

INSPECTION REPORT

SLATER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester

Unique reference number: 120101

Headteacher: Mrs K Cane

Reporting inspector: Mr F. Carruthers
21285

Dates of inspection: 10 – 13 February 2003

Inspection number: 248090

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: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Slater Street
Frog Island
Leicester

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Gillespie

Date of previous inspection: March 2001

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21285	Mr F Carruthers	Registered inspector	English Geography History Educational inclusion English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9163	Mr G Humphrey	Lay inspector		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?
18370	Mr K Johnson	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Religious education The Foundation Stage	
11901	Dr P Lowe	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
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	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 117 pupils on roll, including 20 children in the nursery, 17 of whom attend full time. This roll is slightly smaller than at the time of the last inspection and the school is below the average size of primary schools nationally. The school is the smallest and oldest in Leicester and is situated in a commercial area of the city. Most boys and girls come from outside the local district around the school. The levels of social and economic disadvantage among the families of the pupils are generally above the national average. Thirty-four per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average for primary schools. Just under half of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly black Caribbean, Asian, Indian, Pakistani and African. This is well above the average of most primary schools. Recently a few refugee children have joined the school. Eight pupils receive support for learning English as an additional language and some of them are at an early stage. Their mother languages include Shona, Urdu, Gujarati and Portuguese. Thirty-four per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is above average for a primary school. Most have specific learning difficulties and some have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Last year 13 pupils joined the school and 18 left at times other than the normal times. This pupil mobility rate is above average. All classes have mixed age groups in them. The attainment of most children starting in the nursery is below that typical of children aged three and some have very little English.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a good education for its pupils. There have been very good improvements made since the time of the last inspection, standards are rising and pupils achieve well. There is good teaching; leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very good; and the overall management of the school is good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Children get off to a good start in the nursery class.
- The quality of teaching is good and as a result pupils achieve well.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very good assistance and make good progress. All pupils are given equal opportunity to join in all activities in school.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted very well.
- Leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing could be improved further.
- The ability of older pupils to solve problems and carry out investigations in mathematics and science could be better.

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 March 2001 when it was judged to have serious weaknesses. The school has made very good improvement in a short space of time. All key issues and minor issues identified then have been resolved well. There is a much better level of challenge in the work that pupils are given and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, are making good progress. The quality of teaching has significantly improved and there is now effective teaching in all subjects so that pupils learn well. The teachers' awareness of how the pupils are doing and what to do to overcome weaknesses in their skills and knowledge is now very good.

STANDARDS

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

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

Care should be taken when interpreting the school's results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 because there are few pupils in each year group and an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the school. Standards are rising, however, and all pupils achieve well. For example, last year the pupils in Year 6 made well above the progress they were expected to make in English, given their prior attainment at the end of Year 2 (grade A), and they made above the expected level of progress in mathematics (grade B). The trend in results that the school achieves in English and mathematics has been above the national trend upwards over the last five years. The school sets challenging targets for pupils and staff know the pupils' capabilities very well. Standards in art and design and religious education are above average.

In last year's National Curriculum tests, standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were much improved on previous years. Standards in reading were similar to the national average and in writing they were above the national average. Both reading and writing were well above the average when compared with standards in similar schools. In mathematics, test results were above average. Standards in the current Year 2 are broadly similar. The performance of boys in tests has significantly improved. Teachers' assessments of pupils' work in science show standards to be in line with the national average and above the standards found in similar schools. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, that is the nursery and reception classes.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The attitude of the great majority of pupils towards school is good. However, a small number of pupils, mainly boys, demonstrate unsatisfactory learning attitudes in some lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite and well mannered and have a good understanding of the impact that their actions can have on others.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between all members of the school community are good. Pupils show respect for the feelings of others and have well developed social and moral values.
Attendance	Attendance is below the national average but improving steadily. Unauthorised absence is well above the national average. Punctuality in the mornings is satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

There has been very good improvement in the quality of teaching since the time of the last inspection. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and the proportion of good or better teaching is now above the average found in most schools. There is a good proportion of very good or better teaching in the three junior-aged classes. Most aspects, such as teachers' expertise and planning, the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and teaching methods are now good. Subjects such as design and technology, geography, history and science are used well to promote pupils' abilities in literacy and numeracy. Two aspects to improve are the teaching of skills of investigation and problem solving to older pupils in mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language are given good assistance to learn well. Teaching in the nursery is very good and as a result the children make rapid progress. All aspects of pupils' learning are good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is enriched very well by a range of trips out of school and activities outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Classroom assistants help pupils, including those few with Statements of special educational need, to make good progress with the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. There is good support from the local education authority's service, which is directed where there is most need. Pupils also make rapid progress by the help they receive from their class teachers and from other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Significant improvements have been made since the time of the last inspection, especially in provision for pupils' spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers know and understand their pupils very well and make good use of monitoring and assessment procedures to guide their personal and academic development.

There have been significant improvements since the time of the last inspection in links with parents and they are now good. Parents receive clear information about events in schools and the progress that their children are making.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have led the school by example. There is very good teamwork amongst the staff and these factors have helped the school to make very good improvement since the last inspection.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. All responsibilities are fulfilled and the governors support the work of the school well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The senior staff make detailed analyses of how well pupils are doing and how the school compares with others.
The strategic use of resources	Good. All funding is used to help the quality of provision and the standards that the pupils achieve. Governors and senior staff follow principles of best value well, consulting with relevant agencies and comparing the effectiveness of services and resources.

Staffing levels are good, and this means the average size of classes is below the average for primary schools. The accommodation, though old, is adequate for teaching and kept very clean and attractive. The library and computer suite share the same room and its layout makes for difficulties when teachers take a class of pupils at the computers. The level of learning resources is satisfactory overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school and make good progress. • The good relationship with the school and the ease with which questions and problems can be discussed and resolved. • The way in which school encourages good behaviour and helps their children mature. • The good teaching and range of additional activities. • The quality of the leadership and management in the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more consistent use of homework. • A closer working partnership between the school and parents.

The inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. The use of homework to help pupils' learning is satisfactory and the school has agreed to monitor its use. Inspectors also consider that the school works hard to promote a close working partnership with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Individual year groups have few pupils and some have high proportions of pupils with special educational needs or pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Consequently, results in National Curriculum tests fluctuate over time. It is clear, however, that the outcome of the school's actions since the time of the last inspection has been to improve the standards that pupils achieve.
2. The school's results in tests at the end of Year 6 have continued the rise above that which was evident at the time of the last inspection. Though standards overall in English and mathematics have been well below the national average, the upward trend of improvement over five years has been above the national upward trend. Results at the end of Year 6 last year in English were average when compared to those in similar schools and progress for that group of pupils from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 was very good. Results in mathematics were well below the national average and well below the average for similar schools, as they were at the time of the last inspection. However, the school has consistently added significant value to pupils' attainment over their time in the school. When judged against the results achieved at the end of Year 2, these pupils achieved well in mathematics. Last year, the school successfully achieved its target of 61 per cent of pupils to achieve the expected Level 4 or better in both subjects. This year the school has raised the target figures to 63 per cent in English and 69 per cent in mathematics and is on course to achieve them, because the school has successfully prioritised attention on improving pupils' writing and mathematics in the past two years.
3. In current classes, pupils display confidence in speaking in class and their listening skills develop well. Pupils have good attitudes to reading and by Year 6, most are fluent readers and can use books in the library to find information. Because of good teaching and many opportunities to write in other subjects, pupils' writing is showing improvement. Most pupils take a pride in their work, handwriting is generally neat and spelling skills are average by the end of Year 6. Standards of writing could still be higher. Pupils' work in mathematics is usually carefully recorded and standards of numeracy are satisfactory. The pupils use computers to collect and record data but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in investigations.
4. Because of concerted action taken to improve the quality of teaching in infant classes, which was highlighted as a key issue in the last inspection report, standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have risen well. Standards in National Curriculum tests in 2002 in reading were similar to those found in schools nationally and above those in similar schools. In writing, standards were well above the average of those in similar schools. Results in mathematics matched the national average and were above the average for similar schools. Boys by the end of Year 2 achieved better in reading, writing and mathematics than boys do in most schools. This constitutes very good improvement in a short space of time.
5. Pupils with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language make good progress. The early identification of pupils' special educational needs and the setting of clear and achievable targets enable them to make good progress in relation to their targets. Their progress is also good in all

subjects of the curriculum owing to the sensitive support that they receive individually, or in small groups, which enhances their self-esteem. As a result, they achieve well. Pupils learning English as an additional language make rapid progress and this was especially evident among younger children who have not been learning the language for very long. Good assistance from class teachers, the visiting bi-lingual assistant and indeed from other pupils helps them to gain confidence. Over time, they achieve well and some older pupils are amongst the highest achievers in school.

6. Standards in science have fluctuated in National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 since the time of the last inspection. They were the same as the national average in 2001 but fell to well below the national average and the average of results in similar schools in 2002. Standards at the end of Year 2 rose in the same period. In 2002, they met the national average and were better than those in similar schools. Pupils in current classes develop a satisfactory awareness of how to make a test fair and understand concepts such as the process of change in materials, a healthy life style and an electrical circuit. Some investigations that they carry out are too much directed by the teacher and do not allow enough opportunity for independent selection of resources and methods.
7. Standards in art and design and religious education are above those expected and pupils achieve very well. Standards in all other subjects, including information and communication technology (ICT) are average. It was not possible to judge standards in physical education in Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The attitude of the great majority of pupils towards their learning is good. They enjoy school and show interest and enthusiasm for their learning. They take pride in their work and are keen to share their achievements with others. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires confirmed that their children enjoy school, behave well and make good progress.
9. Children in the nursery are well settled into the routine of school life. They share, take turns and demonstrate good listening skills. Good self-discipline was demonstrated by a group of children in the nursery who were observed sharing a collection of books on spiders and insects with a teacher. Although eager to show what they had discovered they waited patiently, with a hand held up, for their turn to address the group.
10. In Years 1 and 2 the majority of pupils work hard and co-operate well together but there are a small number of younger pupils who find it difficult to concentrate on their learning and stay on task. For example, in a geography lesson some pupils found it difficult to settle on the carpet and concentrate during the introduction to the lesson. In a science lesson several younger boys found it difficult to share ideas and equipment.
11. As pupils progress through the school, the interest and enthusiasm for learning develop well. For example, in a mixed Years 3 and 4 class, pupils demonstrated great sensitivity when their peers expressed their thoughts and feelings during a personal, social and health education lesson. In a history lesson the same class demonstrated high levels of interest and enthusiasm and great maturity, when researching for information about Ancient Egypt on the British Museum website.
12. Older pupils support each other well, particularly when tackling challenging tasks. For example in a religious education lesson pupils in a mixed Years 4 and 5 class responded to questions in a very thoughtful way and the same class in a mathematics

lesson worked hard and applied considerable intellectual effort when solving problems. In a mixed Years 5 and 6 class, pupils' attitudes are often excellent, for example in a science lesson when pupils demonstrated high levels of interest and took detailed notes of what they were being taught.

13. Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and well mannered and have a good understanding of the impact that their actions can have on others. They project a warm and friendly attitude towards visitors. Staff treat the children and pupils with respect and consideration and this is reflected in the confidence and trust that they have in their relationships with others. Relationships between all members of the school community are good. A small minority of pupils display challenging behaviour and they are handled well by staff who follow the school's behaviour code closely. Pupils show respect for the feelings and values of others and have well developed social and moral values. There were two instances of fixed period exclusions in the last twelve months involving one pupil and these were appropriately dealt with.
14. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the benefits of racial harmony, equality of opportunity and of their rights and responsibilities in a modern multicultural society. Both boys and girls, pupils of differing levels of attainment, including those who have been identified as having special educational needs, and those who are from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, are fully included in the life and work of the school.
15. Pupils take very good advantage of the many opportunities provided for them to show initiative. They take responsibility for their learning and help with day-to-day school routines. The school council, with representatives from all ages, including children from the nursery class, has a positive influence on school life. House captains help with the administration of the rewards system. Pupils help teachers with routine tasks during lessons and older pupils support the younger ones in the mixed age classes.
16. Although it is steadily improving, attendance is still below the national average for primary schools. Punctuality in the mornings is satisfactory. Learning attitudes, behaviour and the personal development of pupils have all improved since the last inspection and now make a positive contribution towards the pupils' achievement. Pupils develop as responsible and mature individuals who are well prepared for the next phase of their education.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good and there has been very good improvement since the time of the last inspection, when teaching in infant classes was unsatisfactory. There is good teaching across all age groups and no unsatisfactory teaching. The proportion of good or better teaching is now above the average found in most primary schools. Very good teaching is evident in a good proportion of lessons in the three junior-aged classes.
18. Improvements to address the key issue on teaching include: better planning so that pupils in the mixed-aged classes are taught at a good level of challenge and subject matter is not repeated unnecessarily from one year to the next; the teaching of English and mathematics in infant classes, which is carried out in distinct year groups, so that work is better matched to attainment; the teaching of literacy and numeracy, which was unsatisfactory in infant classes and only satisfactory in the junior classes, and is now good across all classes; and the marking of pupils' work, which has improved. It is good in English, where pupils are given targets for improvement and in mathematics. It is satisfactory in science and other subjects.

19. One year after the last inspection, a follow-up visit found progress on the key issue to be 'reasonable' but there was room for further improvement. Two history lessons were unsatisfactory, for example. Progress has been good on shortcomings found then. For example, a lack of clarity in the objectives, that teachers set for lessons, and unsatisfactory pupil management have now been addressed. Pupils of higher attainment are challenged to do well because of clear targets that they are given.
20. A strength of the teaching is the good level of teamwork. Teachers advise and help one another very well. For example, junior class teachers are benefiting from the specialist advice that colleagues provide in the use of the computer suite and an interactive whiteboard. As a result, there is some very good teaching linking subjects such as history and ICT. Staff assist one another well with the teaching of religious education and music. As a result of this kind of assistance, one lesson in music was excellent.
21. The teaching of English, mathematics and science has been a major focus for attention and is now good. In English, the teaching of writing, which remains a key aspect for improvement, has been consolidated in two ways. There are more opportunities for older pupils to write for different purposes and at greater length, and subjects such as science, design and technology, geography and history are being used well to promote writing. For example, pupils take notes in scientific investigations and write biographies and recounts in history. Pupils' work in religious education on Martin Luther King led to writing of very good quality. A focus in mathematics has been to improve how pupils use mathematics in problem solving and in other subjects. In both mathematics and science, there are, however, insufficient opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out their own investigations and this is an area for development.
22. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and there is some very good teaching in the nursery class. The teacher and nursery nurse in the nursery have very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and they plan the learning well. They manage the children very well and, by their example, encourage respect and care for others. Relationships with the children are very good and as a result, the children quickly become confident in the nursery and make rapid progress. This is especially true of the increasing number of children who are learning English as an additional language. Where Reception-aged children are taught as part of a mixed-aged Reception and Year 1 class, planning reflects their learning needs satisfactorily. Elements of literacy and numeracy strategies are taught well, often separately with a classroom assistant in short sessions.
23. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. All adults ensure that their individual needs are met through the work that is set and the quality of the support provided. Pupils with special educational needs work mainly alongside their peers in the classroom and are given additional support, by teachers and teaching assistants. The support for small groups of pupils by teaching assistants is particularly valuable in literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils learning English as an additional language receive weekly lessons with a visiting bi-lingual assistant, who keeps a regular check on how well they are doing and discusses progress and teaching strategies with class teachers. As a result, the pupils' learning is good and they are attentive and keen to take part.
24. All aspects of pupils' learning are good. This is because pupils are expected to behave well in lessons and to listen to their teachers. As pupils mature they get better at this and by Year 6 the great majority of pupils concentrate well in class and put in a good amount of effort in their work. The pace of lessons is good and learning objectives are achieved. Homework, which includes reading, spelling, mathematics as well as other

topic-based work, makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. However, some parents find the work is not set consistently enough. The school has agreed to monitor this.

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

25. There has been very good improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection when the quality and range of the curriculum were unsatisfactory. A good curriculum is now in place, well planned for the mixed-aged classes. All subjects of the curriculum are covered appropriately and there are planned opportunities for pupils to use literacy and numeracy more fully in other subjects. The teaching of subjects now occurs on a more regular basis, which was a weakness noted at the last inspection, in order to aid the progressive development of pupils' knowledge and learning. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good in all the subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education. All pupils receive a varied and rich curriculum. Sufficient time is given to each area of the curriculum and there are well-planned links between subject areas.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is organised to meet the pupils' specific needs. Clearly identified lesson objectives ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the work set and the results expected. Individual education plans are drawn up by the class teachers, in consultation with the co-ordinator for special educational needs, the school assessment co-ordinator, parents, pupils and, in some cases, external agencies. They contain targets relating to specific areas of learning or behaviour and suggest teaching and learning strategies, which are reviewed at regular intervals.
27. The provision for teaching literacy and numeracy is good. The school has adopted and adapted the national strategies well. There are clear objectives for learning, and pupils are given the opportunity at the end of each lesson to assess what they have learned.
28. Opportunities for pupils' learning outside lessons are very good and there is a range of interesting activities. The well-attended daily After-Care facility offers a number of activities, such as sport, games, art, craft, cooking, role play and computer activities. A range of additional sports is offered, including football, basketball, 'TAG' rugby and cross-country running, which promote both teamwork and the development of individual skills. Professional coaching provides skills and experience beyond what the school can offer. Additional opportunities for music and drama include recorder groups and the choir. Visits by Leicestershire Arts, for dance and drama sessions, have led to opportunities for children with talent and ability to have access to a range of developmental skills in the evenings and at the week-ends. Over half the pupils in Years 3 to 6 take part in the annual residential visit, which extends their experience and develops their relationships and social skills. Proximity to the city centre allows visits to local museums, centres of religious worship, libraries, theatres, the river, canal and environmental trails. Visits further afield include a water education centre, a steam railway trust and a village, which pupils contrast with their city environment.
29. Care is taken to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into all activities and are given support. Provision is made for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Suitable work is provided for pupils of all levels of attainment in lessons, including pupils who have special gifts and talents, and there is good provision for all the age groups in extra-curricular activities.

30. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Religious education and 'circle time', when pupils discuss issues, promote pupils' self-esteem and address significant issues for pupils and the wider society. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 discussed how to respond to difficult situations, the need to follow rules that are made to help us and to consider the impact of our actions on others. They talked about feeling angry and how they should deal with such feelings. Sex education is taught through the curriculum and more specifically in Year 6 and there is provision for drug awareness. Pupils consider their responsibilities in the community. The school pays due attention to healthy food and encourages healthy eating.
31. The school has very good links with the local community. The links with the city football club, include professional coaching and an award scheme for attendance and pupils' contribution to their class and school. The local community assist with health care, and provide guidance through the police service, fire service, school nurse and other guidance services. Local supermarkets give help to promote the health and social development of pupils. The school participates in sporting fixtures with other schools. There are very strong links with local religious centres. Pupils help a number of charities and gifts are sent to children in Romania. They attend story reading sessions at the local library and volunteers from a local bank regularly visit the school to help pupils with their reading.
32. There are very good links with other schools. The school shares its expertise with a number of schools and benefits from their experience and knowledge. There are two-way links to discuss pupils' attainment and progress and visits for pupils prior to their transfer to secondary school. These initiatives help to ensure an easy transition for pupils, and continuity and progression in their learning. The school benefits particularly from the artistic skills of students at a local university. The headteachers and staff of the Development Group of Schools work together for the benefit of all the schools in the group.
33. The school has worked hard to improve the provision for pupils' spiritual development which, at the time of the last inspection, was unsatisfactory, as was the provision for awareness and appreciation of the pupils' own and other cultures. It has been very successful and the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now very good.
34. The provision for spiritual development is very good. The school provides regular opportunities in assemblies and religious education for pupils to explore the values and beliefs of others and creates opportunities across the curriculum for them to reflect and to share their feelings with their peers. Very good displays reflect the festivals and beliefs of some of the major religions of the world and give value to pupils' work in all areas of the curriculum. Procedures for collective worship meet the legal requirements. Pupils enter the hall to music and participate respectfully in meaningful assemblies. These usually include time for reflection and for pupils to say a prayer if they wish to do so. Pupils' experience of living in a multi-cultural city and their visits to different places of worship help them to relate what they learn about to real life situations. Religious education contributes positively to pupils' spiritual development as do most other subjects. Much reflection clearly went into the production of a thought-provoking collage which depicts the Muslim, Hindu and Christian stories of creation.

35. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils are aware of expectations and standards. Rules and strategies to support good behaviour are made clear to pupils and are integral to the daily life of the school. Pupils are constantly encouraged to talk about issues that are important to them in 'circle time', religious education and when suitable opportunities present themselves during the day. There are few sanctions and many opportunities for reward. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. In a simple way, reception-aged children demonstrated their understanding of Goldilocks' feelings of anger with herself, knowing that she had done wrong. Pupils in Year 5/6 clearly understand that most people have qualities that promote respect and that individual differences do not influence what a person is really like.
36. Provision for social development is very good. The school actively promotes equality of opportunity, by ensuring that boys and girls, and pupils of all levels of attainment and backgrounds, work together and learn to adapt to the strengths and needs of each other. Paired and group work encourages co-operative working. Pupils reflect on their own work and the work of others, not only in music, physical education and art, but also across the curriculum. They comment on what is good about it and give suggestions on how it can be improved. Visitors to the school help pupils to develop their social skills as they meet with adults from many walks of life. Their skills are further enhanced through local visits that they make and the residential visit. An awareness of life further afield is developed through their support of local and more distant charities.
37. Provision for promoting cultural development is very good. The city in which they live is itself an example of a multi-ethnic, multi-faith society. Books and displays reflect a range of cultures and teaching draws on the work of artists, musicians and other societies. Educational visits and visitors to the school contribute to cultural development well. Many areas of the curriculum are enriched by visits to places of worship and museums. Artists, dancers and musicians are frequent visitors to the school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 demonstrated maturity in their discussion of Martin Luther King. They were able to talk about segregation and issues of colour and race, because their own relationships are secure.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The support, welfare and guidance provided for pupils are very good. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and care for their personal needs in a supportive and sensitive way. The procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development are good. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires confirmed that they were happy with the way that the school cares for their children and helps them to mature and develop good social and moral values. The standard of welfare and care provided by the school has improved since the last inspection when it was judged as satisfactory compared to very good now.
39. Health and safety procedures are rigorous and risk assessments and actions taken are meticulously recorded. There are good arrangements for the provision of first aid. Child protection procedures are effective. The head teacher is the designated child protection officer and all members of staff have received appropriate training and are alert to the needs of all pupils and aware of the guidelines for dealing with any sensitive issues. The school maintains good links with social services and other relevant external agencies.
40. The policies and procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are good. Good learning attitudes and behaviour are encouraged and celebrated and this results in the majority of pupils wanting to do their best. The strategies for managing behaviour are

well defined in the behaviour policy but there is some inconsistency with regard to teacher expectation in the classroom, particularly with some younger boys who lack self-discipline and social skills and find it difficult to adjust their behaviour to different situations. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour such as bullying, or where pupils demonstrate a lack of consideration towards others, are dealt with effectively and sensitively.

41. The procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are good and have helped to improve attendance over the past twelve months. The rate of attendance has not yet, however, matched the national expectation.
42. The very good procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' academic progress show a significant improvement since the last inspection. Information gathered from formal assessments in English and mathematics is used well to set targets for pupils' achievements. Close analysis of assessments and tests has enabled co-ordinators to identify common areas of weakness, which are given stronger emphasis in future planning. For example, the mathematics co-ordinator was able to see, following a scrutiny of non-statutory tests, that pupils in Years 4 and 5 needed to improve their skills with calculations and this is an issue that has now been dealt with. The computerised 'tracking' system allows teachers to check progress from year to year to make sure that targets set for pupils are realistic and that pupils stay on track to achieve them.
43. The procedures for identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs and providing them with specific support are very good. The school draws on a wide range of information to set and review appropriate targets for each pupil, follow their progress and direct assistance effectively to those who need it. Trained teaching assistants ensure that all pupils take an active part in lessons and help to monitor pupils' progress. The school works closely with external specialist agencies, as the need arises. All pupils have access to an identified member of staff for support. The progress of pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language is checked well by the visiting bi-lingual assistant.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The vast majority of parents have positive views about the school. Through the pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires they confirm that their children enjoy school and make good progress. They appreciate the good relationship that exists with the school and the ease with which questions and problems can be resolved and the way the school encourages good behaviour, helping their children mature. The quality of teaching, the range of additional activities and the leadership and management of the school are all considered to be good. The inspectors agree fully with these positive views.
45. A minority of parents felt they would like to see a more consistent use of homework and for there to be a closer working partnership between the school and parents. The inspectors judge that the use of homework is satisfactory. However, the school has agreed to monitor its use. The school works hard to promote a close working partnership with parents. The inspectors find the school is very welcoming towards parents and that it has endeavoured to involve them as much as possible in the education of their children. The home-school agreement clearly defines the mutual expectations of the school, parents and the pupils.

46. There is a regular flow of information about topics being covered by each year group and the frequent visits to places of historic and cultural interest. Parents are regularly invited to assemblies and other events that take place during and after school. Annual progress reports meet statutory requirements and provide a summary of what pupils have achieved in each subject, setting a range of targets to enable parents to support the learning needs of their children. Parents are invited to two formal consultation evenings during the academic year and have good access to teachers for informal consultation at all other times. The home-school reading diaries are used well by parents and teachers to check pupils' reading progress.
47. The school works closely with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and keeps them well informed about their child's progress. They receive full information regarding the school's provision for special educational needs. Pupils' progress is enhanced as a result of the good partnership between home and school. A number of strategies are in place to support this partnership. Parents meet formally with their child's class teacher twice a year and with the special educational needs team on another occasion. They are welcome to share their concerns with the school and seek guidance at any time.
48. The Parent and Friends' Association organises social and fund raising events, which are normally initiated by school staff but are well supported by parents and the funds raised are used to improve facilities and learning resources. A number of parents spend time in school listening to pupils read and provide support for practical activities during and after the school day. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school and the contribution they make to their children's learning, both at school and at home, is satisfactory overall. The partnership between school and parents and the quality of the information provided has improved significantly since the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. Leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very good and teamwork amongst the staff is a strong feature of the school. Senior staff have worked very hard to lift the morale of staff after the last inspection when the school was judged to have serious weaknesses. Everyone, including governors, has shown determination to prove theirs is an effective school. Well supported by the local education authority, senior staff have improved systems to check the quality of teaching and to analyse information gathered from scrutinising pupils' work and National Curriculum test papers. Other initiatives have promoted the quality of subject leadership and curriculum management. The post-OfSTED Action Plan and school improvement plans have focused on clear priorities to raise standards and tackle weaknesses.
50. As a result, the school has made very good improvement in a short space of time and no longer has serious weaknesses. Indeed, some previous weaknesses, such as provision for pupils' spiritual and personal development, are now strengths of the school. Very good progress has been made on the key issues arising from the last inspection. For instance, unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated as a result of good monitoring of its quality and taking effective action, such as improving teachers' planning. Pupils are now making good progress across the whole age range. Because of very good systems to check on how well pupils are doing, which have been developed since the time of the last inspection, staff have a very clear awareness of how the school is performing and they take effective steps to improve. An example of such steps is how closely linked are the systems for checking the performance of teachers with school-wide issues. Improving the teaching of writing was a main focus in the last school year and mathematics is this year. Consequently the quality of

teaching of these subjects is showing improvement and pupils are making better progress.

51. The governing body assists senior management well and makes a satisfactory contribution to the direction that the school is taking. There is good leadership from the chair of governors, who visits school regularly and leads assemblies, and there are links forged between governors and subjects, so that they gain a better understanding of developments. The various committees carry out their tasks with a good understanding of what they need to do. There is a school improvement committee, which is kept informed of progress, and a finance committee, which receives up-to-date information on budget spending from the school's bursar. There are procedures in place to ensure that money is spent with principles of best value in mind. This aspect, including how well governors compare how the school is doing in relation to national averages and local schools, is satisfactory overall and one that could be developed further. Day-to-day administration by the secretary is very efficient and computers are used very effectively, for example, to monitor spending, pupils' attendance and performance.
52. The leadership and management of provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. They are a significant factor in the good progress made by these pupils, who total almost one third of the school roll. The co-ordinator is ably supported by class teachers, trained teaching assistants and external specialist agencies. The school fulfils its legal responsibilities for special educational needs. The specific grant for special educational needs is used very effectively. The governor with oversight for special educational needs is very well informed. She liaises with the co-ordinator on a regular basis and provides written reports for the governing body. The school works closely with the secondary schools to which pupils transfer, in order to ensure the smooth transition of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
53. The school is well staffed with teachers who are suitably qualified and provide a good balance of experience and expertise. Subject responsibilities are deployed amongst them. Currently, however, there is no one responsible for history. The levels of support staff for pupils with special educational needs are good and classroom assistants make a good contribution to the teaching of initiatives such as *Early and Additional Literacy Support*. The work of the nursery nurse in the nursery is very good. The premises officer and his cleaning staff keep the appearance of the school very clean, and this ensures the buildings, despite being old, are welcoming for the pupils and staff.
54. Overall, there is sufficient accommodation to teach the planned curriculum, although the library and computer suite share the same room and its layout makes for difficulties when teachers take a class of pupils at the computers. The nursery is a very good-sized room and there is a safe area for children in the Foundation Stage to play. The internal environment is enhanced by displays of good quality, several of which have been produced by pupils working very imaginatively with students from the nearby university each year. Outside, the playground surfaces are good but the school has to use a local park, which is within walking distance, for some sporting activities.
55. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall and they are good for ICT and religious education. The library has many non-fiction books that have been well used and now require replacement. Resources are well managed and used effectively in all subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. The staff should:

- (1) Pursue existing plans to raise standards in writing * (Paragraphs 83 – 84)
- (2) Improve the teaching of skills of problem solving and investigation of older pupils especially, in mathematics and science. * (Paragraphs 91 and 94)

* Both key issues feature in the School Improvement Plans.

In addition, governors and staff should consider for inclusion in their action plan the following points for improvement:

- (1) Review the layout of the library / computer suite with a view to improving its effectiveness for teaching (Paragraphs 54, 86, 114)
- (2) Replace old non-fiction and reference books in the library, when finances allow. (Paragraphs 55 and 86)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	12	27	6	0	0	0
Percentage	2	26	59	13	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	98
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	35

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.4

School data	2.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	7	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	12	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (79)	87 (84)	93 (89)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	13	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (84)	93 (89)	93 (84)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

*Because the number of boys and girls is fewer than ten, actual totals have been omitted.

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	7	11	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (73)	61 (59)	61 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	10	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (73)	61 (59)	67 (95)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

**Because the number of boys and / or girls is fewer than ten, actual totals have been omitted.*

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	58	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	8	2	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	6	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	4	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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)	6.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.6
Average class size	22

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 02
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	£
Total income	335,420
Total expenditure	326,796
Expenditure per pupil	2,302
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,361
Balance carried forward to next year	18,737

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Number of questionnaires sent out

118

Number of questionnaires returned

45

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	36	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	51	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	47	4	2	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	36	13	2	7
The teaching is good.	64	31	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	24	13	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	20	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	31	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	51	33	9	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	58	40	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	38	2	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	29	7	2	2

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.

Other issues raised by parents

None

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

57. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Most children attend nursery full-time with a few attending morning or afternoon. All children benefit from the exciting range of the activities planned. This gives them a good start to their education.
58. Early assessments indicate that language and mathematical development are below the expected level when the children start nursery. The number of children who are at the early stages of English language acquisition is increasing. Pupils have limited knowledge of the world around them and few experiences by which to stimulate their imagination. Throughout the Foundation Stage the children make good progress. This is more rapid in the nursery class because of the effective planning and at times very good, challenging teaching. The small number of children in Reception year who are taught in a mixed-aged class with pupils who are in Year 1 make satisfactory progress. At present they do not have opportunities to work alongside other children in the Foundation Stage in order to consolidate their learning in a well-structured Foundation Stage setting.
59. The quality of teaching for nursery and reception children is good overall. There is some very good teaching in the nursery class because the teacher and nursery nurse have very good knowledge of how very young children learn. Planning is very good and is clearly based on what children already know. Teachers are very good role models for children in the way they work together and encourage respect and care for others. Where reception children are taught as part of a mixed-aged class, planning reflects their learning needs satisfactorily. Elements of literacy and numeracy are taught well but there is less scope for independent learning activities than seen in the nursery class.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Children make very good progress in this area of learning. Most are confident enough to leave parents and carers when they arrive at nursery, though one or two still need the security of adults at times. Children persist in their chosen activity for a reasonable length of time and are happy to make choices about what they want to do. They share trusting relationships with their teachers and begin to form secure friendships with their peers. They work well together and share resources such as when reading together or playing with the toy fish in the water tray. Many are beginning to develop a strong sense of belonging to a class and are beginning to show proper concern for those around them. Children are developing a strong sense of what is acceptable behaviour. They treat each other respectfully and are prompt to follow their teacher's instructions, particularly when tidying up after activities. Children are proud of their achievements, and are keen to show what they have done on the computer, for example, or what they have contributed to a class book. They look after their own personal hygiene, but many are still slow to change their clothes before and after lessons of physical development in the hall. Children in the Reception year can sustain concentration well. They develop self-confidence so they are comfortable about working independently or in groups. Although they understand what is right and wrong, one or two do not have a clear awareness of the need to adjust their behaviour in different settings. Nevertheless they build well on earlier experiences and almost all are in line to reach the standards expected for their age by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

61. Teaching in this area is very good. Teachers promote strongly the values of responsibility and care for others. Expectations are very high and children respond very well because they are secure and well cared for. Teachers recognise the richness in the diversity of cultural backgrounds and use this very well to help children develop a respect for their own and other cultures and beliefs.

Communication, language and literacy

62. When children start in nursery their communication skills are generally below expectations for their age. Throughout the Foundation Stage they make good progress so that by the end of their Reception year most achieve the early learning goals in speaking, reading and writing.
63. Children become confident speakers. Most are willing to ask questions or comment on their immediate experiences. Speaking is encouraged well in the nursery. For example, children are invited by the teacher to choose the morning greeting in one of several languages. They are praised for speaking clearly as the teacher calls the morning register. Adults use questions well to encourage responses for children. They give them time to express their thoughts. Particular attention is given to children who are learning English as an additional language so they quickly gain in confidence. Children confidently engage in talk when acting out 'real life' situations in the role-play area. They listen to one another with increasing attentiveness, responding to stories, songs and nursery rhymes with obvious enjoyment. Children begin to experiment with new words. A good example was when the teacher asked children how Goldilocks might have felt, the response was 'petrified'. Teachers are good at encouraging children to talk about what they are doing. This helps them to reflect on what to say and clarify their thinking.
64. Children make good progress with their early reading and writing skills. They learn the sounds of letters well and link initial sounds to familiar words. A nursery child, for example, pointed out to the teacher that 'jelly begins with my name' and demonstrated by drawing a 'J' in the air. In the nursery, children begin to practise writing letters by tracing over their shapes or making them out of dough, before copying them into books. Reception-aged children begin to form letters with more clarity using their knowledge of letter sounds to write simple words. Higher attaining children extend their ideas, beginning to write simple sentences.
65. Children develop a good enthusiasm for books. Nursery children eagerly gather in the book corner for a story when they arrive in the mornings. Some browse quietly, carefully turning the pages and occasionally sharing a book with a friend. Children in Reception year begin to read independently. They recognise and make sense of common words and sentences and understand elements of stories such as characters and that events are sequenced in a logical order.
66. Teaching is good in nursery and Reception classes. Lessons are planned well and there is a good focus on what children are to learn. Teaching methods often excite the children and make learning more fun. Such an example was the nursery teacher's use of 'Sammy Snake', a glove puppet who effectively 'taught' pupils the letter 's' sound. In both nursery and Reception classes, teachers take every opportunity to improve children's knowledge of words or correct the way they say things. Activities are purposeful and build well on what children have learned.

Mathematical development

67. Children make good progress in this area of learning. The school's assessments show that when children start in the nursery, their levels of attainment are generally below expectations for their age. Because of the good teaching they receive almost all are in line to achieve their expected targets by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children in the nursery are given good opportunities to learn about numbers in a meaningful way. They learn to count and match objects by playing number games and singing number rhymes such as 'once I caught a fish alive'. They learn to recognise numbers by tracing around their outlines or making them with dough. Children recognise and name basic shapes such as a triangle, circle and square. They know colours and learn to distinguish between left and right. Children in Reception year develop a sound understanding of number by exploring mathematical patterns and number sequences. They count reliably to at least 10 and solve simple mathematical problems such as $2 + 3 = 5$. Children recognise that regular shapes have 'faces' as well as 'edges'. Pupils develop their understanding of measurement when they play with containers in the sand and water trays.
68. Teaching is good in the nursery. Activities are lively and interesting for children. For example, when learning to count to 8 the teacher began by reminding children about 'Incy Wincy Spider'. The children then had to roll a dice and place the matching number of legs on their spider. The teacher constantly assessed children's learning by questioning them. 'How many have you got?' 'How many more do you need?'. The session finished with the teacher moving the pace of learning on by introducing the idea of 'more' or 'less'. Reception-aged children make good progress because the teacher plans carefully to match work to the level of their understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Children have limited experiences of the world around them when they first start in the nursery. They improve quickly because of the good range of activities planned for them by their teachers. Most reach the expected levels of understanding by the end of Reception year.
70. There are ample opportunities in the nursery for children to become interested and curious learners. Their scientific and technical skills improve, for example, when they use a magnet and a paper clip to move a simple matchbox toy they have made or when they learn about different habitats of creatures. They approach computers confidently and show good independent skills when using simple programmes to draw a picture of Incy Wincy. Children learn about the daily and seasonal changes in the weather by filling in the weather chart each day with their teacher.
71. Children learn about time and place when looking at pictures of old and new toys and talking about how people and things change over time. Visits to a toy museum and Victorian nursery enrich their experiences. Their horizons are broadened further when they visit the Loughborough steam railway and explore the locality on their canal walk.
72. Nursery and Reception children explore a wide range of materials. They discover different ways of fixing and joining materials when playing with construction kits or building three-dimensional models from card and boxes. Reception-aged children used a combination of both to build their 'playground furniture'. They use computers well to create their art work and learn about the differences between older and modern buildings. They look more closely at the locality around the school to identify different

features and develop good scientific concepts such as that pulling and pushing are forces and they find out about sources of light and sound.

73. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. Teachers in nursery and Reception classes plan activities that are relevant and challenging for the children and make them meaningful by linking them to other areas of learning. Language and personal development are particular features of learning and teaching. Teachers continually question children and reinforce language by asking them to explain what they have learned.

Physical development

74. Children make satisfactory progress in their physical development throughout the Foundation Stage. Children in the nursery learn to move in different ways and to keep their balance when hopping, jumping and landing. Small apparatus such as bean bags and sponge balls are used well to improve their co-ordination when throwing, catching and kicking. Nursery children have regular opportunities for outdoor physical development, during which they learn to propel and control wheeled toys and develop skills that they practice first indoors. However, these outdoor opportunities are currently not available in Reception year so their growth in confidence and development of skills are not as fast as they could otherwise be in that area. Children in the Reception class develop satisfactory control of their body movements when engaged in dance activities and using small gymnastics and games apparatus. Activities are planned carefully so that they match appropriately what children are able to do.
75. In both nursery and Reception classes, there are good opportunities for children to practise with small tools such as scissors and implements to cut and shape dough and learn to hold pencils and brushes correctly. There is a good focus on pencil control when practising letters, and the positive effects of this are evident in the presentation of work and handwriting skills in books further up the school.

Creative development

76. Teachers in nursery and in the mixed-aged Reception class plan good opportunities for children to develop their creative skills. Children have had limited experiences in handling different media when they start nursery, but respond well to the activities planned for them. They make good progress overall and most acquire the range of skills expected of them by the end of the Reception year. Teaching in this area of learning is good.
77. Children explore the colour and texture of different materials through painting and collage work. They learn to apply colour in different ways such as using 'combs' to spread paint as well as brushes. They experiment with the effects of coloured papers to make 'stained glass windows' to celebrate different festivals such as Diwali and Christmas. During the inspection, nursery children made spiders from egg boxes and pipe cleaners as part of their nursery rhyme projects. This involved some careful fixing of legs and cutting out of eyes for their spiders. Reception-aged children apply paint more confidently and their portraits of family members show increasing control and sensitivity to tone and colour. Collages showing children 'out on a snowy day' provided a good opportunity for children to select and combine materials in their own designs. This aspect of independence could be developed throughout the Foundation Stage.

78. In musical activities, children explore the qualities of sounds made by different instruments. There was some good quality teaching in the nursery when children used a range of percussion instruments, matching them to the ideas of 'rain' and 'sunshine'. They joined in very well during the singing of 'Incy Wincy Spider' playing their instruments enthusiastically. In the Reception class, the children know an increasing repertoire of songs and rhymes and explore musical patterns and rhythms during their lessons. Children's creative talk is effectively inspired by the role-play dressing up area where they become nursery rhyme characters and by imitating 'real life' situations when playing with small world toys such as dolls houses and furniture.

ENGLISH

79. The school has made very good improvement since the time of the last inspection, when teaching and pupils' progress were judged to be unsatisfactory in infant classes and satisfactory in junior classes. As a result of a purposeful action plan, the staff have taken the essential steps to improve teaching in all classes, so that it is now good and all pupils make good progress. These steps include: raising the expectations of staff; improving the introductions in lessons of the National Literacy Strategy so that pupils concentrate better; teaching pupils in Years 1 and 2 in distinct age groups rather than mixed-aged classes so that the level of challenge in the work is now good; improving the planning of pupils' work in the mixed-aged junior classes to cater for requirements of the older age group in order to lift expectations; and making pupils' writing a focus for the whole school to improve last year.
80. Standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing at the end of Year 2 are now similar to those found in schools nationally and though standards in English in Year 6 are below the national average, good achievement is evident in sampling the work of pupils in current classes. The challenge for the school is to maintain these improvements, particularly in pupils' writing.

Speaking and listening

81. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build on the good start they make in the Foundation Stage and readily join in oral parts of lessons. Most speak clearly and higher attaining pupils explain their thinking well. For instance, in a science lesson, one pupil voiced her view that older pupils were more likely to make accurate observations in investigating forces than younger ones because of their greater experience. Pupils learning English as an additional language are encouraged to be fully involved in answering questions even though their ability to use English in full sentences is often limited. Good teaching, which encourages pupils to try and which is sympathetic to pupils' difficulties, is helping pupils of all levels of attainment to speak clearly and cogently. This was evident in a class of pupils in Years 3 and 4, when the teacher corrected a pupil's speech and made her point without causing embarrassment. Progress continues in junior classes, so that by Year 6 pupils make a good contribution to discussions, for instance, arguing for and against school uniform. Pupils of higher attainment were confident talking to others and pupils with special educational needs joined in because the ethos in school is one of encouragement. The school council is a good example of how the school is promoting the pupils' skills in speaking and listening and consequently their personal development.

Reading

82. Standards vary in different year groups according to how many pupils there are with special educational needs or learning English as an additional language. There is the

full range of attainment in the current Years 2 and 6. The staff have set aside an extra daily session of reading in addition to English lessons so that staff and pupils can have a quiet period in which one group receives tuition while other pupils read quietly. As a result, pupils read regularly and it is evident in conversation with them that they enjoy reading and can name favourite books and authors. All pupils read as part of their regular homework and their diaries indicate that most have read a good number of books in the current school year. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are fluent readers, selecting books from the school library or class libraries. Those pupils with special educational needs receive good help from teachers and from support staff, for instance, in lessons of the *Additional* and *Early Literacy Support* programmes. The pupils' ability to find information from non-fiction books and reference books is generally good. Older pupils understand the colour-coded system of classification in the school library and find information using the contents and index. Their ability to use the Internet for research is improving since the establishment of the computer suite.

Writing

83. The whole-school focus last year on improving pupils' writing has led to the pupils being given sufficient opportunity to write at length and for a range of purposes. This usually happens every fortnight and is having the desired impact on standards. For example, pupils in Year 2 write simple letters, reports and stories of good quality. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn how to plan a longer piece of work and to make a polished version of their work. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 write detailed biographies, for example of Martin Luther King, and well presented play scripts about the Christmas story. They write persuasive pieces on subjects such as school uniform. A joined style of handwriting is taught from early on and pupils write clearly and legibly. Standards of presentation are often very good. A further important improvement since the last inspection has been the thought that teachers have given to how best to use subjects such as geography and history to improve pupils' writing. There are very good examples of this happening across year groups. For example, pupils in Year 2 write about visits out of school looking at village life; pupils in Years 3 and 4 write different stories about the creation of the world; and pupils in Years 5 and 6 raise moral issues concerning the family life in Ancient Greece compared to family life today.
84. Most pupils' writing is average for their age but in some classes there are larger proportions of pupils with specific difficulties involving reading and writing, so there is a wide variation in standards. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress and some make very good progress, being amongst the highest attainers in their class after a few years. They are given every encouragement to do well. Marking of pupils' written work is good and in some classes, for instance, Years 5 and 6, is of high quality. Pupils are given targets to improve and they are regularly assessed according to the level descriptors of the National Curriculum. This is helping pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. The challenge for the school now is to maintain the improvement in pupils' written work so that more pupils reach above the expected level for their age.
85. Teaching in all classes is good. Strengths described above, for example, good teaching methods, good expertise to teach the basic skills and improved expectations, are motivating pupils and leading to their being more aware of how well they are doing. As a result, pupils are interested in their work and their behaviour is good. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 displayed excellent attitudes and behaviour in one lesson focusing on persuasive writing. The quality of pupils' learning is raised by these factors and the pace of lessons is good. Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' learning

through regular reading, spelling and other assignments. There are good opportunities for pupils to use skills of word processing to produce written work.

86. The subject leader manages improvements to provision very well and consistent checking of the quality of teaching and pupils' work has led to weaknesses being spotted and eliminated. There are now very good procedures in place to assess how well pupils are doing and to provide them with targets. This is a further improvement since the time of the last inspection. Teachers know exactly how well their pupils are doing and use this information to help them to plan challenging work. Levels of resourcing are satisfactory. There is a good range of *Big Books* but not enough sets of books for classes or groups to read. Some of the resources in the library are outdated and require replacement. The layout of the library, which includes the new computer suite, is inconvenient for teaching and learning and could be improved.

MATHEMATICS

87. Standards are below the national expectation in Year 6, bordering on well below overall. They are expected to be well below expectations in the National Curriculum tests this year, owing to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs within this small year group. Nevertheless, eighty per cent of pupils are likely to reach or exceed their individual targets. Standards are close to the national expectation in Year 2 and on track to meet expectations in the National Curriculum tests this year. Pupils make progress against their prior attainment and achieve well. Standards are improving throughout the school and most pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. The school provides the right level of challenge for pupils of all levels of attainment. The raising of standards in this subject is a school-wide priority this year, with the focus on using and applying mathematics and developing pupils' mathematical skills across the curriculum. All staff have had further training in these areas.
88. The action taken by the school to improve standards is evident in the improved quality of work in pupils' books and the progress made by all pupils in lessons. Pupils in Year 1 demonstrated their ability to solve simple problems of addition, using numbers between zero and ten. They understood the terms, double, halve, take away, add 3 more, etc. Pupils in Year 2 added three single digit numbers mentally, totalling up to 20 and three two-digit numbers totalling to 100, with the help of apparatus. In both classes, pupils work at the appropriate National Curriculum level. Their ability to communicate information in the form of tables, block graphs and diagrams is developing.
89. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are beginning to recognise position and direction and to use coordinates, using their computer skills to help them. They successfully drew squares and rectangles on the screen, with support for lower attaining pupils and were challenged to draw a triangle, which they found very difficult. Their written work shows that they are encouraged to explain and record information systematically, investigate and test predictions and use the computer to access, collect and record data. In Years 4 and 5, the visual methods that the teacher uses have a positive effect on pupils' learning. For example, in a lesson on shape and space, they consolidated their knowledge of reflective symmetry in regular polygons and made and investigated a general statement about familiar shapes by finding examples that satisfied it. The teacher used the calculator from a laptop computer to reinforce their understanding that the number of axes of reflective symmetry in regular polygons is equal to the number of sides. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 consolidated their understanding of the use of degrees. They identified, ordered and estimated acute and obtuse angles, and they used a

protractor and measured and drew acute and obtuse angles. The challenge for Year 6 pupils was to measure with one degree of accuracy and check that the sum of the angles was 180 degrees.

90. The quality of teaching is good, and in some lessons very good. The strengths are teachers' knowledge and understanding and effective planning which takes into account the needs of all pupils. Teachers' expectations are high and there is a good level of challenge for most pupils. Basic skills are taught well and, together with successful interactive teaching methods, lead to the good acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding on the part of all pupils. The management of pupils is particularly good in Years 3 to 6 and pupils are motivated to apply intellectual effort to their work. They show interest and concentration and are developing independence. All pupils have the opportunity to do well and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. There are planned links between mathematics in most other subjects. Strategies for teaching numeracy skills are good. There is good use of time and resources, including the use of computers in Years 3 to 6. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning of small groups of pupils. Marking is generally helpful in enabling pupils to know how to improve their work. Homework is used satisfactorily to consolidate and extend the work in the classroom.
91. The subject is very well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable subject leader, who has produced a detailed policy and gives good support and guidance to colleagues. Her leadership ensures clear educational direction and reflects the school's aims and values. Support from the headteacher and the local education authority advisor is good, as is the monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils' work. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress through regular formal and informal assessments are very good. The analysis of assessment information is used by teachers well to help them with curriculum planning. There is a good system in place to track the progress of individual pupils. Individual targets are set and are regularly reviewed. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are encouraged to engage in self-assessment and they have a good knowledge of their own learning. Resources are satisfactory and are used well. There is a strong commitment to improvement on the part of all staff and the capacity to succeed is good. An area for development is the use and application of mathematics, with more freedom for pupils to carry out investigations.

SCIENCE

92. Standards are broadly in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and below expectations at the end of Year 6. Although pupils throughout the school achieve well in relation to their prior attainment levels, few are likely to reach the higher levels expected nationally. The proportion of pupils with special education needs or who are at early stages of language acquisition is significant in this respect. This also has an impact on the school's overall results. Nevertheless, the school has worked hard to deal with the areas identified for improvement in the last report and inspection evidence indicates a rising trend.
93. Improvements since the last inspection have been very good. Weaknesses in teaching have been eliminated, the quality and presentation of pupils' work are better, and there are now clear and informative assessments of pupils' progress and attainment. The curriculum is planned thoughtfully to ensure pupils in the mixed-aged classes do not repeat work and takes account of national subject guidance. Although marking is satisfactory there are still inconsistencies in its quality. This remains an area for continued development along with more effective use of ICT in some classes for recording work.

94. By the end of Year 2, pupils know that good growth requires proper conditions which include nutrition, water and warmth. They understand that all living things have similar needs. They investigate the effects of force by changing the shapes of materials or rolling objects down a gradient which has different surfaces. By Year 6, most pupils have a sound understanding of life processes. They know about important aspects of growth and development such as good diet and a healthy lifestyle. Personal development is promoted well through this aspect. An example is when pupils carried out an investigation which simulated smoking and the pupils saw for themselves the potentially harmful effects to their lungs. Pupils understand that materials can change when exposed to heat or water and know how liquids, solids and gases differ from one another. They construct electrical circuits, which incorporate buzzers and switches, and they have a satisfactory understanding of the apparent movement of the sun, the earth's orbit and how this causes day and night and the changing seasons. Throughout the school pupils are given a framework for investigation. They learn appropriate language such as 'predict' and 'conclusion', and understand what a fair test is. However, investigative work is too directed by the teacher, consequently pupils are not given enough opportunities to generate their own independent investigative tasks, select their own resources and find appropriate ways to present their findings. The current system used by the school inhibits the development of scientific skills, especially for higher attaining pupils.
95. The quality of teaching is good. It has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and consequently they plan lessons which have clear learning goals. This results in pupils making good progress in their basic scientific knowledge and use of specific language. Teachers plan tasks that are interesting and make sure there are enough resources to engage the whole class. This results in pupils being better motivated and enables them to work independently at times. An example was seen in a lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5. All pupils had enough equipment to construct their own electrical circuits and to test objects in the classroom for conductivity. Because all were fully engaged the pace of learning was good and the outcomes for the lesson successful. Teachers make good use of video resources in lessons. This has a good impact on learning because of the clarity and quality of the video presentation. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learned well about microbes developing good scientific language such as 'algae' 'fungi' and 'mites'. Younger pupils were left in no doubt about what could happen to their teeth if they did not take care of them properly. The use of video recordings also presented an opportunity for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to improve their literacy skills by taking notes.
96. Teachers establish very good relationships in their classrooms. Expectations are high and they value the contributions which pupils make. This encourages a good response from pupils. They respect their teachers, work hard and generally accept responsibility for their actions on the occasions when they are challenged. There is a good atmosphere of co-operation in the classrooms. Teachers question pupils well to assess their levels of knowledge and understanding and build well on what pupils already know. Some probing questions in a lesson for Years 1 and 2 pupils, such as 'How fast will the car go?' (down a ramp), 'Which direction might it take', 'If the ramp were higher will it go faster?', required pupils to think carefully about possible outcomes of the investigation and to make more reasonable predictions. Teachers ensure that pupils' work is presented neatly by setting high expectations, though in some classes too many work sheets are used.

97. Strong leadership and management have resulted in very good improvements overall since the last inspection. The subject leader has a very clear overview of the strengths and areas for development. Pupils' progress is checked well through the effective tracking system in place. Resources are satisfactory and used well in lessons to support pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

98. Provision is good; at the time of the last inspection, it was satisfactory. By end of Year 2, standards are above those expected for pupils of this age. All pupils make good progress and achieve well, because of good teaching, a clear emphasis on the development of pupils' skills and techniques and good use of visual images, which help pupils to overcome learning and language difficulties. The value placed on pupils' achievement is reflected in the good displays throughout the school. In a lesson in the mixed Years Reception and 1 class, entitled 'Winter Wonderland', pupils recalled what they had observed on a recent walk along the canal, for example, catkins, berries, seeds and bark. One boy referred to 'the naked branches'. Pupils produced a collage of a snow scene, with 'hidden treasures', such as catkins and berries.
99. By the end of Year 6, standards are above those expected for pupils of this age. All pupils are fully included in all activities. They make good progress and achieve well, through the many opportunities to develop and refine their skills in drawing, painting, modelling, collage, print-making and textiles. Good use is made of ICT in researching the work of well-known artists. During the inspection, pupils in Years 4 and 5 studied pointillism through the work of Seurat. They explored ideas together and painted a detailed picture in the style of Seurat.
100. Teaching is good, and sometimes very good, as demonstrated both in lessons observed and the quality of pupils' work over time. It is a major factor in pupils' good acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding and in the good and very good progress made by pupils. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was satisfactory. Characteristics of good teaching in school are teachers' good subject knowledge, planning, and the teaching of basic skills. Their high expectations inspire pupils to apply creative effort to their work. Pupils are managed well, enabling maximum use to be made of time and resources. Teachers give constructive feedback to help pupils' learning. Effective teaching methods engage the pupils' interest and concentration. Through opportunities to appraise their own work and the work of others, pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a good knowledge of how well they are doing themselves.
101. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader is very enthusiastic and has a very clear awareness of how the subject should be developed. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced through opportunities to appreciate great works of art and to express their own feelings through art. Their literacy and social development is promoted through group and paired work and discussion. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge to create geometric designs and to print repeated patterns. Planned links are made with every area of the curriculum, for example, the history and geography of ancient civilisations and of the local area. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and the information is used well to help the teachers to plan work. The subject leader has an overview of teachers' planning and pupils' work. Resources are adequate and are used well. An annual arts day enables pupils to enjoy a range of experiences and develop their techniques. Art students from a nearby university work with students on large murals each year. There are good opportunities

for pupils to study sculpture and the history of art at local museums and to sketch the river, canal, houses and cottages in the surrounding area.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Provision is good. There is a consistent approach to planning, designing, making and evaluating products and finished products are of a high standard.
103. By the end of Year 2, standards match those expected for pupils of this age. All pupils make good progress and achieve well, as a result of good teaching and a strong emphasis on skills and techniques. It was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2. Evidence was drawn from teachers' plans and records, photographic evidence, discussion with the subject leader and samples of pupils' work on display, for example, well-produced models of playground equipment and games in Year 1 and puppets and vehicles in Year 2.
104. By the end of Year 6, standards match those expected for pupils of this age, as at the last inspection. There are good models of mummies, sarcophaguses and Egyptian jewellery in Years 3 and 4, linked to their history topic. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have designed and made packaging, for various purposes, and models that light up, in connection with their science work on electricity. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 designed a structure, such as a pen knife, a fruit cocktail, an open gel pot, a world cup trophy, a photograph album, a bag, a shoe, a violent volcano and a hot chocolate swirl, in the style of Claes Oldenburg, whose work they have researched on the Internet and reproduced in art lessons. They examined a wide range of materials, touching, feeling, describing them and thinking about their uses. Their task was to design a structure, using instructional writing methods, in preparation for making it. Their planning was of a high standard, with attention given to shape, form and the use of materials. They reflected on their designs as they developed, and identified what was working well and what could be improved.
105. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding and teach designing and making skills well, ensuring that pupils acquire knowledge, skills and understanding well. They have high expectations and plan well. They ensure that all pupils understand what they have to do and what they are expected to achieve and allow them time and a degree of freedom of choice to achieve well. Pupils are enthusiastic and motivated, as a result. Standards of both design and making are good. Teachers have good class control and make very good use of time and resources. Pupils are trained to evaluate their products and identify and carry out improvements. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a good knowledge of their own learning, as a result.
106. The subject is very well managed by an experienced subject leader, who has a very clear sense of how the subject is to develop and gives good guidance to colleagues. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good and links with all subjects of the curriculum are developed well. Pupils' mathematical skills are developed through accurate measuring. Discussion and written evaluation of their products contribute to pupils' literacy skills. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and the information is used well to help teachers with planning work. Learning resources are satisfactory and are used well. The action taken to meet the school's targets and the priorities for development are very good.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

107. Standards in both subjects are broadly average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and this is a similar finding to that at the time of the last inspection. Improvement in provision has been very good since then and shortcomings found in curriculum planning and in how well the subjects contribute to standards in literacy are now strengths. Unsatisfactory teaching, evident in history lessons during the follow-up visit one year after the last inspection, has now been eliminated and the quality of teaching is good in both subjects. Particularly valuable are the links made with ICT, especially for researching information on the Internet. These outcomes are the result of concerted action by the staff and reflect the good teamwork amongst them.
108. Pupils in Year 2 report well on their visit to Newarke House Museum nearby. They know about famous historical figures such as Grace Darling. The teacher makes good comparisons between current standards of the lifeboat service and the difficulties in the past to help the pupils to appreciate her significance. The pupils ask pertinent questions and begin to use terms such as 'famous' and 'heroine' in their own writing. The teacher also forges valuable links with work in geography. For instance, a successful lesson on map work is followed by asking pupils to make suggestions about where might be a suitable place to position a lighthouse on a simple map of an island. Pupils in a geography lesson made sensible suggestions about three improvements that residents of a village could make. For example, they were asked to suggest a site for a primary school on their maps. They took into account convenience and safety in their responses. One very good feature of the lesson was the way the few pupils learning English as an additional language were given every opportunity to contribute, even coming to the front of the class to explain their ideas, using a larger version of the map on the board.
109. In both history lessons seen involving junior classes, the teachers made very good use of the Internet. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 researched gods and goddesses of Ancient Egypt and those in Years 4 and 5 answered questions about the Ancient Greek civilisation from the websites of national museums. They are developing a good awareness of how to use various sources of information, such as books, video recordings and the Internet, as well as visiting sites of historical interest, in order to get an insight into the past. Pupils also extend their geographical knowledge by well-planned visits, for example, to the Cropston Water Centre to find out more about the water cycle. The pupils' map reading skills improve through working with simple plans, local maps and aerial photographs, downloaded from the Internet, as well as UK, European and World maps. Pupils in Year 6 learn about the countries of the European Union and use appropriate terms to locate them on a map. They are able to describe the countries' locations by using positional terms, including eight compass points.
110. Teaching is good in both subjects and one very good lesson was seen. Lessons are well planned and out-of-school visits form a very important part of many units of work. Teachers have good expertise to teach both subjects and as a result, they motivate well the pupils, who enjoy the work and put in a good amount of effort. An example of how well the teachers use the subjects to promote the pupils' writing was part of a topic on Ancient Greece. Pupils wrote very interesting narratives as if they were caught up in the battle for Troy. One pupil in Year 4 wrote, 'They then went on the rampage, destroying the city and killing the Trojans'. There are some excellent examples of staff planning to use other subjects to enliven topics. For example, the teacher in the Years 3 and 4 class incorporated art and design, when pupils used parchment material to paint pictures in the style of the Egyptians, as well as design and technology, when they

mummified a small toy brought from home and then designed a sarcophagus from card.

111. The subject leader for geography provides good guidance for staff and has worked closely with staff and the subject leader for history, who left the school at the end of the autumn term. They have planned work in both subjects that covers the National Curriculum well and promotes the pupils' learning in a progressive manner.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. There has been steady improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the ways in which ICT is used in other subjects. Resources have been improved significantly. Computers have been updated and there is now Internet access. Teachers' confidence has also improved because of the training they have received. This accounts for the good use of ICT in other subjects. Further training for staff is planned in order to maintain the momentum of improvement.
113. Little direct teaching was seen during the inspection but observation of pupils using computers and the range of work displayed indicate that basic skills are taught effectively overall. Pupils in Year 2, for example, develop competent word processing skills. They enter, save and retrieve work and enhance its presentation by controlling the colour, size and style of text. During one lesson, pupils learned to build a procedure to control the movements of a car shown on screen. Most were able to direct the car along a given route on a street map. By the end of Year 6 pupils use computers confidently to produce a range of work. Writing is often combined with graphics to give a better presentation and some pupils have some experience with Power Point presentations. During lessons, pupils were seen using computers effectively to research topics in history. Pupils showed good skills in searching the website to select information they needed and download a hard copy. All could use drag, cut and paste techniques skilfully. The computer suite was also used efficiently for a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 3 and 4. Pupils learned to enter instructions in order to control the movements of a screen 'turtle' to make it draw different shapes. This required some precise thinking skills on the part of the pupils as they worked out each logical step. Pupils who have special educational needs benefit well from the use of computers. Their interest is sustained so they are better able to stay on task.
114. The subject leader manages the provision well. Nationally recommended guidance has been adapted thoughtfully to ensure pupils develop skills progressively as they move through the school. Advice from the local education authority has helped the school to establish the new, networked system of computers. The layout of the computer suite itself, however, is inconvenient for whole-class teaching. The development plan for the subject is clear with realistic priorities set for its continued improvement. There is a good range of software, which teachers use effectively and which includes some data logging equipment and a digital camera.

MUSIC

115. Standards meet expectations in Years 2 and 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress throughout the school and most achieve well overall. Since the last inspection the school has revised the scheme of work. A more simplified version based on local education authority guidelines is used, resulting in non-specialist teachers gaining more confidence and consequently

teaching music to their own classes. There are now more opportunities in assemblies and lessons for pupils to listen to a wider range of music.

116. The quality of teaching is good overall though stronger in Year 3 to 6, where there is some outstanding teaching. In one excellent lesson in a class with above average proportions of pupils with special educational needs, the teacher's excellent use of resources, her knowledge of pupils' level of understanding and her relationship with pupils inspired achievement and resulted in exceptional quality of learning. The pupils learned how pitch and dynamics in sound can be controlled to convey mood and feelings. They explored changing sounds at first hand, by experimenting on various instruments, and knew by the end of the lesson the specific language such as crescendo, diminuendo and pianoforte linked to that element of music. A video recording demonstrating these elements added a great deal of interest to the lesson. The teacher used this very well to exemplify and consolidate pupils' learning as the lesson progressed.
117. Pupils learn to listen and to repeat rhythmic patterns and sequences, and to respond to different kinds of music. In one lesson pupils listened to a selection of short pieces then had to make a judgement 'I liked it', 'It's O.K.' or 'I don't like it'. Responses were recorded to see if they change over time when the music is played again at a future date.
118. Singing is taught satisfactorily, though at times teachers' expectations are not high enough, so that techniques such as correct posture, breathing and listening to others are not emphasised. In assemblies, pupils sing in unison tunefully and follow a piano accompaniment well. There are strong links during hymn practices to spiritual and moral development when pupils reflect on lines such as 'Let peace begin with me'.
119. The curriculum is enriched for pupils through a recorder club. School productions provide further opportunities for pupils to perform and develop their musical skills. Pupils who have stronger musical interests are encouraged. Two pupils currently attend a local performing arts centre outside of school time. A music workshop is planned to take place shortly, during which all pupils including those in the Foundation Stage will work with visiting specialists to explore a chosen musical theme.
120. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The subject leader has very good subject knowledge and provides support and advice for colleagues which enable them to maintain standards. Resources are satisfactory and are used well in lessons, particularly the percussion instruments, to help pupils develop basic skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. Provision is good. By the end of Year 2, standards match those expected for pupils of this age. All pupils make good progress in developing their skills in gymnastics, dance, games, athletics and swimming. They achieve well in all areas. A two-year cycle of activities ensures that in mixed-aged classes, all pupils cover all aspects of the curriculum. This is helped by the provision of a good policy and scheme of work, which provide clear guidance on what is to be covered. Improvement since the time of the last inspection has been good and unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated.
122. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 explored simple skills with control and co-ordination. They varied skills, actions and ideas and linked these in ways that suited the activities. They showed some understanding of simple tactics and compositional ideas. In a dance lesson, they improved their performance by watching, listening,

assessing their performance and identifying ways of improving it. They enacted the story of Dick Whittington, as recounted on a tape recorder, using space well and working with a partner or in a group, as appropriate. They understand how to exercise safely and describe how their bodies feel during different activities.

123. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards or teaching by the end of Year 6 as only one other lesson was observed. The scheme of work and teachers' planning indicate what is covered in each year. A very good lesson was observed in Years 3 and 4. Pupils made links with literacy, as they performed 'Sleeping Beauty' with grace and control, using a range of movements. The music and visual stimuli surmounted any learning or language difficulties, enabling all pupils to make very good progress in the lesson and achieve well, because of very good teaching.
124. Teaching is good in infant classes and pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. High expectations ensure that they work at a good pace and apply creative effort to their work. All pupils make good progress and have a sound knowledge of their own learning, because of the teachers' knowledge and understanding, good teaching of basic skills, effective planning and the way in which pupils are managed. Time and resources are used well and ongoing assessment is used to effect improvement in pupils' work.
125. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and pupils experience all five aspects of the curriculum at planned times in their school career. All pupils from Years 1 and 2 to Years 5 and 6 have swimming lessons. They make good progress and achieve well.
126. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The experienced and enthusiastic subject leader gives generously of her time in taking football training after school and enabling pupils to participate in football matches, tournaments and cross-country events after school and at week-ends. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of extra-curricular activities, including football, basketball, TAG rugby and cross-country running. Professional coaching and expertise develop pupils' skills and experience to a high level. The annual residential visit, which is open to all pupils in Years 3 to 6, gives pupils access to a wide range of outdoor activities, such as go-karting and cycling. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and assessment information is used well to guide curriculum planning. Resources are adequate and are used well. There are plans to apply for Active Mark recognition for the school, in conjunction with the Healthy Schools' Award.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

127. Standards are better than those seen typically at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils throughout the school make good progress and develop good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths. They show a clear understanding of how commitment to a particular belief influences people's daily lives. Their learning in lessons makes a very good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments. Standards have improved since the last inspection. There has been significant spending on resources, which helps pupils' understanding of different religious practices. The quality of teaching has improved and pupils' presentation of their work is better than previously reported.
128. The quality of teaching is good. Characteristic strengths are the range of methods teachers use to promote pupils' thinking about religion, and teachers' use of resources. In one lesson visitors from different Christian communities came to the school and

spoke to pupils about their personal commitment. They then demonstrated how special clothes they wear for religious ceremonies proclaimed their beliefs to others. One visitor used a different approach to the topic; talking about 'inner clothing' of kindness, care and love, making reference to St. Paul's writing. Pupils showed very good levels of interest. They questioned the visitors thoughtfully and learned much about how personal faith influences daily lives. Following their visit to a local church, the pupils in the mixed Years 3 and 4 class demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the symbols and artefacts they saw. Pupils talked about the significance of things such as the font, lectern and stained glass. They also showed good knowledge of the New Testament, for example, when talking and asking questions about Christian beliefs surrounding Good Friday, the resurrection of Jesus and the life of John the Baptist.

129. Teachers' subject knowledge is good so their approach to teaching is confident and lessons are planned well. Time is allocated in lessons for pupils to talk and exchange views. Teachers use the richness of the different cultural backgrounds in the school sensitively to confront different views and promote tolerance. An example of this was seen in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 when following the theme of respect, they talked openly about some causes of segregation and the need to recognise the good qualities in others, despite their differing opinions. As a result of their good learning pupils in Year 2 are able to talk about the places of worship visited by Christian, Sikh, Muslim and Hindu communities. They know some of the different traditions and celebrations in those faiths and that holy writings are found in the Qur'an. Pupils can recall stories about Noah's Ark and parables of the loaves and fishes and the Prodigal Son.
130. Leadership and management by the subject leader are very good. Pupils' learning is enriched because of strong links with different religious communities. The scheme of work is thoughtfully adapted to suit the particular nature of the school, comprising a combination of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and nationally recommended guidelines. Staff confidence has risen as a result of good in-service training. Effective monitoring of lessons has led to improved standards.