was not well led and managed. The inspection team found that inconsistencies in the amount and use of homework set are unsatisfactory although the quality of homework seen is satisfactory. The range of extra-curricular activities provided is judged to be good. Leadership and management are sound overall but some issues remain to be addressed.
54. Overall the quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. Information regarding the school and its activities is detailed in the attractive school prospectus and governors' annual report for parents, although these contain some omissions, in particular in relation

to the school's work with pupils with special educational needs. Regular contact with parents is maintained through updating letters. Some parents commented that newsletters detailing school successes and pupils' achievements are produced infrequently and they feel dissatisfied about the extent to which they are kept informed about school events. At present, no curriculum overview is sent to parents each term to explain what their children will be learning. The school hopes that the recent establishment of a school web site should help to address some of these issues and raise the profile of the school. Some parents would welcome opportunities to support their children better by attending workshops to learn about teaching approaches used, such as in mathematics.

55. Most parents of pupils with special educational needs expressed satisfaction with the provision for their children. However, the school needs to develop its partnership with some parents by ensuring that parents are fully involved in establishing individual education plans for their children. The school is aware that working with parents is an area for development and intends to improve this in the summer term when it introduces a new format for individual education plans.
56. Some parents are closely involved in the life of the school and this is having a positive impact on the work of the school. Parents and other volunteers are invited to help with various activities around the school on a regular basis and a number are very supportive, helping out with small group activities, listening to reading or accompanying pupils to swimming. A number of previous volunteers have since been recruited on to the staff as support assistants. The 'Friends of Holliers Walk' association is very active in running a number of fundraising and social activities for the school. This has helped to provide valuable financial support to the school and they have recently helped to purchase benches and play equipment for the playground and curtains for the hall. A number of parents have also helped to create an attractive science garden and some help by hosting parents of overseas visitors during pupil exchange visits. Some parents still feel that there are insufficient opportunities offered to encourage parents to attend or be included in the life of the school.

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

57. The headteacher, senior staff and governors give sound leadership in promoting the school's aims and values. The headteacher has a strong vision for the school's educational direction and has successfully guided the school for many years. With the support of governors, the headteacher has built a hard-working and supportive management team which carries out its delegated responsibilities with energy and commitment. The school's philosophy is a very inclusive one and all pupils are treated with care and consideration. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the life of the school and make satisfactory progress across the school. There is a small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language and these pupils are also well integrated and make as good progress as other pupils.
58. The school has an inclusive approach to deciding its priorities. The headteacher and senior managers analyse test data in English, mathematics and science and use their findings, together with contributions from subject co-ordinators, to decide the most important priorities for the school. These are presented to governors who discuss and agree priorities and the allocation of resources to meet them. In the past two years, the key priority has been to improve writing across the curriculum. Currently, the key priority is to improve standards in mathematics. These are appropriate priorities in view of the standards achieved and action taken has been successful, for instance in improving pupils' writing across the curriculum. Other whole-school priorities have been identified, such as the introduction across the school of joined script that has been successfully introduced, and improvement to the quality of teaching. These priorities are shared with all teachers.

However, the lack of an overall school development plan into which to incorporate them makes it difficult to monitor their implementation and evaluate their effectiveness over a specific period of time. Monitoring of whole-school issues is undertaken by the senior management team, and reported on to governors appropriately, but there is no planned mechanism for incorporating them into a coherent, overall plan to be implemented by all. This limits the effectiveness of action taken.

59. The quality of subject development plans has improved since the previous inspection, but they still do not always reflect whole-school priorities. They now include costs, identify timescales for action and criteria for judging success and indicate how they will be monitored. They include evaluation by subject co-ordinators of how effective the previous year's action has been and outline priorities for the next two years. They also include measurable targets to raise pupils' standards in English and mathematics. These features were all required as part of the first key issue at the previous inspection. This key issue has now been met in respect of many of the actions required. However, the majority of subject plans do not have measurable targets for raising standards in their subject, and lack criteria that reflect the effectiveness of action taken and resources used, in terms of improving outcomes for pupils. The insufficiency of these aspects of strategic planning is one of the reasons why the school has not effectively resolved all the key issues identified in the previous inspection.
60. Monitoring of teaching has been carried out by senior managers and some subject co-ordinators. It has been effective in raising the quality of teaching in some subjects, such as mathematics, in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. However, overall, monitoring of teaching has not been effective enough in improving the quality of teaching and raising standards across the curriculum in Years 3 to 6.
61. The responsibility for monitoring standards and teaching is appropriately delegated to the two deputy headteachers with responsibility for reception and Years 1 and 2 and, for Years 3 to 6, to other senior managers and to subject co-ordinators. However, all senior managers and teachers carry a full teaching load and do not have sufficient time to carry out duties, such as monitoring teaching in their subject or across year teams. Until this school year, the budget surplus allowed the school to employ an additional teacher in order to provide release time for such duties. With the fall in role and reduction in the budget the school can no longer afford this. The school has not yet identified alternative strategies. The procedures for putting into practice recommended actions, currently identified through monitoring by senior staff, are unclear. Responsibility is delegated to Year teams to implement action but procedures for monitoring this, although planned, are inconsistent. As a result, implementation is inconsistent and has not been effective enough in securing improvement, for instance in improving year team planning consistently across all years. These issues were raised at the previous inspection and need to be resolved across the school.
62. Improvements have been made in relation to the key issues of the previous inspection that have had a positive impact on the standards and achievements of pupils. For instance, in raising standards by Year 2 and Year 6 in science and in Years 1 and 2 in physical education, in the very successful introduction of joined handwriting across the school, in better teaching, especially in Years 1 and 2, and in better provision and teaching in the Foundation Stage. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been more successful than work in meeting the objectives of the National Literacy Strategy where further work is needed. The investment in laptop computers has improved opportunities for pupils to gain skills in information and communication technology and pupils are making satisfactory progress. The use of test data is better now in English, mathematics and science but assessment across the curriculum remains unsatisfactory. The work undertaken to raise teachers' expectations of higher-attaining pupils has been partially

successful, for instance in the setting in mathematics in Years 5 and 6 and for number work in Year 2 but is still an issue across the curriculum.

63. Performance management is carried out satisfactorily on an annual basis and performance targets set. These include targets for teaching, for measurable improvement in pupils' attainment in end of Year 2 and Year 6 tests in English, mathematics and science, and for each individual's professional development. The school has achieved Investors in People status for its professional development work. Staff have benefited from access to training. For example, a deputy headteacher has completed the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers and teaching assistants have studied to achieve the National Vocational Qualification Level 3. Other training, for example to improve writing across the curriculum, has been beneficial to all teachers and has helped to raise standards in writing. Staff new to the school feel welcome and speak favourably of the support they are given. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been achieved since the previous inspection although some important issues remain to be resolved.
64. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties effectively. Although the governing body has vacancies, governors are taking action to fill these. Governors are strongly committed to the school and monitor its work through appropriate committees. Governors have recently carried out a self-audit that has usefully identified their strengths and weaknesses in terms of their knowledge about the school. This will inform their future training and is already helping to sharpen governors' awareness of strategic issues. One of the areas they need to address is how to monitor effectively the provision for pupils with special educational needs within the school. Currently, the co-ordinator is on long-term sick leave and the role is covered, in an acting capacity, by the headteacher who also has a full teaching load, as well as his management responsibilities. This is an unsatisfactory situation and has temporarily delayed work needed to improve further the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
65. The financial management of the school by the headteacher and governors, ably supported by the school's bursar, is good. Audit reports are acted on and issues are being dealt with. Available funds, including special grants for pupils with special educational needs and other purposes, are used effectively. Financial decisions are linked to educational priorities and the principles of best value are applied soundly. After several years of surplus, the fall in the numbers on roll has led to a budget deficit and the need to reduce staffing. This has been managed very effectively to date and future plans to manage further reductions in order to eliminate the deficit by the end of the financial year 2005 – 2006 are realistic. The close co-operation of the headteacher and governors on these issues is a good example of the effectiveness of the governing body in carrying out its responsibilities.
66. The current level of staffing is satisfactory but there are staffing issues to be resolved as two teachers are on long-term sick leave and the headteacher has had to take a full teaching load. This restricts the time available for his management duties. The headteacher and governors are taking action to resolve this issue as speedily as possible.
67. The indoor accommodation is spacious. The newly appointed site manager ensures that the school is very clean and is cared for well. Refurbishment and maintenance of the premises is carried out in accordance with a plan agreed by governors. The school works hard to improve the Victorian premises. For example, the school successfully obtained matched funding for the local education authority to renovate the lower hall and has obtained further funding to improve the accommodation for Years 1 and 2. The three areas of outdoor playground mean that pupils are dispersed effectively when outside but there is no green space for pupils' recreation. There are continuing limitations on access

to a sports field and for pupils with physical disabilities. There is no outdoor area specifically for children under five and this is unsatisfactory.

68. The school continues to have a satisfactory range and quantity of resources to support the curriculum. Classrooms are well organised overall. Pupils' increasing ability to take responsibility in organising their work is supported by readily accessible resources. However, there is still a quantity of old and out-of-date resources. This was noted in the last inspection. Until these are removed they will provide a temptation for busy teachers to use with consequent limitations to pupils' learning. The libraries are organised and managed satisfactorily. The library co-ordinators use external agencies to good advantage. They have appropriate plans to extend resources further. Pupils do not have the opportunity to use and apply information retrieval skills because there is no readily accessible card index or, in the infants library, a numerical Dewey index. Provision for the few pupils for whom English is an additional language is well managed.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. To improve further the education provided by the school and raise pupils' standards the school should:

- improve strategic planning and management by:
  - incorporating whole-school issues for improvement and agreed priorities for action into an overall school development plan;
  - ensuring that all plans that contribute to the overall school development plan, for example, subject development plans, include these priorities and that they are acted on;
  - implementing improved procedures for monitoring action taken, such as the monitoring of teaching quality in Years 3-6, and evaluating outcomes in terms of pupils' achievements;  
(paragraphs 58-61)
- implement and improve assessment of pupils' standards and progress in English and science and in foundation subjects, by:
  - matching assessment criteria to National Curriculum expectations in all subjects;
  - tracking pupils' progress by ongoing assessment;
  - using assessment information to plan lessons more effectively to meet the needs of individual pupils and groups of pupils;  
(paragraphs 23, 28, 50, 62, 94, 117, 123-124, 129, 140, 152)
- raise further teachers' expectations of what higher-attaining pupils can achieve by:
  - assessing their attainment and potential achievement;
  - setting challenging learning objectives for these pupils in lessons and providing work to match;  
(paragraphs 29, 32, 97, 108-109, 122, 128)
- improve provision to prepare pupils for living in a multi-cultural society.  
(paragraph 43)

### Minor issues

- to improve the quality of some individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs by defining steps towards targets more clearly (paragraphs 24, 35)
- to meet statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship (paragraph 40)
- to provide outdoor facilities for children under five to support their progress in all areas of learning (paragraph 67, 83)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	10	34	32	4	0	0
Percentage	0	13	42	40	5	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	YR –Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	513
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	36

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	69

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

### Attendance

95.1 per cent in 2001 - 2002

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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	44	43	87

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	40	39	39
	Girls	37	40	35
	Total	77	79	74
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (89)	91 (92)	85 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	38	43	43
	Girls	39	43	43
	Total	77	86	86
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (89)	99 (89)	99 (84)
	National	85 (84)	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	37	47	84

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	33	31	35
	Girls	42	37	44
	Total	75	68	79
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (82)	81 (81)	94 (97)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	34	35
	Girls	41	40	45
	Total	72	74	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (81)	88 (81)	95 (90)
	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	443	1	1
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	59	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)	20
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.6
Average class size	27

### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	316

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Financial information**

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	1,121,568
Total expenditure	1,137,846
Expenditure per pupil	2,073
Balance brought forward from previous year	-16,278
Balance carried forward to next year	-16,278

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 16.6%

Number of questionnaires sent out	500
Number of questionnaires returned	83

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	40	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	40	8	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	61	5	2	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	43	20	11	1
The teaching is good.	42	52	3	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	42	11	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	34	50	12	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	52	0	6	0
The school works closely with parents.	25	36	19	14	6
The school is well led and managed.	20	45	11	14	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	29	64	1	5	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	30	21	17	11

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

70. The good quality of teaching and learning in the two reception classes provides children with a very positive start to their school careers and represents a significant strength of the school. There were 57 children in this age group at the time of the inspection, most of whom had previously attended a pre-school playgroup or private nursery. Their attainment on entry to the school is mostly as expected for children of this age. In most of the areas of learning, they make appropriate progress. They make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and in some elements of communication, language and literacy and physical development. They are on course to attain the majority of the early learning goals by the time they begin Year 1. This is a similar picture to that reported at the time of the last inspection.
71. There are very good arrangements that ensure children are well prepared for entry. Parents and children are shown around the school and attend an 'open day' in the reception classes. Reception teachers visit children in their homes, gaining information and beginning to establish a good relationship with them. Parents are invited to an induction evening in the school, where they are given information about the school's expectations and procedures. Later, the school invites them to complete a questionnaire to seek their views on how successful the induction procedure has been and to suggest improvements. This promotes a positive partnership between parents and school staff right from the beginning.
72. Teaching in the two reception classes is good, with some very good elements and few weaknesses. The school has maintained the strengths in this area noted at the previous inspection. The quality of teachers' planning is very good. Teachers are clear about what they want children to achieve in each lesson and how this relates to the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. They plan in detail, noting how they will assess the progress children make. Afterwards they record carefully what learning has been achieved and what needs to be done next. This enables all children, including those with special educational needs, to make steady progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Another significant strength is the way in which teachers manage their classes. They know the children very well, cater for their individual personalities and maintain their enthusiasm for learning. They provide a secure and calm environment in which children feel safe and happy.
73. Although there are some lessons in specific subjects, a good overall balance of work is achieved between the six areas of learning. The distinctiveness of the Foundation Stage is maintained whilst providing a smooth transition into Year 1 work. However, some individual early learning goals receive less attention and children's achievements in them are less clearly assessed. Sometimes this is because children are taught through traditional subjects and these do not encompass the full range of the early learning goals. There are insufficient opportunities for children to work and respond in more independent ways. For example, children's capacity to respond to experiences in a variety of imaginative ways is sometimes limited because teachers specify the mode of response rather than allowing children to make their own choices. Teachers do not record which activities children undertake when they have a choice. There is thus no assurance that their experiences at these times are well balanced.

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

74. Teachers make good provision for this area of learning. They ensure that all children have equal access to their time and attention. Each day a 'special helper' is identified who takes the register to the office, helps to hand out drinks and heads the line as children move around the school. Children are encouraged to co-operate with each other, to share and to take turns. For example, they have 'talking partners' with whom they discuss answers before responding to the teachers' questions. Many of the wheeled vehicles they use in the playground are designed for more than one child and so promote co-operative play. The 'garden centre' provides further opportunities for social interaction. The daily 'snack time' is an orderly social occasion, with a child responsible for sweeping up crumbs at the end. Above all, teachers and other staff provide excellent role models. They treat children politely and take an interest in all they do. They make rules and expectations very clear and give gentle but effective reminders when children occasionally misbehave.
75. Children make considerable progress as a result of this effective provision. Their good standards in this area of learning are particularly praiseworthy because they have had to cope with some disruption. The classes were reorganised from three smaller to two larger classes in January with a change of teacher for many. Children enter the classroom happily at the beginning of the day, greeting adults pleasantly and settling down quickly to listen to the teacher. They display consistently positive attitudes and very good behaviour. They engage in independent activities very sensibly, enabling the teacher to work with a group without interruption. Most of the time they are aware of each other's needs, for example finding a place in the circle for a child with nowhere to sit. However, two children caused a major traffic jam in the playground because they were totally preoccupied with an important conversation and unaware of other children waiting to pass! Children's ability to select and use resources independently is limited by the few opportunities they are given to do this, but children are on course to meet all the other goals in this area of learning.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

76. The consistently good teaching in this area of learning is often linked well to work to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children with good speaking skills are encouraged to extend their spoken responses, whilst staff ensure that quieter children also have plenty of opportunities to respond, particularly through the use of 'talking partners' and in play situations. Spontaneous opportunities are often seized. For example, in a numeracy lesson on money, a child said that coins could be used to play 'heads and tails' and was encouraged to explain the rules of the game. Sometimes, however, questions are restricted to those requiring only single word answers and this does not encourage them to speak at any length. There are ample opportunities to listen to stories and poems to extend their vocabulary.
77. There is a daily literacy lesson that gives children thorough, systematic teaching in reading and writing skills, but other opportunities are also taken to learn new words. Teachers maintain children's interest in reading well, for example by covering some of the words in the 'big books' they read together. This helps children to use a good range of clues to work out which word is covered. Higher-attaining children are challenged well by these activities. All children take books home regularly and it is evident from the children's reading diaries that an effective dialogue between home and school often ensues. The school has recognised that its main reading scheme requires replacement, which is a priority for the coming financial year.
78. Writing skills are developed alongside those of reading, using a cursive script designed to enable children to join their letters easily in the future. During the inspection, children were working to produce a group book on the life cycle of a chicken, largely based upon their



own observations of chicks hatching in the classroom incubator. This gave them an appropriate incentive to write. Teachers model the writing process carefully, ensuring that children space and spell words correctly in their own work. There are good opportunities for children who have not developed good skills in controlling a pencil to undertake exercises to help them with pencil control, but rather fewer for children to experiment freely with mark making, for example in role-play activities.

79. Children make sound progress in this area of learning and their progress in acquiring handwriting skills is good. Most children are likely to attain all the early learning goals in this area by the end of the reception year. Although some speak with quiet voices, they express their thoughts clearly, often in several sentences. Some children still use immature language. Children mostly listen well to each other and to their teacher. Reading skills have developed to the expected level. Children recognise features of books and understand terms such as *author* and *illustrator*. The majority of children know all the sounds of the individual letters and are beginning to use their phonic skills to work out how to read simple regular words or to distinguish between more difficult ones. For example, one child used her knowledge of vowel sounds to distinguish between *Johnny* and *Jennifer*. Children write with care, demonstrating good handwriting skills, but do not produce a sufficient quantity of writing.

### **Mathematical development**

80. There is a strong emphasis upon this area and lessons observed during the inspection were well planned and taught. Many opportunities are taken to develop mathematical understanding. At registration, for example, children experience counting on and back from larger numbers. Children use sand and water when they are free to choose their own activities. Specific objectives are set, such as understanding *full*, *half-full* and *empty*. However, there is no guarantee that all children will work in these areas, so that some miss the opportunity to learn these new concepts. In numeracy lessons, teachers extend children's skills in a progressive way, using correct vocabulary throughout. They provide work to match the needs of all children. For example, lower-attaining children sort and identify real coins whilst higher-attaining children work out which coins they would use to pay a given amount.
81. As a result of consistently good teaching, children make good progress in this area of learning. Most children are on course to meet, and in some aspects to exceed, the early learning goals. All children count to 20 and most well beyond this. Some higher attaining children recognise numbers up to 100 and are beginning to understand tens and units. Most children know that a five pence coin is the equivalent of five one-penny coins. They can name squares, triangles, rectangles and circles.

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

82. Provision for this area of learning is satisfactory. Specific topics, such as growth, provide children with a good range of experiences, such as watching chicks emerge from eggs in the incubator. Children learn about cultures and beliefs by studying festivals and celebrations throughout the year. Visitors, such as firemen, are used to give children a wider perspective on the world around them. Staff or volunteer parents give children good guidance in using computers to extend literacy or numeracy skills. However, these are insufficiently used as an element in role-play activities to emphasise the place of computer technology in the workplace. There are some omissions in the school's programme for this area of learning. Children do not have enough opportunities to select from a range of tools and materials as they shape, assemble or join, nor do they have time independently to explore objects or investigate how things work. Good teaching ensures that most

children will meet the early learning goals included in the school's programme, but children are unlikely to meet every goal in this area of learning.

### **Physical development**

83. The school's provision in this area of learning is constrained by the lack of outdoor facilities for Foundation Stage children. There is no outdoor area specifically designed for this age group in which their skills across several areas of learning can be developed. The playground immediately outside their classrooms is available to them only on Monday mornings. Opportunities for climbing are inadequate. Nevertheless, the school works hard to provide appropriate activities and resources. There is a plentiful supply of good quality wheeled vehicles and each class has two physical education lessons in the hall. The latter are of a good length and are very well taught, with a good emphasis upon improving performance. There is appropriate provision in the classroom for children to develop the skills of cutting, sticking, modelling and constructing, although precise objectives for this work are insufficiently identified in planning documents.
84. In spite of the inadequate resources children make good progress in most aspects of this area of learning and are likely to exceed expectations in many. In dance lessons, children respond well, often interpreting words and music adventurously. They enjoy working hard and are often able to point out the good features of their work. In the playground, children use vehicles sensibly. Even when travelling at speed they are aware of space and retain good control, so that collisions are very rare. Children are aware of the changes to their bodies caused by exercise.

### **Creative development**

85. There is satisfactory provision for this area of learning, although a few aspects require improvement. The role-play areas, taking the form of a garden centre at the time of the inspection, provide children with good bases for imaginative play. However, teachers and support staff interact too infrequently with the children in these areas because they are occupied with groups of children on other activities. Art activities are planned and carried out with groups of children, ensuring that all participate in due course, extending their skills in using colour, tone and texture. There are fewer opportunities for children to engage in painting, printing or collage more spontaneously as a response to what they see or hear. Similarly there are regular, well-planned music lessons but few opportunities for children to experiment more freely with musical instruments or to listen to music. However, as noted above, dance lessons provide a good creative outlet for children's energies. Although children are on course to meet many of the goals in this area, they are less likely to do so in those aspects demanding an imaginative response to a wide range of stimuli.

## ENGLISH

86. Standards are satisfactory overall. Standards have risen since the previous inspection in speaking, listening and handwriting. They are good in these at the end of Year 2 and satisfactory overall at the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards in reading and writing are satisfactory. This was so at the time of the previous inspection. The standards achieved in the 2002 national assessment tasks at the end of Year 2 were below average when compared with similar schools. However, there were a number of pupils with special educational needs in the group.
87. Standards of achievement by the end of Year 6 in the 2002 national assessments were well above average. However, the inspection judged standards to be variable and some higher-attaining and average-attaining pupils are not achieving well enough. In reading, the issues related to standards identified in the previous inspection remain the same. In writing, there have been notable improvements across the school since the previous inspection. Standards in writing by Year 6 are currently average. In the last two years the school has placed emphasis on raising standards in writing across the curriculum and as a result standards in writing are continuing to rise.
88. Across the school pupils' standards in speaking and listening are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils improve their listening skills because teaching provides good opportunities for speaking and listening. The most successful teaching enables pupils to talk in pairs and small groups as well as in whole class discussion. Such teaching also provides good opportunities for speaking and listening across all subjects. For example in Year 2, science lessons engage pupils' interest and they listened attentively to a visitor who had brought a snake for them to see. In a religious education lesson in Year 4, pupils worked well in groups creating a story to illustrate how the choices of individuals can affect others. They spoke clearly describing the responses of the characters in their story. Imaginative role-play for younger pupils provides worthwhile contexts to develop skills further. However, in Years 3 to 6 opportunities for drama and to present arguments or oral reports are limited.
89. Attainment in reading for pupils by the end of Year 2 is satisfactory overall. Effective teaching develops pupils' confidence and enjoyment well. Higher-attaining pupils are achieving levels above the average. They read fluently with little hesitation. The vast majority of pupils recall the stories they have read and make simple predictions. They make sensible attempts to read unfamiliar words. Pupils take their books home regularly and parents play a valuable role in supporting their children's learning. They are helped by the guidance provided by teachers in the home reading record. However, pupils' progress is not as fast as it might be because of the emphasis placed on one reading scheme. In particular, this limits the achievement of lower and higher attaining pupils. The school is aware that, whilst this resource may have been helpful in the past, it no longer meets the raised expectations of the National Curriculum. The school has rightly identified that more up-to-date resources should be provided.
90. Attainment in reading for pupils by the end of Year 6 is in line with that found nationally. Higher-attaining pupils are confident and interested in reading. Decoding skills are well used and they make appropriate inferences and deductions, to discuss character and plot. They show good understanding in discussions of what they have read. Average and lower-attaining pupils read accurately and take account of punctuation, but have not reached the stage of using intonation effectively when reading aloud. As pupils progress through the school, the close attention given to recording pupils' reading in earlier years is discontinued. As a result, pupils receive too little guidance and challenge in their choice of books. Parents receive too little information about how to help their children as home reading records are maintained inconsistently. Additionally, whilst pupils read in groups

with a teacher to improve their reading, the use of guided reading within literacy lessons is underdeveloped. This potentially reduces pupils' attainment both in reading and writing.

91. Standards in writing by the end of Year 2 are in line with those found nationally. Pupils have made good progress. Higher-attaining pupils show good understanding of sentence construction and punctuation. They use note-taking to record the main ideas of their work. They know how to research information and use a contents and index page. They have been well supported in their work by appropriate structures, such as 'writing frames'. Such strategies help all pupils to put their work in order. For example, they use headings such as 'What I want to know; what I want to find out and what have I learned?' Pupils' handwriting is of a very good standard. A new model has been successfully introduced and it has had a dramatic effect. Handwriting practice provides an opportunity to reinforce spelling. However, it does not provide pupils with enough opportunity to practice important letter blends, such as 'ea', 'oo' or 'ee'.
92. Standards in writing for pupils as they progress through Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory overall. Pupils make good progress through Years 3 and 4. Pupils write using a cursive script and achieve good standards. Pupils' writing shows development of ideas, imagination and structure as a result of teachers' well-chosen contexts. Redrafting ensures that attention is given to improving sentence construction and raising standards. There are examples of pupils achieving high standards in writing collaborative stories in Year 4 and individual stories in Year 6. In such examples, pupils use well-selected vocabulary and powerful phrases to create atmosphere and suspense. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, the links between reading, spoken language and writing are not sufficiently emphasised. The quality of pupils' handwriting varies. Whilst there are examples of Year 6 pupils using a well-formed cursive hand, too often work is not presented well.
93. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and is good in Years 1 and 2, and in some classes in Years 3 to 6. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching in approximately four out of ten lessons is now good or very good. All teaching is at least satisfactory. Pupils are eager to learn and behave well. This is because teachers' planning has improved and is much more consistent across year teams. Teaching is characterised in Years 1 and 2 by effective teacher-pupil interaction and well-structured opportunities for pupils to work together on purposeful activities. As a result, pupils are motivated and interested in their work. This enthusiasm transfers with pupils as they move into Year 3. Pupils are keen to contribute in lessons and improve their telling of traditional stories using phrases, such as 'many, many moons ago'. The good teaching provides a brisk introduction and clear learning objectives, writing tasks are modelled well by the teacher so that pupils understand the techniques to enable them to produce work of good quality. For example, pupils made an accurate description of what characterises formal and informal writing by analysing two models of invitations to a party. In such lessons too, teaching uses effective questioning skills to assess pupils' understanding and to identify further teaching points.
94. In the lessons where teaching is no more than satisfactory, pupils' learning is constrained by too much teacher direction and use of closed questions or activities that do not match the learning objectives. This is because there is still no assessment policy and the weaknesses identified in the last inspection remain. Although pupils make satisfactory progress, there is too little precision in identifying what pupils need to learn next to make best progress. In such lessons, learning objectives are too wide and lack specific focus. The school's marking policy is not implemented consistently. There is too little evidence to show that from time to time pupils' work is assessed and comments recorded to identify what they have achieved and to remind them what to do in the future to produce work of an even higher standard.

95. Information and communication technology is used well in a number of lessons. A particularly good example is the collaborative writing of a science-fiction story. This was posted on the school website and drew a wide number of contributors to improve the text. The finished outcome was of high quality. Standards in literacy are being effectively developed through an emphasis on reading, writing and speaking skills in other subjects, such as geography, religious education and history. Pupils use their skills well in class discussions, in reading about topics studied and in writing about them in different ways, such as reports, imaginative stories and factual accounts.
96. The co-ordinator applies a considered, methodical approach to his role. He has given considerable time to analysing pupil data and written tasks to identify how improvements can be made to teaching. He has organised staff training and has undertaken some classroom observation. This is good practice. However, there is no overall plan agreed for lesson observation to ensure that recommendations are implemented and the outcomes evaluated. Assessment is still not focused sufficiently on the National Curriculum and the progressive grades within each level. Thus, the tracking of pupils' progress is insecure and reliable assessment is not available to inform future teaching. As a result, pupils are sometimes not sufficiently challenged.

## **MATHEMATICS**

97. Standards of attainment are average. Standards of work have fluctuated over the last few years since the previous inspection report but pupils are mainly making satisfactory progress overall in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against their targets. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress overall. The proportion of pupils who attain standards that are above the national expectation has improved since the last inspection, although some teachers do not challenge higher-attaining pupils satisfactorily. The school has identified the need to raise standards in mathematics and is taking steps to ensure that the National Numeracy Strategy is implemented consistently and effectively across the school. The school has also improved the breadth of mathematical study since the last report. Pupils now enjoy handling data and solving problems and puzzles.
98. Standards of attainment are average in Years 1 and 2. Teachers are working hard to raise attainment and an analysis of pupils' work shows that pupils in the current Year 2 attain average standards. Progress is sound. In lessons, pupils often achieve well. Most Year 2 pupils are confident in counting in twos, fives and tens up to 100. They describe and extend simple number sequences and count on or back in ones and tens, starting from any two-digit number. Higher-attaining pupils show that they can count on or back in threes, fours and fives without apparatus. Almost all pupils, including lower-attaining pupils, have a secure knowledge and use of addition and subtraction facts to 20. Many are beginning to use a range of strategies, for example doubling, to work out addition and multiplication problems accurately. They demonstrate an understanding of odd and even numbers. Some pupils are beginning to understand the early stages of multiplication by the continuous addition of a number. Higher-attaining pupils know some multiplication tables and understand about division. Pupils name common two and three-dimensional shapes and describe their properties, such as how many sides, edges and corners the shapes have. They measure the length of objects and lines accurately. They interpret and discuss the information collated on a variety of different forms of graphs. They understand how to do calculations involving money and giving change. They are beginning to be able to tell the time, with the higher-attaining pupils able to solve time problems, for example, adding on an hour and a half to a particular time.
99. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average. The school acknowledges that the 2002 group was an able group who achieved above average results in the national tests in

comparison with all schools. However, these results were still below average in mathematics when compared with schools similar to Holliers Walk Primary. The school's data show that the current Year 6 has an average range of ability. An analysis of pupils' work in the current Year 6 shows that pupils are working at an average range of attainment. The standard of attainment in Year 3 is lower in comparison to national expectation than in other year groups. This reflects the 2002 standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 which were well below the national average. However, there is satisfactory progress in all year groups, including in Year 3. Pupils in Year 6 have developed their problem-solving skills successfully using multiplication and division knowledge. They also build upon the good strategies demonstrated in the introductory session of the lesson by their teacher and other pupils. They have a clear understanding of mathematical language. For example, in an observed lesson pupils used the words 'multiple', 'factor' and 'product'. Pupils use long multiplication methods and divide whole numbers and decimal fractions by a whole number. They find the decimal equivalents of fractions and simple percentages of small whole number quantities. They have made two-dimensional nets to create their own three-dimensional shapes. Pupils draw tables, graphs and charts and extract information to solve problems. For example, they used these in the investigation of time taken to get to school and the line graphs of pupils' results in tables tests.

100. Pupils use their skills satisfactorily in other subjects, such as in measurement for design and technology and the creation of pattern in art. Graphs and charts are created within other subjects, such as geography and science. In a science lesson seen during the inspection pupils in Year 6 learnt how to convert their mass to what it would be if they were on the moon and on other planets. In this they used their mathematical knowledge well. The co-ordinator for mathematics has recently provided staff with training to use information and communication technology to support mathematics lessons and loaded suitable programs on class computers. Little evidence of its use was seen during the inspection. Nevertheless, in information and communication technology lessons, pupils have drawn graphs and used measurement in the use of programmable toys. Reading and writing skills are used in word problems.
101. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. In Years 3 to 6 it is sound overall, with some good teaching and a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. The three-part lesson structure of the National Numeracy Strategy is well established, although some teachers do not allow sufficient time for pupils to contribute to the final whole class session. Opportunities for teachers to assess pupils' understanding of the objective of the lesson are therefore missed. Teachers conduct the oral and mental session at the beginning of the lesson with enthusiasm and pupils respond well. For example in a Year 4 lesson, the teacher played a game with the pupils by hiding shapes. Pupils asked good mathematical questions about angles and faces to find out what the shapes were. Most teachers use good open-ended questioning techniques, getting pupils to explain their answers and to extend their mathematical skills. For example, in a Year 2 higher-attaining set pupils looked for two 'missing numbers' in a pattern sequence. Pupils were eager to contribute their own methods for finding the answer. One pupil suggested finding the difference between the two known numbers and halving the answer. In the best lessons, the pace is quick enough to maintain pupils' interest, with no over-long activities. Teachers usually manage pupils well. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils are not managed well and this slows the pace of learning for the whole class and there is insufficient time for pupils to carry out the planned tasks.
102. In good lessons, the teacher challenges all pupils at their own level of ability. In many lessons, even those where pupils are set according to their ability, the higher-attaining pupils in the group are often not challenged sufficiently and are capable of further extension to maintain their interest and progress. Teachers usually plan suitable activities

for the lower-attaining pupils and adequate support. Nevertheless, sometimes pupils do not progress as fast as they should, as tasks are too difficult. For instance, pupils with poor numerical skills are sometimes expected to carry out a task without visual or practical aids. The school is able to provide some sound additional support for pupils with special educational needs. Where this is most effective, the teachers and support assistants ensure that these pupils take an active part in the lesson, directing targeted and appropriate questions to promote their self-esteem and learning.

103. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in raising teachers' expertise in the delivery and planning of lessons. Lessons are planned in accordance with the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy, and teachers have received appropriate training in teaching the subject, both from external providers and within school and this has resulted in numeracy being taught well across the school. The co-ordinator monitors the subject well and has analysed test questions to see where pupils' mathematical skills are weaker. This is fed back to teaching staff. She has also observed all teachers teaching a mathematics lesson, looked at pupils' work and interviewed samples of pupils. From this information, the school is now beginning to focus on raising standards across the school. New assessment procedures are now in place, along with annual formal testing. However, the school does not track individual pupil progress across the school, although individual teachers do have targets for overall improvement in pupil attainment. Marking is inconsistent and pupils are not really aware of what they could do to improve their skills.

## SCIENCE

104. Standards are above national levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a better picture than at the time of the last inspection when they were in line with national levels. Results last year indicated that more pupils than nationally achieved the higher Level 5 at the end of Year 6. This too is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection, when fewer pupils than nationally were reaching the higher level.
105. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress, and in Years 3 to 6 they make at least satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are making sound progress. This is because teaching has improved since the last inspection with no unsatisfactory teaching seen on this inspection. Many teachers confidently teach the requirements of the curriculum. All strands of the National Curriculum are taught. Investigative work is good. The development of a scientific vocabulary is given greater emphasis than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils acquire scientific knowledge and understanding and develop essential skills, such as predicting and deciding what makes a fair test, as they move through the school. There are clear plans to sustain the subject's development. There are good links with other subjects, such as mathematics and physical education, and with personal, social and health education that make the subject relevant to pupils. An analysis of test data is helping to identify and overcome weaknesses in pupils' learning.
106. By the end of Year 2, pupils learn the importance of rest and exercise to maintain a healthy lifestyle. They identify natural and man-made materials, classify materials according to whether they bend, twist, squash or stretch and discover how materials can change. In a well-taught lesson in Year 2, pupils recalled well the work they had done investigating which places in the classroom were best for melting an ice cube. Under the teacher's expert guidance, they discussed animatedly how to carry out a test of the rates of melting of chocolate, margarine and ice. They understood that the materials to be tested had to be approximately the same size. One boy drew thoughtfully on his experience of baking a cake at home. They recorded simple predictions on a work sheet and carried out the experiment as a class. They checked the results against predictions –

sometimes with surprise. Higher-attaining pupils were beginning to understand the elements of a fair test. Learning was good and pupils enjoyed the work – including the chocolate!

107. By the end of Year 6, pupils clearly understand that scientific ideas are based on evidence. They present observations and measurements in different ways and are developing well the skills of scientific enquiry. Pupils in Year 6 describe scientific methods, for instance for separating mixtures, such as sieving, filtering and evaporating. They identify key parts of organisms, such as petals and stamens in various plants. They have carried out an investigation to observe the growth of mould over time and learn how the school kitchen keeps food safe in their study of healthy eating. In a Year 4 lesson on friction, pupils successfully set up and carried out a test of shoes on different surfaces. They recorded their findings and drew appropriate learning from them that was relevant to their daily lives. In a Year 6 lesson on gravitational attraction, pupils enjoyed working out what their weight would be if they were on the moon. This drew well on their numeracy skills. The learning from this work will be reinforced during the planned visit to the National Space Centre.
108. Teaching and learning are mostly good in Years 1 and 2. They are at least sound and sometimes good in Years 3 to 6. Positive features of good teaching include good relationships with pupils, high levels of teacher enthusiasm, good choice and use of resources to reinforce learning, purposeful and regular questioning, secure subject knowledge and good marking. In the best lessons, precise learning targets are shared with pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn, and teachers can more easily assess the progress that pupils have made. Where these strengths are evident, pupils respond well and make good progress. Weaknesses observed in otherwise sound lessons include too little challenge for higher-attaining pupils, high noise levels, which are not checked, leading to a reduction in pupils' concentration, and a pace that is not brisk enough to enable pupils to make good progress.
109. The acting subject co-ordinator has taken on this role in the light of the long-term absence of the permanent post-holder. She has clear plans to sustain the development of the subject. However, there are some issues that need to be resolved. There is no regular monitoring of teaching, of curricular planning, or of pupils' work to help identify their strengths and weaknesses. The structured curricular plan has not been matched to pupils' precise needs. This limits their progress. This is particularly so for some higher-attaining pupils. The procedures for assessment of pupils' progress remain inconsistent. Pupils do not have targets to aid learning. Links with literacy and information and communication technology are useful but limited. The use of numeracy skills in science is better, for instance in calculating and measuring. The quality of presentation and marking is unacceptably varied. Pupils often use colouring to improve presentation, but this makes little contribution to the development of their scientific understanding.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

110. Standards across the school are in line with those found nationally. These are the same as found in the last inspection. In Years 1 and 2, pupils demonstrate good control in the use of paint. They mix primary colours with care and achieve aesthetically pleasing results. They use a variety of media to interpret ideas and show a sensitive response to stimulus. Pupils produce excellent observational drawings as of their study of fruit. This is good progress since the last inspection. They work well together to create large-scale collages on themes, such as winter. In Years 3 to 6, art and design is used to illustrate other subjects, such as in history where in three-dimensional work pupils create Roman mosaics and in geography the giant tree canopies of rain forests. Pupils talk about the work of famous artists and give thoughtful comments on the style and techniques employed.



111. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 use sketchbooks but these provide an unsatisfactory record of progress as pupils move through the school. The books are used inconsistently and sometimes rarely. They are not used sufficiently to practise new skills before making final presentations. For older pupils, the use of the book is often considered 'rough work' and as a result the opportunities to improve standards and to refine work are lost.
112. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6. Only four lessons were observed during the inspection. Pupils respond well to the subject as a result of well-chosen contexts. They are encouraged to support one another and exchange ideas and techniques readily. Effective demonstration by teachers is done in the most successful lessons. On occasions, teaching is unsatisfactory because pupils' access to resources is too limited or they receive too little guidance. This results in an unsatisfactory standard of work.
113. Overall, whilst standards have been sustained, the subject has made little progress since the last inspection because art and design has not been a focus for improvement. The subject is identified as a priority for next term. At present, the progressive development of skills that pupils are expected to acquire is not sufficiently clear to pupils. They do not always know how to improve their work. The co-ordinator does not have opportunities to work alongside colleagues or to provide workshops to improve teaching.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

114. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected for their age. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are supported satisfactorily in class and make sound progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, but evidence was gained from talking to teachers and pupils, looking at teachers' lesson planning, pupils' written work and drawings, displays and photographs.
115. By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate satisfactory skills and knowledge of techniques and materials through a range of effectively planned topics. Throughout the school, teachers have recently begun to follow closely the nationally approved scheme of work. This is helping to improve progress and raise standards. Teachers plan focused practical tasks for pupils which help them to acquire the skills needed to design and make their own artefacts. For example pupils in Year 1 used construction sets to investigate how to make swings and slides for a model playground before making these from art-straws, cardboard tubes and string. They have also experienced dough modelling and produced good representations of faces for holding a small calendar. In the Year 2 classes, pupils made sock puppets to a satisfactory standard and decorated them to their own designs. Pupils in Year 2 have looked at a range of different vehicles and ways of joining materials before making good designs and models of their own. In these classes, pupils have experienced the use of an appropriate range of materials and techniques and attain the standards expected. In a very good lesson seen, the teacher supported pupils by her questioning and guided pupils to success in the outcome of a wheeled-vehicle but did not influence them to alter their design. This gave pupils appropriate opportunities in later lessons to evaluate what they might alter in future models. There was a high expectation of pupils' behaviour and pupils responded with high levels of motivation, concentration and independence.
116. In Years 3 to 6, the projects are planned satisfactorily and give pupils the opportunity to demonstrate sound skills and knowledge of techniques. All teachers across the school have taken part in training and all elements of the design and make process in Years 3 to

6 are now satisfactorily covered. Pupils apply knowledge from other subjects, including science and art. For example, the working models of a moving monster in Year 3 demonstrate that pupils are making effective use of mechanisms in the form of a syringe and the use of pneumatics for movement. Pupils in Year 3 use graphics in their sound design for toothpaste packaging. Appropriate links with literacy and numeracy were seen in the mainly detailed evaluation of the end product and in the use of measurement. Year 6 made sound written evaluations of commercially bought slippers before producing satisfactory designs of their own. Pupils used a variety of textiles to produce the good end products, using and applying a variety of skills. Plans for work on torches and alarms in Year 4 and moving toys in Year 5 show that pupils will have some experience of systems of control in the upper part of the school. There is no evidence to show that information and communication technology contributes to the subject.

117. There was insufficient evidence to judge the overall quality of teaching, although lesson planning is satisfactory. Subject expertise has improved since the last inspection and further training is planned. Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills are under-developed.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

118. Standards in geography are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils achieve satisfactory knowledge and skills as they move up the school. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, in part because of the additional support they receive. They are well included in the work of their class. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress in line with that achieved by the majority of their class.
119. By the end of Year 2 pupils are developing basic map reading skills satisfactorily. They know the points of the compass and the direction these indicate. They use simple co-ordinates to find places and physical features on a map. Pupils are developing good investigative skills within their weather topic. They use a rain gauge and a thermometer to collect weather information systematically and record it carefully on a chart. They understand the importance of accurate measurement and recording. In this they build well on their work in science and in mathematics. In discussion, they are developing their speaking and listening skills well.
120. By the end of Year 6 pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of key features of places, and of the environment, in different parts of the world. They have studied the impact of human intervention in the rainforests of the Amazon and understand satisfactorily some of the effects this has had on native Amerindian tribes such as the Kayapo and Yanomami. They understand some of the effects of human and physical processes, for instance in their comparison of physical features and land use in Cowling and Hinckley. They develop further their map reading skills and the use of co-ordinates. Pupils use the internet well to find out about weather in Greece, including minimum and maximum temperatures, wind direction and speed, rainfall and humidity. They have produced a simple Excel spreadsheet to show the daily weather in Athens. Some pupils have planned how to travel from Leicester to Athens using airline information on the Internet. This work links well to their current work on Ancient Greece in history and gives good opportunities to develop computer skills. Pupils use their mathematical skills effectively in measuring, recording on charts and graphs and in using map co-ordinates. In geography, pupils read, discuss and write about what they have learned and this helps them to extend their literacy skills. Pupils enjoy their work in geography and their attitudes and behaviour in lessons are usually good.

121. The teaching of geography is satisfactory overall. Some teaching is good, especially in Years 1 and 2. In these lessons pupils learn well because teachers use good strategies to involve pupils and good resources that enliven the learning. For instance, in a lesson in Year 1 the teacher used an illustrated storybook, 'Oi! Get off our train' that has a strong environmental message and excellent illustrations to interest pupils and to teach them how to plot a journey. Pupils developed map skills and knowledge of physical features by drawing five features, such as a marsh, a hill, a pond and the sea, and forming them into a plan by linking them with a railway track. They gave instructions and followed those of others. Pupils became aware through the story of the damage to the environment that human intervention can cause. They learned well about several aspects of geography. When teachers question pupils well and focus clearly on geographical vocabulary, modelling it well for pupils orally and in writing, pupils are confident in using correct terms themselves. They enjoy contributing to class discussion. In a lesson in Year 4 about the environmental issues affecting the rainforest the good use of role-play helped to bring the subject alive and challenged the pupils to think, and to articulate their thoughts. In this, geography sometimes links well to pupils' development in other subjects, such as English through the development of speaking and listening skills, and in religious education, through discussion of the moral issues related to the environment.
122. Teaching is less successful when teachers do not use good strategies to keep the whole class involved. Sometimes the pace of lessons slows and pupils do not complete their work in the time allowed. Sometimes teaching does not focus sufficiently on the geographical learning intended. For instance, when pupils in Year 5 discussed video evidence of life in a town in Pakistan and compared this with their life in Hinckley, they focused on details such as clothing and transport but did not explore what these details told them about the difference in human and physical factors in the two places. As a result, the discussion was superficial and did not probe pupils' understanding. Teachers do not always plan well enough to take account of what all pupils already know and can do, and sometimes this means that work is not challenging enough for higher-attaining pupils. Learning objectives are not clearly enough defined in terms of the geographical knowledge, understanding and skills expected, and this limits pupils' progress. Pupils have opportunities to use information and communication technology in their work in geography but this needs further development.
123. There are two geography co-ordinators, one for Years 1 and 2 and one for Years 3 to 6, who are both enthusiastic about the subject. They have worked hard to support their colleagues by improving schemes of work and providing sufficient resources. In this their leadership and management are satisfactory. However, monitoring of the subject remains unsatisfactory as the co-ordinators have not had time to observe lessons, monitor planning or scrutinise pupils' work. Assessment of pupils' progress is limited as teachers do not keep detailed records of pupils' progress in geography. In consequence, planning of lessons is not well enough focused on individual needs. The subject development plan lacks detail and rigour. It does not set out how it will be evaluated in terms of the effect of work undertaken on pupils' standards and progress. In these aspects management of the subject is unsatisfactory.

## **HISTORY**

124. Standards in history are average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. This is a less favourable picture than that found at the last inspection when standards were average across the school. The decline is because medium and short term planning is not sufficiently clear and detailed about the specific knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils are expected to acquire within their topic work. The progress made by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but unsatisfactory by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6.

125. By the end of Year 2 pupils are beginning to develop a sense of chronology by comparing the present to aspects of life in the past. They show their knowledge about key people in the past by recounting the story of Guy Fawkes. They know some facts about the lives of Louis Braille, Mary Seacole and Christopher Columbus and have completed some good, empathetic writing as travellers on the Mayflower, and in the role of Mrs Murray, a Victorian washerwoman. This work contributes well to the development of their writing skills. They answer simple questions about the past and are beginning to understand the differences between past and present.
126. By the end of Year 6, there is a limited amount of work in pupils' books. Pupils have learned biographical details about famous people, such as John Lennon and Albert Einstein, but this work has not been used effectively to develop pupil's historical skills. For instance, in some cases pupils have written out the words of the John Lennon song 'Imagine' but do not show what they have understood about why those words were significant for that period of history. In some cases the marking of the work focuses on the handwriting rather than historical skills. There is a limited amount of work that relates to the current history topic, 'The Ancient Greeks'. Their work shows that pupils have some knowledge about city-states in Greece and the political ideas of the Athenians. In one class, pupils had researched Greek gods on the Internet and found some relevant material. In Years 3 to 6 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of chronology. For instance, in a lesson in Year 3 about the Victorians, pupils explained that they lived about a hundred years ago. In a Year 6 lesson pupils placed the period of the ancient Greeks on a time line accurately. While pupils have acquired some historical knowledge their ability to apply this in understanding the past is too limited. Pupils' understanding of principal changes and their causes, and of the different sources of evidence, and the different ways in which the past is represented and interpreted is underdeveloped. The development of pupils' skills of enquiry is not consistent across all years and pupils do not make evident progress in these skills.
127. The teaching of history is unsatisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2 it is satisfactory but in Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching is variable and is unsatisfactory overall. The best teaching motivates and interests pupils by using a range of strategies to bring the past to life, such as role-play and discussion, and supports this by good use of artefacts and other resources. For instance, in a good lesson in Year 2 that developed pupils' understanding and knowledge of how people's lives were different in the past, the teachers used role-play and good artefacts, such as a washing tub, dolly and scrubbing board, to bring the subject alive and interest the pupils. They talked with enthusiasm about the artefacts and what they showed and settled well to their writing task. All the pupils had the opportunity to try out the artefacts and they did this with enjoyment, very sensibly taking turns, whilst they completed their writing task. All pupils completed the same task but the class teacher gave extra help to pupils where necessary. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher used a video of Victorian school life and the original logbooks of Holliers Walk School to bring the subject alive. Pupils enjoyed these and were fascinated by the comments of the first headteacher but discussion of differences was superficial.
128. Teaching is less successful when there is too little focus on the skills of historical investigation of texts, no examination of the difference between primary and secondary sources of evidence, and when questioning is superficial. Aspects of teaching that need improvement are planning work that will challenge all pupils, especially higher-attaining pupils, the development of enquiry and research skills and developing teachers' use of questioning to deepen pupils' understanding. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding through visitors and outside visits. For instance, Year 3 visits Beaumanor Hall where they have the opportunity to dress up as Victorians. There have been Victorian and Greek Olympics days in school and a musician has visited

to demonstrate music of the Tudor period. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are usually good in history lessons. They enjoy this subject when it is brought alive for them and participate enthusiastically.

129. Aspects of the leadership and management of history are satisfactory but in view of standards that are below average by the end of Year 6 it is unsatisfactory overall. The subject leader is enthusiastic about the subject. There is a development plan for history but it lacks rigour and detail and does not explain how it will be evaluated in terms of the effect it has on pupils' attainment and progress. The priorities for the current year are to review the policy and schemes of work, evaluate teaching, the use of non-fiction texts to support the teaching of history and to monitor the level of resources and these are appropriate. There are two key outstanding issues from the time of the last inspection. Monitoring is still unsatisfactory, as the co-ordinator has not observed lessons, monitored planning or analysed work. Teachers do not keep detailed records of pupils' progress and little reference is made to National Curriculum criteria for assessment. Consequently, teachers do not take sufficient account of the knowledge and understanding pupils have already acquired when they plan future learning. Whilst information and communication technology is used in history, for instance in researching a topic on the Internet, its use needs to be developed further. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of literacy skills, through the opportunities for pupils to discuss, listen, read, scan text, and write accounts of what they have learned. The growing understanding of chronology draws on pupils' knowledge of numeracy.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

130. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a similar picture to the findings of the last inspection.
131. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in most areas as they move up the school. This is because the subject is secure within the school's curriculum, with all strands of the information and communication technology curriculum being taught. Leadership by the previous co-ordinator has been good, and there are clear plans for the subject's continued development. Pupils of all abilities, including pupils with special educational needs, have regular access to computers to enable them to improve their skills across most areas of the subject. For example, pupils are increasingly using the Internet and CD-ROMs to locate information and have begun to share information using e-mail. Resources have significantly improved, through the purchase of laptop computers to help pupils acquire essential skills and use information and communication technology in other subjects. Most teachers are now more confident, as a result of training, with the subject's requirements and this increased confidence is helping to ensure that pupils work well. Pupils are increasingly comparing information and communication technology with other forms of communication to make them aware of the developing use of this new technology in the modern world. Year 4 pupils benefit from a residential visit to Kingswood, where they consolidate their learning in the subject.
132. By the end of Year 2, pupils use computers well to write poems, use an appropriate program confidently to find information about materials in science, compile graphs of pupils' birthdays, and retrieve, alter and save information about 'what happens to the food we eat'. Year 4 pupils compare how text is presented in paper catalogues to how it is presented on the Internet. Year 5 pupils use the Internet to find out about seed dispersal in science. By the end of Year 6, pupils confidently use information and communication technology to present information in a variety of forms. For example, pupils know how to build a database, complete a spreadsheet, and start to appreciate the power of this technology when they represent data in different ways.

133. There are some gaps in what pupils learn which prevent pupils from making the progress they should in some aspects of the curriculum. For example, learning about control technology through the use of the programmable robot is not taught often enough to ensure that pupils reach national levels in this strand of the subject by the end of Year 6. This is because teachers require further training to help them to teach this aspect effectively. There is no regular monitoring of teaching and learning or of pupils' work to enable the co-ordinator to identify training needs and take the necessary action. There is no systematic approach to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school and there are no agreed arrangements for tracking pupils' development. This was noted at the previous inspection. There are missed opportunities to develop skills further through the increased use of the small ICT suite, which is not used often enough to give pupils opportunities to practise and extend skills. All pupils usually receive the same teaching and tasks and higher-attaining pupils are not given suitably challenging work. There is little drafting of stories on computer and this restricts the development of literacy through word processing.
134. Teaching is satisfactory overall. One lesson, taught by the previous co-ordinator, was judged very good. This was because of secure subject knowledge, clear explanations, probing questioning, very good use of a computer simulation to help pupils solve problems, a confident approach and good relationships to help underpin learning. As a result, pupils made very good progress in the tasks set, demonstrated good involvement and high levels of enthusiasm. Overall, pupils enjoy working with computers. In part, this is because they often work in pairs, which provides mutual support and enables them to develop social skills.

## MUSIC

135. Standards in music are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. They are higher in performing than in composing, listening and appraising in Year 6. Standards have declined since the previous inspection, when they were reported to be above average, because the quality of teaching, although satisfactory, is not as strong as it was. At the last inspection, a specialist teacher carried out all music teaching, whereas now in four age groups, one teacher takes every class. In the other age groups, teachers teach their own classes. Although the overall level of teacher expertise has risen, it has not improved enough to maintain standards at a higher level. The time spent on the subject is comparatively low if extra-curricular activities are discounted and this makes it difficult for most pupils to achieve high standards. Nevertheless, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress through most of the school.
136. It was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection. When these pupils sing in assemblies, they perform at an average level. By the time they reach Year 3, pupils clap accurately in time to recorded music and many sing enthusiastically and with reasonably accurate pitch. Year 5 pupils sing two-part rounds well, compose accompaniments played on xylophones and glockenspiels and mostly sing with accurate pitch.
137. By the end of Year 6 pupils attain average standards in singing, composing and recording their work in written forms, and achieve some success in playing them. Their progress in performance skills shows little advance on those in Year 5. This is because they have not experienced a well-balanced programme in all aspects of the subject. Their singing in class groups is pleasant and tuneful, with good participation but lacking in dynamic variation. They compose a variety of rhythms using instruments, and record their work in written form. Some pupils find it difficult to keep in time as they play them to a recorded

accompaniment. Pupils enjoy their lessons, which occasionally include opportunities to listen to and appraise well-known music from a variety of sources. However, their knowledge of familiar composers is sparse, although they have a good knowledge of instruments of the classical orchestra. They have had little experience of composing tunes using instruments and computers.

138. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, but is better where expertise is higher. Teachers introduce activities clearly and give pupils sufficient time to practise and refine their performance. They sometimes miss opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge, for example by not using the correct names for instruments. In most classes, they manage pupils well so that there are few interruptions caused by poor behaviour. Teachers identify the positive features of pupils' performance and provide encouragement so that pupils work to improve what they do. However, in some classes there is insufficient teaching of specific skills to enable pupils to progress further.
139. There is a good range of extra activities of very good quality for those pupils who show interest or aptitude. These include two choirs, open to all interested pupils irrespective of ability, an orchestra and recorder groups. The Year 5 and 6 choir, in particular, achieves a high standard of singing, but unfortunately has failed to attract boys. Visiting teachers give instruction in violin, viola, flute and clarinet playing. The school seeks to include all pupils who wish to participate, but has no contingency funds to support those who are unable to afford to pay for these lessons.
140. The talented subject co-ordinator ensures that her teaching is of a high standard but has little opportunity to observe lessons in other classes. Although some performances are recorded to enable teachers to evaluate the attainment of groups of pupils, the assessment of individual pupils' achievements is not yet in place. There are good resources to support the teaching of the subject, including a number of ethnic instruments.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

141. During the inspection, lessons were observed in dance and gymnastics in Years 1 and 2 and in gymnastics, swimming and games in Years 3 to 6. Overall standards of attainment are above expectations in Year 2 and at the expected levels in Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs continue the good progress they make in the reception classes through Years 1 and 2 and make satisfactory progress through the rest of the school. Progress is less marked in one particular year group where pupils show less positive attitudes to the subject. As was the case at the previous inspection, attainment in swimming is above average. Ninety-three per cent of 11-year-old pupils can swim 25 metres unaided. Standards have improved in Years 1 and 2 and the weaknesses noted in the previous inspection in gymnastics have been eliminated. The improvement is at least in part a result of improved teacher expertise. This was achieved by evaluating teaching in the subject and providing in-service training for teachers where necessary.
142. Pupils in Year 2 know why it is necessary to warm up at the beginning of a lesson and enjoy an interesting range of routines to do this. They control their bodies well and are aware of the space around them so that collisions do not occur. In gymnastics, they use apparatus well to achieve a good variety of balances, although these are not always held steadily. They move fluently in dance lessons, often interpreting the teacher's instructions with flair and individuality.
143. Virtually all pupils in Year 3 are able to swim and by Year 6 93 per cent swim at least 25 metres unaided. Games skills develop steadily through Years 3 to 6. In Year 4, pupils know a range of ways of passing a ball but have not developed the tactical skills they need in team games. In Year 6, pupils put their skills into action as they play basketball, using

accurate chest passes and shooting well, although many remain insufficiently aware of the need to work as a team. Pupils show appropriate progress in gymnastics. Those in Year 5 work particularly well in mixed-gender pairs, imitating or reflecting the sequences of movements made by their partners. They understand how to make asymmetrical balances of good quality and display considerable ingenuity in travelling to a new balanced position.

144. Teaching is good throughout the school, although there was a single unsatisfactory lesson. Teachers have good levels of subject knowledge, enabling them to plan lessons to develop pupils' skills progressively. They make good use of demonstrations by pupils to extend the range of their movements. However, not all teachers show pupils how they can improve or give pupils the opportunity to comment on the work of others. In the best lessons, the teacher knows exactly what she intends to achieve, there is constant attention to improving the quality of movement and time is used very efficiently. In a very good gymnastics lesson for Year 5 pupils, for example, the teacher pointed out that 'gymnastics is something that is beautiful' and worked to achieve this aim. Pupils responded to her enthusiasm with work of good quality accompanied by very good behaviour. A very good swimming lesson for pupils in Year 3 equally embodied these positive characteristics and was well planned to provide a variety of activities using the local leisure centre's good facilities. In less successful lessons, teachers do not plan with clear objectives in mind and allow poor behaviour to disrupt learning.
145. The energetic co-ordinator has provided teachers with a good, usable scheme of work and takes a strong lead in organising and running the school's extensive range of extra sporting activities, all of which are open to girls and boys. She has invited local coaches in to give instruction in rugby, basketball and cricket to all Year 6 pupils. The school participates in many sporting competitions, fielding teams in local leagues and tournaments. The level of participation is particularly praiseworthy in view of the school's inadequate facilities. There is no area of grass and the hall for indoor physical education is too small for the older pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

146. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus satisfactorily by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection. Progress is satisfactory throughout the school. Progress is satisfactory for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make sound progress. The coordinator has ensured that the school's scheme of work is in line with the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus.
147. By the end of Year 2 pupils have an understanding that people of different religions celebrate festivals in different ways, such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christmas.
148. They know some of the symbols of different faiths, such as the Cross and the Star of David. They know parts of the life of Jesus and understand that parables contain special messages, as well as stories. They understand well the underlying message of the parable of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual and moral development.

By the end of Year 6, pupils have learned about the religious practices, traditions, language and symbols of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Their written work and oral contributions in lessons show that they have satisfactory knowledge about religions and understand some of the significance of their key features.

149. The teaching of religious education is satisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2 it is good. In Year 2 lessons on the three of the parables that Jesus told, teachers gave pupils good



opportunities to answer questions to develop their understanding of the messages. Pupils demonstrated through their talk and writing that they could not only retell the stories but could express well how the characters might have felt. They understood that the stories had a deeper meaning.

150. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is satisfactory although there are good features in some lessons. In particular, in a Year 6 lesson about the way in which Muslims believe that the Qur'an was revealed to Mohammed, the teacher modelled respectful behaviour very well. Consequently, the pupils also behaved respectfully without having to be reminded. In a Year 5 lesson on Muslim marriage, the teacher drew well on pupils' own experiences to contribute to this lesson. Teachers use appropriate resources well, for instance bread and wine in a lesson about Holy Communion, and the Qur'an, in a lesson of a series on Islam, to bring the subject alive. Pupils are interested and respond well. Teachers make good links with other subjects, for instance in Year 4 with the geography topics that pupils are currently studying. This gives pupils opportunities to discuss the moral issues involved in environmental questions. However, when teachers do not set appropriate time limits for tasks, this results in very slow work and some pupils carry on conversations that are not related to their work. Alternatively, when pupils are set too much to do in a lesson, there is not enough time to complete the work and to evaluate well what they have learned. Group work tasks sometimes do not develop pupils' understanding. For instance, in a drawing task that did not develop their understanding of Holy Communion.
151. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are usually good in religious education lessons. They enjoy this subject and participate well.
152. The leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory in some aspects. The subject leader is enthusiastic about the subject and has provided guidance and resources for colleagues. There is a development plan for religious education but it lacks rigour and detail and does not explain how it will be evaluated in terms of the effect it has on pupils' attainment and progress. The priorities for the current year are appropriate. The school needs more resources to teach Christianity and Sikhism. Monitoring is unsatisfactory, as the co-ordinator has not observed lessons, monitored planning or analysed work. Teachers do not keep detailed records of pupils' progress in terms of the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, and do not plan well to take account of prior learning. This issue was identified in the last inspection report but has not been addressed. There is some use of information and communication technology. For instance, the school makes use of Leicestershire CD ROM resources that show all religious buildings in Leicestershire. Discussion, reading and writing make satisfactory contributions to pupils' literacy skills.