

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST BOTOLPH'S CE CONTROLLED PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Shepshed, Loughborough

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120159

Headteacher: Mrs Christine Price

Reporting inspector: Bogusia Matusiak-Varley
19938

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 5th June 2003

Inspection number: 248104

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 10
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Loughborough Road Shepshed Loughborough Leicestershire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sally Vallance
Date of previous inspection:	1 st December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19938	B Matusiak-Varley	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion English as an additional language Science Music Religious education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
19664	J Bayliss	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22790	J Pinney	Team inspector	English Design and technology Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
22157	M Roussel	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Geography History	
11642	C Parkinson	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Art and design	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Botolph's C of E Controlled Primary School is an average-sized school, situated in Shepshed, a small town four miles from Loughborough. There are 221 pupils on roll, 119 and 102 girls. There are 11 children who attend the reception class part-time. Children start school when they are four years old and transfer to high school at the age of ten. Since the previous inspection, the school's intake of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) has increased significantly, because of the good reputation it has for its inclusive practices. Presently there are 28 per cent of pupils within the school who have SEN (above average); 3 per cent (above average) have statements of SEN. This year, the majority of pupils with SEN are in Years 2 and 5 and this depresses the end-of-year judgements made on attainment. The range and nature of pupils' special needs vary from general to specific learning difficulties, including autism. The vast majority of pupils are of white British origin. Two per cent of pupils are from different ethnic minority backgrounds; they do not have English as an additional language and have full access to the curriculum. Ten per cent (below average) of pupils are entitled to free school meals, but this is not a true indication, as many pupils who would qualify do not take up the option. Attainment on entry to the school is variable but is generally below average. This has changed from that identified in the previous report of 1997 where it was judged as average. Many pupils have underdeveloped language and mathematical skills. Pupil mobility is high. The school has had a high turnover of staff in the past two years due to promotions and ill health; five teachers left and six were appointed in the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school that provides much that is good for its pupils. Pupils are well looked after, receive a satisfactory quality of education and there is very good provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning and those who have SEN. All pupils receive high levels of pastoral care and the school rightly deserves the confidence parents have in it. Standards are rising and pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall, with good achievement in mathematics, music, physical education and religious education. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with good and very good features. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in mathematics, physical education (Years 3 to 5), music and religious education. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good; she is well supported by an effective governing body which executes its statutory duties well. Pupils love coming to school; they behave well and have good attitudes to learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in mathematics, music, physical education and religious education.
- Pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening and attain above-average standards in Year 5.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning and those who have SEN in the mainstream school is very good.
- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in mathematics, music, physical education and religious education and leads to good achievement in these subjects by Year 5.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning, they behave well and attendance is above the national average.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall – very good provision is made for pupils' social development – contributing well to pupils' attitudes and personal development.
- The school provides good levels of pastoral care for its pupils.
- The school is well led and managed by a very caring and dedicated headteacher who is totally devoted to the whole school community.
- Partnership with parents is good and the school sees parents as true partners in their children's learning.

What could be improved

- Standards in reading and writing, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and some foundation subjects need to be raised.
- Curriculum planning to ensure that all pupils develop appropriate skills in each subject as they move through the school.
- Assessments in science and foundation subjects and their use in planning the next steps of pupils' learning.
- Aspects of teaching, relating to marking, use of assessment and extension activities to challenge higher-attaining pupils.
- The roles of some subject co-ordinators.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection in December 1997, in spite of many staff changes and the lack of a deputy headteacher for over eighteen months. The school has addressed all of the key issues, but still needs to improve curriculum planning further. The quality of teaching has improved; there is virtually no unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school. Provision in the Foundation Stage of learning has improved, as has provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The very good provision for pupils with SEN has been maintained. Standards in English and mathematics are not as high as in the previous inspection, but this is due to the academic profile of pupils in Years 2 and 5, many of whom are on the SEN register. High standards in music, physical education (Year 5) and religious education have been maintained, as has the good quality of leadership, resulting in very good relationships throughout the school. The role of the governing body has improved and is now judged as good. The school's capacity for improvement is good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	C	C	B	C
Writing	D	C	A	B
Mathematics	E	E	B	C

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

The 2002 national tests and teachers' assessments show that, by the end of Year 2 in comparison with all schools, standards in reading and mathematics were above the national averages and standards in writing were well above. In comparison with similar schools, standards in reading and mathematics were in line with and in writing standards were above the national average. Over time, the performance of pupils exceeded the national averages in reading and writing, and performance in mathematics fell below the national average. The performance of pupils in science, according to teachers' assessments, was above the national average. Inspection findings show a slightly different picture. Whilst standards are rising as evidenced by the 2002 national test results, this year standards are not as high owing to the high proportion of pupils in Years 2 and 5 who have SEN and are below average attainers. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are in line with national averages; in reading and writing, standards are below national averages, and in mathematics and science, standards are in line with national averages. In music and religious education, standards are above those expected of pupils

nationally. No judgement can be made on physical education as no lessons were observed. In ICT, standards are average. In all other subjects, pupils attain average standards.

By the end of Year 5, standards in speaking and listening are above average, as are standards in music, physical education and religious education. In mathematics and science, standards meet the expectations of ten-year-olds nationally. In ICT and all other subjects, pupils attain average standards. No judgement can be made on design and technology as insufficient work was seen. In reading and writing, standards are below average. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with SEN make good progress. Pupils who are higher attainers make satisfactory progress overall.

In relation to pupils' prior attainment, standards are high enough for most subjects, but need to be higher in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics. A high percentage of pupils in Years 2 and 5 did not start their education in this school. The school has worked very hard at raising standards and sets rigorous and challenging targets which become part of teachers' performance management targets, and which have been met. A particular barrier to improvement has been the fact that the headteacher has been without a deputy for eighteen months.

Attainment on entry to the school is below average and, by the time children enter Year 1, they have attained the Early Learning Goals (ELG) in all areas of learning and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have good attitudes to learning; they enjoy lessons and persevere with tasks. Pupils behave well in and around the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. All pupils are well behaved, they are courteous, polite and well mannered.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very good around the school, but on occasions in lessons, opportunities are missed to enable pupils to become independent learners.
Attendance	Good. Pupils like coming to school and they arrive punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 5
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with several good and very good features. Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage of learning, where all groups of children are effectively challenged. During the week of inspection, 58 lessons were seen. One excellent music lesson was seen in the juniors' choir session; six lessons were very good and were seen in Year 2, Year 3 and the mixed Year 4/5 classes, 29 lessons were good, 21 were satisfactory and one unsatisfactory English lesson was seen in the juniors. Excellent and very good teaching challenged pupils into developing their learning at a fast rate as a result of interesting subject content, very secure subject knowledge and a passion for teaching. Weaknesses in teaching are identified in ineffective use of time, lack of challenge for all groups of pupils, especially above-average attainers, and insufficient provision of extension activities. Basic skills of reading and writing and phonics are taught satisfactorily, and numeracy is taught well. The teaching of

children in the Foundation Stage of learning is good, as is the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. Support staff make a valid contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is regular but does not always inform pupils how to improve, especially in their written work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Very good in the Foundation Stage. Generally broad and balanced, but time allocation to teaching reading and writing is too generous. Skills progression, opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT and clear expectations of what all groups of pupils should be achieving in mixed-age classes need improvement.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. These pupils are very well provided for, especially when they are working with support staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. Very good provision for social development, as a result of which pupils have good attitudes to learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils are well looked after. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, but there is a weakness in the use of assessment to inform the next steps of pupils' learning.

Partnership with parents is good and the school sees parents as true partners in their children's learning. Provision for parental workshops is very good. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is very good because it is exciting, relevant and provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn through discovery.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher fulfils her duties well and is providing a clear educational direction for the school. Newly appointed co-ordinators are undertaking training, but as yet do not monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are true critical friends and exercise their statutory duties well. They are regular visitors to the school and monitor the school development plan effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school analyses its performance well and knows its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school manages its finances well and principles of best value are used in all purchases. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are 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 like school and make good progress.• Behaviour is good and the school helps their children develop into mature and responsible individuals.• Teaching is good.• There is good information about their children's progress.• They feel comfortable approaching the school with suggestions or concerns.• The school works closely with them.• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Homework arrangements.• More activities outside of lessons.

The parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire, those attending the parents' meetings and those who spoke to inspectors during the inspection were very supportive of the school; they think it is a very good one. Inspection evidence confirms much of what parents think is good, although progress made by some children overall could be better and there is some inconsistency in teaching quality and expectations. There is no evidence that homework is inappropriate and there is good provision for extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The 2002 national tests and teacher assessments showed that, by the end of Year 2 in comparison with all schools, standards in reading and mathematics were above the national averages and standards in writing were well above average. In comparison with similar schools, standards in reading and mathematics were in line, and in writing, standards were above the national average. Over three years, the performance of pupils exceeded the national averages in reading and writing, but they fell below the national average in mathematics. There was no significant difference in attainment by gender in reading and writing, but the girls did better than the boys in mathematics. In science, teachers' assessments indicated that the percentage of pupils attaining average standards was above the national average but the percentage of pupils attaining above-average levels was in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels in writing was below the national average.
2. The school's assessment data indicates that standards are rising as a result of the effective systems of school self-evaluation, where any underachievement is appropriately targeted. The school has faced considerable problems in raising standards as there has been instability in staffing owing to promotions and ill health, and the headteacher has been without a deputy for a considerable length of time. There have been new appointments of subject co-ordinators and not all of them are yet fully involved in monitoring teaching and learning, although an effective start has been made in putting training in place for them to develop their roles. The headteacher has worked very hard in identifying the correct areas for raising standards and, with the present complement of staff and the imminent appointment of a deputy headteacher, the school is well placed to raise standards even further. This is because staff are hard working and committed to improving their practice.
3. Inspection findings show a slightly different picture in relation to standards identified by end of key stage test results. The present cohort of Year 2 and Year 5 pupils has a high percentage of pupils who are below average attainers and who have special educational needs. School data indicates that, in both of these classes, approximately one-third of pupils have not had the benefit of attending the school from the reception class and that several pupils came to the school at other times than normal admission, and have not experienced the stability and continuity of learning. School data indicates that the present Year 2's attainment on entry was below that expected nationally, and several pupils have experienced learning difficulties.
4. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are in line with national averages and, by the end of Year 5 they are above expectations for ten-year-olds. This represents good achievement and, in relation to their prior attainment, pupils make very good progress. This is because the school places a high emphasis on planning good learning opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills such as their participation in school performances, assemblies, concerts and paired work in classrooms.
5. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, standards in reading and writing are below those seen by most seven and ten-year-olds nationally. In relation to pupils' prior attainment, their achievements are satisfactory, but they could be better. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, pupils can read mechanically and know how to segment words and read on, but only the higher attainers (approximately one-eighth of the class) read accurately and expressively. Overall, pupils' skills of inference, deduction and research are underdeveloped. The school has rightly recognised the need to develop standards in reading and has a good action plan to raise standards but, whilst devoting a large amount of time to raising standards in reading and writing, there are still further improvements to be made as identified by the inspection, to move pupils on at a faster rate. The present strategies employed are not sufficiently focused at teaching principles of shared, guided writing and modelling text to encourage writing, using writing frames and using data from rigorous

- analysis of pupils' work, based upon skills underpinning level descriptors to move pupils on in their reading and writing. Too many pupils do not spell subject-specific words correctly; their punctuation needs attention and written work is not presented neatly enough.
6. The school has adopted good systems of setting pupils into capability groups, but within these groups, there are still pupils, especially higher attainers, who need further challenge in order to maximise their full learning potential. Whilst they make satisfactory gains in learning, their rates of progress are inconsistent because, at times, they are not sufficiently challenged. The school has recognised this as an area for development and the headteacher has already put in place plans for implementing reading and writing targets as defined by the National Literacy Strategy.
 7. In science, mathematics and ICT, pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. In mathematics, pupils' achievements are good, and in ICT and science they are satisfactory. In mathematics, the quality of teaching is good, and in science and ICT it is satisfactory. Teachers are still developing their ICT skills and not all are ensuring that pupils use computers to support learning across the curriculum. For example, samples of word processing, drafting and editing are not prolific enough to enable pupils to make good rates of progress. The school deserves recognition for all the hard work that teachers have put in to raising standards since the implementation of the ICT suite, but there is still a way to go to ensure that ICT is used as an integral part of pupils' learning in other subjects. Formal identification of ICT in teachers' planning is one way of ensuring that standards will rise at a faster pace.
 8. In mathematics, pupils' achievements are good overall and all groups of pupils make good progress and become competent mathematicians, knowing how to apply the four rules of number to problem-solving. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, pupils can explain their mathematical thinking whilst undertaking quick numerical calculations. This is because the school has placed high emphasis on developing the mental oral starters at the beginning of lessons. Staff have received good continuous professional development from the LEA Numeracy Consultants and, as a result, the quality of teaching has improved and is now good. The emphasis on learning correct mathematical vocabulary has resulted in all pupils understanding mathematical terminology correctly. The use of intervention strategies to support learning is having a positive effect on standards, and pupils who have been previously struggling are catching up.
 9. In science, pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall, but are inconsistent throughout the school, with the best rates of progress seen in Years 4 and 5. Not all groups of pupils are consistently and sufficiently challenged, especially the higher attainers, as at present, the school lacks a rigorous scientific framework of clearly defined end-of-year expectations of all groups of pupils in terms of knowledge and skills acquisition. The same topic is offered to pupils in both key stages and teachers' medium-term planning does not clearly reflect what different-aged pupils will be learning in terms of scientific knowledge and skills. As a result, whilst pupils make satisfactory progress because of the sound standards of teaching, continuity and progression of pupils' learning cannot be securely assured as, at times, tasks are not securely matched to pupils' needs because of underdeveloped assessment procedures and lack of rigorous curriculum planning. Interviews with the key stage co-ordinators revealed that the school has recognised this as an area for future development.
 10. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, pupils know how to set up scientific experiments. Higher attainers have a satisfactory knowledge of fair testing, but too few opportunities are provided for all pupils to evaluate their predictions in the light of experiment findings. The use of ICT to support pupils' work is satisfactory overall, but more could be done in ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities in entering their own data and using a range of bar charts, graphs and recordings to interpret their results. At present, opportunities for ICT are not sufficiently identified in teachers' medium-term planning and opportunities for pupils to develop a range of word processing skills are limited. Pupils have sound knowledge of all of the Programmes of Study for science and know how plants grow, how babies change into adults, how materials are suited to different purposes and how friction affects movement.
 11. Standards in ICT are broadly in line with national expectations for seven and ten-year-olds and the recent implementation of the ICT suite is having a positive effect on raising standards. Pupils'

achievements are good because of the recent access pupils have to the ICT suite and the good provision for extra-curricular learning in the ICT club. However, pupils' achievements could be better if opportunities for ICT were more formally identified in teachers' planning and more opportunities were given to pupils to word process their work and record their findings in a variety of ways, especially in mathematics.

12. In religious education and music, standards are above the expectations defined in the locally agreed syllabus and the national expectations respectively by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. All groups of pupils make good progress. Standards in singing throughout the school are good and instrumentalists achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. In religious education, pupils have good knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths, such as Islam and Judaism, and they know how festivals are celebrated and the importance of prayer and worship. They know about holy books and how these are used to guide the lives of the faithful.
13. In physical education, by the end of Year 5, standards are above expectations for ten-year-olds and all pupils make good progress because the newly appointed co-ordinator for this subject has devised a good scheme where skills are clearly identified and this contributes to the good quality of teaching and learning. Pupils are well co-ordinated and are confident team players; they demonstrate good knowledge of rules and have good ball skills. No lessons were observed in Year 2. Therefore, firm judgements on attainment cannot be made.
14. No judgement can be made on standards in design and technology at the end of Year 5, because insufficient work was available on which to make a secure judgement, but by the end of Year 2, standards are broadly in line with national expectations and pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
15. In all other foundation subjects, pupils meet the expectations of Year 2 and Year 5 pupils nationally and, overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
16. Pupils with SEN make good progress because of the very good provision made for them under the careful guidance of the headteacher and the co-ordinator for SEN. Pupils who are higher attainers make inconsistent progress ranging from good to satisfactory, depending on the level of support they receive, but overall, their progress is satisfactory and could be better with more focused use of assessment and target setting.
17. Children in the Foundation Stage of learning make good gains in learning from below-average attainment on entry, and they achieve all the Early Learning Goals on entry to Year 1 because of the very good provision made for them, such as good planning, good teaching, good assessment of their learning, and very good opportunities for them to learn using a variety of senses and exciting learning resources.
18. The use of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory overall, but could be better by being more clearly identified in teachers' medium-term plans. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its strengths in the good progress in the Foundation Stage and that exhibited by pupils with SEN. Standards in physical education, music and religious education remain above average and have improved in music. In English and mathematics, standards are not as high, but this is because the current academic profile of pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 has altered and there are more pupils with SEN. In all other subjects, average standards have been maintained, apart from geography where standards are not as high as they were at the time of the previous inspection.
19. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment and are poised to rise, as a result of the effective systems of school self-evaluation and the good leadership and management of the headteacher and governing body.
20. Pupils with SEN achieve well, particularly in English and mathematics, where they have additional extra help and challenging work set for their ability levels. Pupils' standards of work are often satisfactory and this is reflected in the school's targets and improved results of national tests, despite the very large increase in the number of pupils with SEN.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

21. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully maintained good standards in pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour, personal development and attendance. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults have improved from good to very good now. This has been achieved despite considerable changes in school organisation. These high standards make a positive contribution to the way in which pupils learn.
22. Children in the Foundation Stage of learning show good attitudes to learning. They are keen, interested to participate in lessons, and play well together. They take turns, share equipment and toys and are very happy to serve one another in the flower shop (role-play area), and consistently say 'please' and 'thank you' when change is given.
23. Pupils' good attitudes help to provide an atmosphere in and around school that supports their learning well. The very large majority of the pupils are keen to come to school in the mornings. They readily take out their books and settle to work while waiting for the register to be taken. In most lessons, pupils show an interest in what they are doing, readily involving themselves in whatever activity is presented to them. They enjoy taking part in question-and-answer sessions, during which they are happy to take turns without inappropriate shouting out. The response to teachers' instructions is almost always good. It is frequently very good when lessons are made interesting and present challenge to the pupils. Pupils of all ages and abilities concentrate and apply themselves well even when, occasionally, the lesson is less stimulating than it should be. They are keen to collect rewards for good work and effort and are proud to receive them at the weekly award assemblies. School council representatives, who take their responsibilities seriously, speak of how much they enjoy lessons, struggling to find anything they don't like.
24. There is an orderly atmosphere in and around the school that helps create a positive climate for learning in all classes. Pupils' behaviour is good in classrooms and when moving about the school. There is an ethos of good behaviour with almost all pupils responding well to the high standards expected. Some boys display boisterous behaviour during break and lunchtimes, and at times the noise levels in the dining hall rise to unacceptably high levels but, overall, break times are pleasant social occasions. Pupils behave sensibly both in classrooms and when at play. Almost all have a clear understanding of the effect of their actions on others. They understand and respect the school rules, which they see as fair. There is some reported history of unsatisfactory behaviour, confirmed by representatives of the school council, who think behaviour is now good, having improved in recent years. However, it has not been necessary to exclude any pupil, for either a fixed term or permanently, in recent times.
25. All pupils get on very well together and this is seen as they work and play together. Nothing was seen to suggest that when the very occasional incident of inappropriate behaviour occurs it is oppressive. There is no evidence of vindictive bullying, sexism or racism. Pupils respect the values and beliefs of others. They are keen to learn about the beliefs and practices of multicultural Britain. Boys and girls of all ages and backgrounds mix very well, sharing concern for each other. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated. They readily help each other and other pupils support them well. In lessons and at other times, very good relationships are evident between pupils and adults. Almost all pupils are courteous and friendly with adults and respect their teachers well.
26. Pupils grasp the opportunities provided for them to show initiative and personal responsibility. Although largely routine in nature, these opportunities steadily increase as pupils move up through the school. Pupils are diligent in fulfilling their classroom and school responsibilities, which they undertake with enthusiasm. More opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning have been introduced since the previous inspection. The pupils have responded well to these but there is still room for improvement.
27. Throughout the school, pupils mature as individuals because of the overall good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They become increasingly socially aware,

developing views and opinions that are soundly based, and expressing them sensibly, such as caring for the environment. Pupils readily involve themselves in charitable activities, recognising the need to help those less fortunate than themselves. The inspection supports the view of most parents that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible individuals.

28. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance. A recent trend of slightly falling attendance has been reversed this school year, with attendance levels moving to above those reported when the school was inspected in 1997, at 95.3 per cent. There is negligible unauthorised absence and no evidence of truancy. Punctuality in the mornings is good. When instances of lateness occur, they are of a minor nature and are not disruptive to lessons.
29. Pupils with SEN have good attitudes to their work because they are challenged and feel secure because they have effective support and very good relationships with staff. Their behaviour is good because they are interested and keen to learn. They do not always have enough planned opportunities to learn to work independently.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

30. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good and very good practice. One excellent lesson was seen in music in the juniors. The best teaching was seen in the Foundation Stage, Year 2, one Year 3 class and in one of the Years 4 and 5 classes. These examples of good and very good practice are not yet fully disseminated across the school so that teachers can learn from one another. The satisfactory quality of teaching is enabling pupils to make satisfactory gains in learning.
31. During the week of inspection, 58 lessons were seen of which one was excellent, six were very good, 29 were good, 21 were satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, pupils made very good gains in learning because they were challenged by their teachers and teachers clearly showed their love of the subjects and of teaching. For example, in a very good history lesson in Year 2, the teacher put pupils in role as detectives when they would find out information using artefacts about how pupils lived in the past. The teacher adjusted her interventions to the needs of the pupils, she did not give them all the answers, but cajoled them into thinking for themselves about what certain artefacts, such as 'jugs' might be used for. Good opportunities were provided for pupils to develop their skills of independent learning and all groups of pupils made very good progress. In one excellent music lesson in a choir session for Years 4 and 5 pupils, the teacher set very high expectations of breathing, posture and diction. Her verve, stamina and passion for teaching were reflected in pupils' performance of 'Ocean Commotion'. Pupils gave their teacher one hundred per cent commitment and proudly presented their work, commenting on how it could be improved. In a good science lesson in Years 4 and 5, the class teacher gave very good explanations of food chains, and ensured that all pupils fully understood the process by providing a card game to support their learning. Pupils picked up the new knowledge quickly and were able to answer all the questions effectively.
32. Satisfactory teaching throughout the school largely focuses on correct conveying of knowledge but there are inconsistencies in the way skills are developed, extension activities are provided for higher attainers and in the use of literacy, numeracy and ICT to support learning. Pupils are managed well, clear explanations are given, but pupils are consolidating learning rather than being pushed into making new connections with previously acquired learning. In these lessons, too few opportunities are provided for pupils to become independent learners and become responsible for organising their learning. Teachers are hampered by the fact that, although curriculum plans have been developed since the previous inspection, they do not yet clearly identify expectations for mixed-age classes, nor is it clear what each year group is expected to achieve by the end of the year, both in subject contents and skills acquisition. Too often, opportunities for developing pupils' skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are not formally identified in teachers' plans and valuable opportunities are lost to enable pupils to apply their learning to new situations.

33. Where teaching is less secure, as in one unsatisfactory English lesson in the juniors, tasks set do not fully match the learning intentions identified at the beginning of the lesson and insufficient opportunities are provided for modelling what pupils are expected to achieve and how to organise their learning. This is generally not common, because all teachers are committed to their craft and strive to improve on their previous best performance. The effective monitoring of teaching and learning, coupled with sound procedures for performance management, is helping to develop the quality of teaching and learning.
34. Teachers generally have satisfactory subject knowledge, but need to develop their understanding of how to impart their knowledge of subject-specific skills, to use assessments more rigorously to plan the next steps of pupils' learning, and to develop extension activities to challenge more able pupils. In English not all teachers are familiar with the skills underpinning shared and guided reading and writing, and this is an area which needs to be addressed.
35. Support staff make a valid contribution to pupils' learning and are generally used well in lessons. They support pupils with SEN particularly well and are fully aware of these pupils' learning difficulties. The teaching of SEN is good throughout the school. Pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) are used well in planning, clear explanations of tasks are given and pupils are effectively challenged.
36. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage of learning is particularly good. Staff in the Foundation Stage unit know how young children learn and ensure that a correct balance of activities is provided for them to learn through structured play, using all of their senses, and more formal learning opportunities focusing on acquiring basic skills of correct letter and number formation. All activities are underpinned by clear learning objectives and good quality learning resources are carefully chosen to ensure that these children are interested in their work. In lessons observed, good opportunities were provided for children to develop their skills of independence.
37. Teachers teach basic skills effectively but the teaching of mathematics is better than that of English and ICT. Staff have had a lot of support from the local education authority's numeracy consultants and this has improved teachers' practice. The teaching of numeracy is good. The teaching of literacy and ICT is satisfactory overall. The headteacher has plans in place to further develop the teaching of literacy, especially in shared and guided reading and writing which, at present, is taught inconsistently. The modelling of reading and writing, the use of writing frames, the structuring of independent work around text studied in lessons, and providing challenging texts and extension activities, are areas for future development, because at present, there are inconsistencies in the delivery of these fundamental aspects of the literacy strategy. The headteacher has rightly identified these areas in her action plan.
38. The teaching of basic skills is satisfactory. Pupils are developing a good range of phonics and this is evident in their writing which shows spelling to be phonetically justifiable, but not always correct. In reading, pupils can segment their words accurately but, too often, their writing has spelling errors of subject-specific words. This is a weakness which prevents pupils from making even better gains in learning. Too often, teachers' marking does not pick up on these incorrect spellings. Whilst teachers mark work regularly, they do not offer sufficient pointers for improvement and do not always mark according to level descriptors of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. This slows down pupils' rates of progress because too often tasks are set which are not fully matched to pupils' needs. Refinement in this aspect of teaching (the use of level descriptors to move pupils on in their learning) would raise standards quickly and effectively, and improve the productivity and pace of pupils' work because pupils would be far more aware of what they need to do in order to improve. An effective start has been made at setting targets, but, at present, they are not always specific enough to help move pupils on at a faster rate. Teachers' expectations of pupils, whilst satisfactory overall, could be higher, especially in challenging higher-attaining pupils and insisting that all groups of pupils present their written work neatly and accurately.

39. Teachers use a satisfactory range of teaching methods and good opportunities are provided for collaborative work; this contributes positively to pupils' speaking and listening and social skills. The use of homework is satisfactory. It is regularly set and is closely linked to the work studied in class. Overall, pupils' learning is satisfactory over time. Some examples of good and very good learning were seen during the week of inspection, especially in music and ICT. Staff would benefit from observing one another teach in order to develop their teaching skills even further.
40. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, as there are more examples of good and better teaching and there is hardly any unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school.

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

41. The school's curriculum provides satisfactory learning opportunities for pupils. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, and meets statutory requirements. The curriculum is very good for pupils who are five years and under in the Foundation Stage; for pupils in Years 1 to 5, it is satisfactory. For pupils in Years 3 to 5, the curriculum is significantly enhanced by the provision of a wide range of good extra-curricular activities which have a positive effect on pupils' learning, especially in physical education and ICT. The provision of a good range of popular high quality extra-curricular activities does much to enhance learning opportunities, particularly for older pupils. Each member of the teaching staff runs one club each week and all pupils in Years 3 to 5 are given the opportunity to participate. On offer is a diverse choice, including netball, basketball, computers, French, art and sewing. Staff plan to increase opportunities for younger pupils next year.
42. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on literacy, which is in the main relevant to the needs of the pupils. However, there are weaknesses in that time allocated to raising standards in reading and writing needs to be reviewed in focusing more on enabling pupils to develop these skills through rigorous use of target setting, modelling of texts which challenge pupils into developing their reading and writing skills, and ensuring that principles of shared and guided reading are effectively implemented. The extra time provided for independent reading and cross-curricular writing is not always used effectively to raise standards as, at times, there is a lack of rigorous teaching of reading and writing skills as lessons lack demonstrations by the class teacher. For example pupils in the oldest classes were asked to write a historical account but there was no teacher demonstration of what a report contains or the particular sentence structure that is required. The use of these sessions needs to be planned in more detail, specifically reflecting a rigorous focus on raising pupils' attainment through well-focused objectives underpinned by clear identification of skills.
43. The total weekly teaching time for pupils in Years 3 to 5 has been increased since the previous inspection. In the foundation subjects, teachers do not always plan a clear progression of skills for pupils as they move through the school, and expectations of what pupils should achieve at the end of each year are not sufficiently clearly stated in relation to skills progression.
44. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good. It is very well planned and the learning opportunities pupils receive are vibrant and exciting, with an appropriate balance of learning through play and structured learning activities. All children have very good opportunities to learn using all of their senses. The outdoor play area is very well structured and plenty of opportunities are provided for these young children to develop their language and mathematical competencies.
45. The school is fully inclusive and, for the most part, pupils have equal opportunities to achieve well, whatever their learning difficulties, gender or ethnic background. Across Years 1 to 5, curriculum

planning is satisfactory overall and is consistently based on appropriate schemes of work, mostly based on nationally recommended guidelines that provide adequate guidance for teachers on the content to be covered each year. In some subjects, notably science, physical education, geography and art, co-ordinators have begun to adapt the schemes of work effectively to meet the particular needs of the school. This supports the progress of pupils and aids the continuity of learning as pupils move through the school. A rolling programme for most subjects effectively accommodates the needs of mixed-age classes, avoiding unnecessary repetition of work. Planning in the foundation subjects does not, however, consistently identify what specific skills the school expects different groups of pupils to have and learn. This is particularly evident in design and technology, geography, history and art and design. This has a negative effect on the challenges provided for above-average-attaining pupils in many subjects who, at times, could be achieving more. The school has made good provision for pupils in relation to the range of extra-curricular activities provided, especially in music.

46. Satisfactory strategies are in place for the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills. The school's implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has contributed effectively to the rising trend in standards over the past four years. In Years 3 to 5, pupils move from their class groups to be taught in mathematics and English ability 'sets'. This enables teachers to match tasks and activities more closely to the needs of the pupils. The school participates in national initiatives to provide support and booster groups in English and mathematics for identified pupils, and school records indicate these pupils make good progress because of the extra support they receive. The introduction of 'brain gym' activities is proving particularly beneficial to lower-attaining pupils. Last year the school identified numeracy as a priority area for improvement and improvements in the planning, teaching and assessment, together with support from the local authority, have had a positive effect on raising standards. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to strengthen their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum but these are not sufficiently well planned to enable pupils to both consolidate and extend skills taught in the literacy and numeracy sessions. The school has recognised the need to identify formally opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT in teachers' medium-term planning and clearly state what pupils are expected to achieve at the end of each year in science and all foundation subjects.
47. Enrichment of the curriculum is good and contributes to pupils' good attitudes to learning. The school places emphasis on the enhancement of pupils' experiences through visits locally and further afield and through curriculum focus days. For example, the school recently celebrated a 'living history day', when pupils in Years 3 to 5 studied living conditions under the Roman civilisation. These events bring subjects to life and make them more relevant to the pupils.
48. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. All pupils have full access to the curriculum. They are very well supported by teaching staff and support assistants and every effort is made to ensure that they have appropriate work matched to their needs. All support programmes are effectively implemented and all staff work very hard to ensure that these pupils get the help they need.
49. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development through a well planned programme of study. The school has featured locally as an example of good practice in its provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Issues of sex education are dealt with separately and informally, as they occur, or as part of a wider curriculum and through the circle time sessions. Education in drugs and alcohol abuse is included as part of the science curriculum. The governing body has decided that sex education is not included formally as part of the taught curriculum.
50. Pupils benefit from good involvement in the local and wider community. There are close links with the local parish church, although it has been without a vicar for the past year. Other local church leaders are frequent visitors to the school. Learning is further enhanced through the good use made of visiting experts, for example, to give coaching in tennis and football. Pupils from Years 3 and 5 visit nearby residential outdoor activity centres. Pupils play a full part in the local community. For example, they sing in the county choir and participate annually in a local dance

festival. All these experiences enhance pupils' learning significantly, as do the educational trips that pupils participate in.

51. The school liaises effectively with pre-school groups and feeder schools and there are particularly strong and beneficial links with the high school which shares the same site, and to which most pupils transfer. For example, regular visits between staff and pupils of both schools and joint projects undertaken in English mathematics and science ensure that pupils are very well prepared for the next phase of their education.
52. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the previous inspection, and is good overall.
53. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. A planned programme of assemblies is successful in fostering a sense of community. Pupils are given good opportunity to reflect on their own experiences and are growing in their understanding that some beliefs extend beyond the here and now. Pupils' own written prayers feature in assemblies and they sing hymns with sincerity and enthusiasm. As well as promoting the religious faith the school fosters, pupils are led towards an understanding of the similarities and differences between different religions and are encouraged to respect the beliefs of others. The school puts great emphasis on the celebration of individual success and awards ceremonies help pupils to develop a pride in their own achievements and to celebrate those of others. Although there are few planned opportunities for pupils to experience spirituality in daily lessons, the provision of a wide diversity of experiences presents pupils with good opportunities to explore what animates themselves and others.
54. The provision for moral development is good. The school has worked hard as a team to establish its own orderly and secure environment in which pupils are able to work unimpeded by harassment. There is a clear system of rewards and sanctions, which are designed to foster positive attitudes and build self-esteem. Each year, pupils and parents are required to sign an agreement to abide by the school rules. As a result, pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They are given clear messages about standards and expectations for their behaviour, and staff provide good role models for them to copy. The school is currently encouraging pupils to develop self-discipline by using circle time. This is having a positive effect in encouraging pupils to manage their own behaviour effectively.
55. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. Lessons often include tasks that entail pupils working together with partners or in groups. This was noticeable, for example, when Year 2 pupils explained their designs to a partner in a design and technology lesson. The good provision of a range of activities outside lessons, including the provision of an annual residential experience for pupils in Years 3 and 5, is particularly effective in instilling a sense of citizenship. There are increased opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility as they move through the school, for example in helping to prepare for assemblies and to tidy the school grounds. A particular strength of the provision for social development is the 'circle of friends' where pupils are encouraged to offer support to others who are feeling lonely or isolated. A flourishing school council provides pupils with the experience of participating in the democratic process.
56. The provision for cultural development, in particular multicultural awareness, has significantly improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Knowledge and understanding of the pupils' own rich heritage are well promoted through geography, history, art and music. It is further enhanced by the provision of frequent opportunities for visitors to the school and by visits to local areas of interest. Since the previous inspection, the school has placed a high priority on developing an improved understanding of the beliefs and traditions of other cultures and this is proving successful. For example, pupils recently visited a local Hindu temple and are shortly to visit a museum which is promoting a display of Islamic artefacts. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the customs and values of other cultures, and the diversity of cultures within the school is celebrated well. However, insufficient opportunities are provided in art to ensure that pupils are aware of different multicultural artists although an effective start has been made recently. Since the previous inspection the school has maintained a broad

and balanced curriculum, and good improvement has been made in the Foundation Stage curriculum which is now judged as very good.

57. Pupils with SEN and those from ethnic minority backgrounds have good access to the curriculum because the work planned for them enables them to take part in all subjects. This is good in English and mathematics where differentiated tasks are set according to ability, but less effective in other subjects where the lack of clear assessments means that suitable targets are not set.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

58. As at the last inspection, the school gives good attention to pupils' personal wellbeing. The pupils are well cared for emotionally and socially as well as academically, although further improvement needs to be made to use assessment to inform the next steps of pupils' learning. Because there is sensitive, caring support for pupils' individual welfare, they feel secure and happy in their school surroundings. This contributes well to the standards of pupils' attitudes and behaviour that are achieved as well as their welfare.
59. Child protection arrangements have improved since the last inspection and are now very well organised. Class teachers and support staff are fully aware of their responsibilities. They are attentive and conscientious in their approach to the proper support of the pupils in their charge.
60. School staff and governors undertake regular risk assessments and have proper regard for the health and safety of the school community. Provision for pupils with physical disabilities is a problem for the school because of its design with many varying levels, but all relevant legislation requirements are met. Should any parents with disabled children wish to send them to the school, provision will be made to accommodate them. Playground supervision is appropriately organised. Teachers and lunchtime supervisory staff, who relate well to pupils, ensure that there is effective care during periods of outdoor activity. First aid provision is very good. Arrangements for dealing with sickness or the very occasional accident, for example, when a Year 3 girl received treatment for a twisted ankle, are well organised and appropriate records are maintained. There are good procedures for liaising with parents when necessary, for example, in the case of a bump to the head. Fire safety arrangements are well organised. There is a robust policy for the protection of pupils using the Internet and e-mail facilities.
61. Procedures for checking and promoting good attendance are good. Records of attendance are properly maintained. In response to a recent small fall in attendance levels the school strengthened its monitoring activities and introduced a positive rewards scheme that has successfully addressed the situation. Registration is undertaken efficiently and there are good arrangements to deal effectively with any unexpected absence.
62. The way in which the school works to check and improve the quality of behaviour and eliminate oppressive behaviour is good. The school's policies are well focused on the need to promote good behaviour and there is good definition of rewards and sanctions. There is a successful whole-school approach to the promotion of good behaviour and the development of positive attitudes and self-discipline, which is underpinned by the Christian ethos that permeates much of the pastoral aspects of the school's work. There are good strategies for dealing with the occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour, although not always implemented consistently by teachers, and as a result there is very little disruption to the flow of lessons. Pupils are anxious not to lose 'golden time' entitlement and this has a positive impact on the way pupils behave. Parental support is sought through a sharing of the school's strategies, outlined in the 'behaviour booklet' that is shared with pupils and their parents.
63. The school's arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. The school endeavours to 'find what turns pupils on' and values and supports their out-of-school achievements such as swimming, athletics and dance. A good range of strategies includes a personal, social and health education programme, school council, a caring ethos, 'well done' assemblies that help build self-esteem, and circle time, when pupils sit together to discuss a range of personal and general issues and involvement in charitable activities. There are no formal records of achievement to record personal development but teachers' records and

summaries in the pupils' annual reports provide a satisfactory record of how pupils develop as they move through their school life. Informal arrangements, which benefit from teachers' knowledge of pupils as individuals, are good. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. They are better in English, mathematics and physical education than in other subjects. In foundation subjects and science they keep an adequate record of pupils' coverage of topics but are not sufficiently highlighting what they know, understand and can do in relation to skills acquisition. The use of assessment is unsatisfactory overall because insufficient use is made of level descriptors underpinning skills progression. Targets are not sufficiently rigorous and, as a result, above-average-attaining pupils are not consistently challenged. The school has recognised this as an area for development, and plans are in place to improve the tracking of pupils' progress.

64. The care of pupils with SEN and this from ethnic minority backgrounds is good. Reviews of statements are carried out effectively and pupils with statements receive the help to which they are entitled. Individual education plans (IEPs) are good and are updated regularly, with degree of success towards targets noted.
65. Arrangements for checking the progress of pupils needing special support are good. Under the expert guidance of the headteacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator has developed good tracking procedures to ensure that well-informed records are kept of pupils' progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

66. The school's partnership with parents continues to be good as at the time of the previous inspection. The school aims at 'progress through partnership' with parents involved as full partners in the work of the school. In this it is successful. Overwhelmingly, parents who responded to the questionnaire, attended the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors or who talked to inspectors during the inspection have very positive views about the school's provision for their children. They think that the school is a very good one, valuing what it does for their children. They feel that the school has improved since the last inspection. Parents are particularly pleased that their children like school and are expected to work hard and do their best. There is much support for the ethos of the school, the care provided, and the attitudes and values that the school promotes. Parents feel well informed about how their children are progressing and about school activities. They think that the school works closely with them and are unanimous in saying that the school makes it easy to liaise with it. Teaching is thought to be good and the school to be well led and managed. Inspection evidence supports much of what parents say.
67. A very small number of parents have concerns about some aspects of the school's provision for their children. These relate to homework arrangements and the range of activities that the school provides for their children outside lessons. The use of homework seen during the inspection was satisfactory. The school's policy is clear and well explained so that parents can understand what is being done and how they can help. There is no problem with the range of activities provided outside lessons, which is better than in many similar schools and is good overall.
68. As at the last inspection, parents are provided with much information that is of very good quality but there are some areas for development, such as use of assessment to inform planning, which means the information now provided is judged to be good, rather than very good, overall. There is an 'open door' policy that encourages parents to communicate with the school. The headteacher is happy to meet with parents at any time, as are teachers, although an appointment may be necessary because of teaching commitments. Meetings are held when parents are invited into school to view their children's work and discuss their progress. Annual written reports on their children's progress and targets for improvement are discussed with parents. The quality of the annual reports is good overall, providing parents with good information about how well their children are doing in English and mathematics but rather brief information on other subjects. This is because at present the assessments used in science and foundation subjects do not fully reflect pupils' skills acquisition. The school has recognised this as an area for improvement and already plans are under way to improve this aspect of the school's provision. There is little

information given about how pupils' attainment compares with that expected of pupils nationally except when reporting the results of national assessment testing. There is some good use made of the general comments section of the annual reports. Well focused and objective comments and indications of areas for development, both academically and personally, are clearly the result of most teachers taking time and trouble to make reports truly individual.

69. Liaison with the parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents are regularly informed of any help and support their children are given and they are made to feel very welcome in the school. Reviews are regular and informative.
70. Valuable curriculum information is provided each half term, and regular, chatty newsletters every fortnight give wider information on school events. The 4+ News is an attractive source of information for parents of children new to the school. The school prospectus is a very comprehensive, well-organised document that provides parents with all the information needed to know what the school provides for their children and the part they can play in supporting its activities. It is enlivened by pupil-produced illustrations. Statutory requirements are met. The governors' annual report to parents is satisfactory. Although meeting statutory requirements, some reporting is brief. For example, the financial statement does not clearly provide parents with information about income and expenditure, together with balances brought and carried forward.
71. Links between home and school are good overall. For the youngest children in the school they are very good, with regular reading workshops offering opportunities for parents and children to share the learning experience with mutual benefit. Home-school agreements that provide for commitment by all involved to the improvement of standards complement the school's strategies for raising standards. Many parents give good support to their children's learning, for example, by hearing them read regularly at home, and by attending parents' meetings, but support is patchy, with some parents, especially Year 2 parents, not supporting as well as elsewhere. The school successfully encourages parents and other helpers to participate in its work by supporting fund-raising events and helping directly in school. The school appreciates the contribution of parents who are able to give active support and help, including acting as governors. There is a supportive 'Friends' association that fosters relationships between home and school. Its activities provide opportunities for parents, staff and pupils to socialise and raise funds that give much-welcomed additional financial support to the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

72. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. The leadership and management of the headteacher and governors are good and the school provides satisfactory value for money. The headteacher has worked closely with the governing body to put into effect plans to move the school on and to raise standards. There has been no deputy headteacher at the school for eighteen months and the headteacher has used other senior staff well to develop their management skills, in implementing her vision for the school during this difficult time. The school has increased its number of pupils with special educational needs by 100 per cent since the previous inspection, and this has altered the profile of pupils' attainment. In response to this the headteacher and governors have increased the number of learning support assistants to ensure that pupils receive effective additional help and that they are effectively included in all walks of school life. The governors have a high level of involvement and knowledge, perform their function as critical friends well and have good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school's aims and values are strongly reflected in its work through its partnership with parents and partner institutions, its efforts to improve standards and its provision for social development and special educational needs. The policy for racial equality is in place and, while the school has very few pupils of ethnic minority background, every opportunity is taken to accommodate them.
73. The absence of a deputy headteacher for a significant length of time has meant that, despite suitable delegation of management responsibilities for monitoring curriculum development, the management of the school, although it is good, still has some areas for improvement. This is because the school's senior management team has not had enough time to develop performance

management fully, and to monitor different subjects to make sure that the curriculum planning and delivery are effective enough to meet the needs of all its pupils. While the school's management has identified the need to raise pupils' attainment, the targets have not been specific enough and have not been identified from detailed analysis of different aspects of pupils' attainment, especially in English. While monitoring of teaching in English and mathematics is regularly undertaken and is good overall, it is satisfactory for science and foundation subjects and here elements of teaching and pupil achievement need to be improved. The school has suitable priorities for development drawn from monitoring, teaching and learning, performance management and analysis of tests and assessments, and has taken effective action to meet them. The result of the action has been to improve standards, particularly in mathematics in the last two years, and in the quality of its provision in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's management of provision for special educational needs is very good. It raises attainment and improves the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and ensures that they play a full part in school life. The headteacher has set up effective systems which the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is implementing appropriately. Subject co-ordinators execute their duties satisfactorily overall. The leadership and management of mathematics and music is good. Subject co-ordinators help staff with planning but not all monitor teaching and learning and, as a result, not all staff are aware of the best practice in the school. Furthermore not all subjects are carefully monitored for the progressive development of subject specific skills.

74. When the school was inspected in 1997, finances were judged to be managed efficiently although there was a need to improve development planning by better linking expenditure to agreed priorities. The situation has improved with a more appropriate linking of financial strategies to school priorities. Governors monitor cost effectiveness of spending and have good knowledge of budgetary issues.
75. The school has good procedures for ensuring that the financial resources available to it are used to support pupils' learning efficiently. Recent expenditure on a per pupil basis has been similar to that for primary schools nationally. Members of the school's staffing and finance committee, working closely with the headteacher, have a secure grasp of the school's financial situation. The financial planning process is well organised with a clear cycle of planning and review that is linked to the school development plan. The headteacher is very secure in her strategic planning, with clear objectives and very focused views of how to sustain the school's educational provision and be able to respond to changing circumstances. Governors offer good support and are totally conversant with all aspects of financial planning. The budget is managed effectively. The school benefits greatly from the support it receives from the school bursar, provided as part of a 'buy back' package from the local authority, whose expertise makes a significant contribution to the school's financial monitoring and strategic financial planning.
76. Planned financial reserves, the amount of money that the school carries forward from one year to the next, have varied in recent years, being higher than good practice suggests at the end of the most recent year for which confirmed figures are available. Last year they were reduced to a more typical level at some 5.5 per cent of expenditure. They are forecast to fall further during the current year as the school uses them to support its strategic objectives in the face of a trend of falling roll numbers. The decisions made about the use of reserves are consistent with the school's prudent contingency planning to ensure that it will be able to respond to changing circumstances with minimal disruption to its planned strategies by ensuring that the school's educational provision is sustainable and that, as far as is possible, its educational targets are met. There is a focus on raising pupils' attainment and progress by giving attention to maintaining classroom support levels, improving the quality and quantity of learning resources and raising the quality of the physical environment.
77. The specific funds element of the school's finances is well used. In line with its aim to properly support according to need, the school contributes from its own funds to supplement the specific grants it receives to ensure that there is effective raising of the attainment of those who receive extra support to address special learning, behaviour, language or social needs.

78. The school's overall administration arrangements, and the day-to-day control of its finances, are good. Clerical staff are conscientious, undertaking their duties in a quietly efficient manner. Work flows through the school office smoothly and effectively. Recommendations of the school's most recent audit have been properly addressed. There is appropriate use made of new technology here, and elsewhere, to support the work of the school.
79. In judging the school's performance, members of the governing body, effectively supported by the headteacher, use the four principles of compare, challenge, consult, and compete well to plan and implement the work of the school. Some objective and effective self-evaluation procedures are in place, building on local authority guidance and the school's own analysis of 'value added'. There is an awareness of the need to obtain value for money and good procedures are in place for ensuring that best financial value is obtained when purchasing products or services. All expenditure has to be justified, with the headteacher being expected to report to governors on the impact on standards achieved. There are some good consultation procedures, with governors making use of a variety of information from parents, staff and the pupils. Governors are aware of trends in performance as a result of progress reports prepared by the headteacher and some recent work on tracking individual pupil and class progress. They are making some effective comparisons with how school standards compare with those expected. They have a good appreciation of what is going on in the school as a result of the objective reports that they receive from the headteacher together with their own knowledge as parents or regular visitors to the school. They are aware of the need to challenge what is going on in the school and consult stakeholders such as parents, and are doing so in a rigorous but sensitive way that recognises the management difficulties that have been presented by the lack of a deputy headteacher.
80. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. The school places a high priority on the provision of support staff. The school has maintained an effective presence in the classroom, with all teaching staff suitably qualified and with a good range of teaching experience to support the needs of all pupils in the school. They maintain and develop their professional skills through regular training. The provision for teaching and supporting pupils with special educational needs or others with identified needs is good. The headteacher has introduced a register for gifted and talented pupils and these pupils are appropriately identified and a watchful presence kept of their needs.
81. The adequacy of accommodation for the delivery of the National Curriculum is satisfactory overall, as it was when the school was inspected in 1997. The school caretaker and cleaning staff keep the building clean and tidy. Although its design is not well suited to the delivery of the National Curriculum as now recommended, and the use of a remote temporary classroom is less than satisfactory, overall the school provides a welcoming setting, both externally and internally, that supports learning well. Appropriate attention has been paid to security matters.
82. Disabled access is a problem because of the way the school is built upon several levels, with several flights of stairs inside and steps outside. Classrooms are of reasonable size for the numbers involved, bright and airy, providing well-organised facilities for the effective delivery of the curriculum. There is very good internal and external provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning. A number of specialist areas, including the dining/assembly hall, a well-equipped computer room, resource areas, some 'quiet rooms' for small group work, a library and medical room, complement the teaching areas and contribute to an effective learning environment. The open plan design at times results in noise distraction between adjoining classrooms that reduces the quality of the learning environment.
83. There is sufficient hard surfaced playground space for the size of the school, together with a limited amount of grassed space. It is generally of good quality with a profusion of trees and shrubs that enhances the appearance of the school and its educational provision. A more spacious playing field is available a short walk from the school.
84. Resources are satisfactory overall. Expenditure on resources to support pupils' learning has been directed in recent years to ensure that no subject is under resourced. All subjects are supported with the necessary resources for teaching the National Curriculum. No subject is under resourced

and there is good provision for English, physical education and for the youngest children in the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

85. To address the issues raised within this report, the headteacher, governing body and staff, in conjunction with the local education authority, should:

- i. Improve further the school's standards in reading, writing, science, mathematics, ICT and some foundation subjects by ensuring that:

English

- text-level work is used as a starting point in developing pupils' writing activities;
- principles of shared and guided reading and writing are rigorously implemented in all classes;
- writing frames are provided for pupils who struggle with their work;
- skills underpinning level descriptors are consistently used to move pupils on, both in their reading and writing activities;
- pupils are informed of what they need to do specifically in order to improve their reading and writing skills;
- quiet reading sessions and extended writing sessions are purposeful and focus on specific targets for improvement;
- time allocated to raising standards in reading and writing is regularly monitored by the headteacher for its effectiveness on standards;
- further emphasis is placed on improving pupils' skills of punctuation; and
- higher-attaining pupils are pushed even further when working in capability groups.

(Paragraphs 5, 33, 37, 42, 105, 107, 108, 109 and 110)

Science

- clear expectations are defined in planning what all groups of pupils should achieve by the end of each year, both in scientific knowledge and skills;
- a rigorous scientific framework for developing experimental and investigative work is introduced to enable pupils to set up their experiments;
- more opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss how the outcome of their experiments matched initial predictions;
- key words are appropriately spelt;
- scientific diagrams are clearly labelled;
- the curriculum is monitored by the co-ordinator for progressive skills development.

(Paragraphs 9, 10, 128, 131 and 132)

Mathematics

- more opportunities are provided for pupils to word process their findings of mathematical investigations and use ICT to record their findings in a variety of ways; and
- above average attainers are more consistently challenged in the mixed reception/Year 1 class.

(Paragraphs 11 and 121)

Information and communication technology

- rigorous and systematic opportunities are provided for pupils to use ICT in lessons to support their learning.

(Paragraphs 9, 10, 112 and 154)

Foundation subjects

- knowledge and skills progression are clearly defined in teachers' medium-term planning;
- there are clear expectations of what all groups of pupils should achieve at the end of each year, both in knowledge and skills acquisition; and
- appropriate emphasis is placed upon ensuring that pupils spell subject-specific words correctly.

(Paragraphs 18 and 130)

ii. Improve curriculum planning by ensuring that:

- all subject medium-term plans clearly identify opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT;
- time allocation to the teaching of reading and writing is reviewed; and
- all teachers are clear about what all groups of pupils should achieve in all subjects in each year group.

(Paragraphs 18, 32, 42, 45, 46, 130, 138, 139, 146, 148, 152, 157, 162, 169 and 182)

iii. Develop assessment procedures further for their use in science and foundation subjects.

(Paragraphs 9, 38, 63, 131, 146 and 169)

iv. Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:

- marking is regular and consistent and enables pupils to improve the quality of their work, especially in relation to standards of written work and subject-specific spelling;
- teachers use information from assessments more regularly to plan the next steps of pupils' learning;
- interesting extension activities are provided in lessons to challenge and stretch higher-attaining pupils;
- more emphasis is placed upon the modelling of reading and writing;
- opportunities are provided for teachers to improve their knowledge of shared and guided reading and writing;
- teachers have access to the examples of good and better practice within the school; and
- more opportunities are provided for pupils to become independent learners.

(Paragraphs 5, 26, 27, 33, 34, 37, 121, 133, 150, 152 and 155)

v. Develop the role of subject co-ordinators by:

- providing further training on how to evaluate teaching and learning; and
- ensuring that they know how to monitor teachers' medium-term plans for the progressive development of subject-specific skills and curriculum coverage.

(Paragraphs 73, 75, 115, 136, 138, 139, 146, 151, 162 and 169)

Minor issues

- improve the quality of reports so that parents are clear about how their children perform in comparison with national expectations; and
- ensure that pupils have access to work of multicultural artists.

(Paragraphs 56 and 68)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	6	29	21	1	0	0
Percentage	2	10	50	36	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y5
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	227
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y5
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	65

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	31	17	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	29
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	45	45	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (92)	94 (88)	96 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	30
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	45	45	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (88)	94 (88)	98 (96)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
183	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
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 – Y5

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7
Average class size	25.2

Education support staff: YR – Y5

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	238

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	552,660
Total expenditure	517,938
Expenditure per pupil	2,002
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,485

Balance carried forward to next year	56,207
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Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	221
Number of questionnaires returned	39

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	85	13	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	31	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	44	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	41	8	0	3
The teaching is good.	67	31	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	46	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	33	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	44	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	36	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	51	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	49	5	3	3

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

86. At the time of the last inspection it was reported that children in the Foundation Stage made good progress in all areas of learning. Present inspection findings confirm that judgement, but there has also been good improvement in curriculum planning, which is now very good, and provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn through well-structured play activities, both indoors and outdoors. There are, at the present time, 11 children attending part-time and 33 reception children attending full-time; nine of these older reception children are taught with a Year 1 class. Children are admitted part-time in the Autumn and Spring terms and summer born children attend full time. Parents are invited to a coffee morning when the headteacher shows them around the school and the reception teacher explains what their children will be doing during their time in the reception class. They are given a parent's booklet and leaflets to explain how they can help their child at home. During this visit their child is able to play with the other children they will be with in the reception class. On the day they start, children start at 15-minute intervals so that the reception teacher and parent can settle the child into the class. The teacher maintains links with local playgroups to get to know the children and for them to get to know her, thus making their transfer to the reception class smoother. Induction procedures are very good.
87. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is below that expected nationally, especially in spoken language, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. However, combined with the good teaching and very good provision in relation to learning opportunities offered, children make good progress during their time in the early years. By the time they transfer to Year 1 most children attain the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals (ELG) for children of their age.
88. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good in all areas of learning. The teacher, nursery nurse and learning support assistants work well as a co-ordinated team. They provide a calm and welcoming environment in which children are happy and settled. Furthermore, this close teamwork is a strength that impacts directly on the quality of learning and development of all children in the Foundation Stage. All staff in the Foundation Stage have very good relationships with the children and manage them well. Observation of their work demonstrated a high quality of involvement and support for the children in the early years that made a positive contribution to the children's progress in learning. The curriculum is very well planned to promote children's development in the six areas of learning, personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. In addition, the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy are taken into account in the planning in order to prepare children for their entry to Year 1.
89. The children who work with Year 1 pupils have their work planned separately to ensure that it is matched to their ability and also to challenge them. The medium term planning is linked to the Early Learning Goals, with a focus or theme for each term. The theme for this term is 'In the

garden' and all the learning is focused very closely in each area of learning within this theme. Although the same theme is used for the part-time and full-time children, the work is planned to ensure that the learning is well matched to their age and individual ability.

90. Planning of lessons is good. For example, the lesson plans identify the learning outcomes and activities matched to children's ability levels, based upon information gathered from the good assessments undertaken. Observations of children's learning are undertaken consistently and all adults can be seen making notes on individual children's progress in the activities, and work in books is immediately marked and recorded in children's individual profiles. Staff make very good provision for children's personal, social and emotional development and this was evident by how well children worked together and their friendliness with each other and with adults. It was very impressive how pupils would take part in independent or group activities, demonstrating how well their confidence had built up since they joined the class. For example, this was seen in activities such as role-play in 'The Flower Shop', where they would take on the roles of shopkeeper, assistant or customer and, when in the water and sand areas where they took part in 'pond dipping' and finding creatures hidden in the sand, they would politely take turns and share equipment because of the effective modelling provided by teachers.
91. Teachers ensure that learning opportunities are vibrant and exciting. For example, in the 'frog area' there was an indoor garden area and imaginary pond; children were able to press start on the cassette player and sing along to the music of 'Five little speckled frogs'.
92. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that every opportunity is taken to help children become independent, resulting in children taking care of their classroom, tidying up and putting equipment away, which they do quietly and sensibly. Teachers ensure that parents are seen as true partners in their children's learning. Teachers have good knowledge of how young children learn. They make it very clear for children as to what is expected of them and ensure that learning objectives are very clear, as a result children know what is expected of them and respond very well to learning. Basic skills of reading, writing and number are taught well and many of the higher attaining children can recognise simple words and phrases and are starting to form their letters and numbers correctly. Some read short sentences and are very interested in books.
93. Teachers ensure that children receive balanced opportunities for formal learning alongside structured play, and learning using their senses is encouraged at all times. From a below-average baseline, pupils attain the ELG in all areas of learning and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
94. Links with parents are very good and parents help in the reception class, mending toys, and have helped with laying slabs and erecting the playhouse. A very good example of how parents are involved in their children's learning is the parents' reading workshop in school where parents are invited to work alongside their children, reading and playing games. During the inspection a parents' reading workshop was held with 21 mums and dads attending, and parents expressed how much they enjoy taking part in the reading and how it also helped them to work with their child at home.
95. The indoor and outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good, providing a secure, caring and calm environment and, as a result, children make good progress. There are areas for reading, imaginative play with Noah's ark, music, ladybird study, small world construction, role-play in the home corner and flower shop, displays from the natural plant and animal kingdom, an indoor garden, a creative area and water and sand play. The whole indoor area is bright, colourful and an exciting and stimulating area for children to experience. The outside area consists of a hard-surfaced play area with markings for children to use wheeled toys, including scooters, bicycles and prams. There are potted plants, a garden area, outside sand and pebble area, grassed area with toy house, bird tables and safety surface area with a car and a pirate ship. This area is a completely secure outside play area and allows the children free access between the classrooms and outside play and learning area.

Personal, social and emotional development

96. When the children start in the reception class they quickly become used to school routines and enjoy coming to school. They are happy and secure and most settle well to the activities provided. Most children play happily alongside one another and this was seen in 'The Flower Shop' where children were taking on different roles and interacting very sensibly. However, staff ensure they maintain a close eye on these activities and take every opportunity to involve the children in activities where they learn to share and take turns. This was seen where the children were taking part in circle time and sharing their holiday experiences with each other. Opportunities are also planned for the children to talk about and show what they have done with other children. As they mature and grow in confidence, they develop their social skills and by the time they are ready to leave the reception class, they play happily together and form friendships. Children enjoy the range of activities provided and show good levels of concentration for their age. Children are happy and secure in school and are developing good attitudes to learning. They try hard with the activities offered and are developing very good levels of concentration. They are learning to share toys and take turns and are becoming sociable and co-operative. Children develop their social skills through the reception classes and, by the time they transfer to Year 1, they attain the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development.

Communication, language and literacy

97. On entry to the early years many children find it very difficult to talk about themselves or to express their thoughts or feelings. However, during their time in the reception class the children make good progress in speaking and listening and are very keen to stand at the front and talk about what they have done, with the other children listening excitedly, wanting to share their own ideas. Other opportunities to develop their speaking skills were seen where the children had the opportunity to talk about the Big Book the teacher had been reading to them on mini-beasts. Staff spend a lot of time speaking to children and modelling language for them and children respond very positively to this stimulus. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. Stories feature significantly in the set theme for the term. For example, 'The Very Lazy Ladybird' and 'The Hungry Caterpillar' fitted very closely the theme of 'In the Garden' that was being developed throughout all areas of learning. Children also know a number of popular rhymes and they enjoy singing 'Five Little Speckled Frogs' and having stories read to them. To support the development of children's reading there is a reading area and, with the support of an adult, the children practise reading words in their reading books. They also have access to talking books, interactive books, phonic toys and structured reading books for the reading workshops.
98. Children are able to recognise their own names and all will have a go at writing their names on a daily basis, some better than others. They enjoy practising making marks on paper and complete patterns and tracing activities to support pencil control. Children enjoy their reading time and are keen to talk about these stories, especially stories they have read as a whole class. Children make good progress in this aspect of learning and, by the time they are ready to start in Year 1, most children achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy.

Mathematical development

99. Children make good progress in this area of learning and attain the ELG on entry to Year 1. The class teacher is a mathematics specialist and gives very good leadership in this area of learning. During the summer term the reception children follow the local education authority guidance for mathematics, which leads the children into the National Numeracy Strategy. Children show an interest in numbers and quickly learn some simple number songs and rhymes. Staff plan activities that focus on mathematical language, such as 'behind, in front and underneath.' They can recognise numerals up to 10 and, in one lesson, they were counting spots on ladybirds up to 9 and with help could count backwards from 24. However, counting back from 10 was done independently and with confidence. In this lesson the teacher used a good strategy to teach the ordinal numbers first, second and so on. In this activity she set out chairs as seats on a bus and children had to identify creatures sitting on the seats and recognise what position they were and answer whether first to the sixth. The following day a literacy lesson was observed where pupils were looking at a big book on ladybirds and were confidently identifying first to the sixth.

100. To link in with the theme for the term the mathematics topic involved work on, for example, shorter and longer flowers, counting petals, ladybird mathematics and farmyard mathematics where pupils count 'how many legs?' As a link with art the children had a display of their symmetrical butterfly mathematics pictures. Other mathematical work links with the topic through the children using the flower shop and using coins to purchase flowers and other items in shop games. To encourage pupils to follow instructions they go outside to move to instructions, such as forwards, backwards and change direction. Incidental learning takes place where the teacher asks the children to count how many in class and compare with the total of how many children are on the class roll. In addition, time is covered through the day and what day was it yesterday and what day will it be tomorrow? Children confidently use 'Millie's Maths House' on the computer for number work and were observed using the mouse to manipulate objects on the screen and could clearly explain what they were doing and what they were learning. Children love the counting rhymes and they burst into song when they are playing in the well-equipped outside area.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

101. Children are curious about and interested in their surroundings and enjoy exploring the new experiences offered in the reception class. The class environment is colourful, stimulating and exciting, which challenges the curiosity of the children. For example, in their daily activities they can use construction kits and interactive toys, such as cassette recorders, work on the busy and writing tables and use programmable toys to move a ladybird around the garden. They listen to a range of music and enjoy rhythmical music. This was clearly seen in the part-time children's music session where they listened to the music of Scotland with bagpipes playing tunes of Scotland's flowers. However, one boy was very quick to recognise the drums when the pipe band played and all the children marched around the room.
102. Evidence of other work was seen in photographs, especially the visit that children made to the high school during the week to take part in a cooking activity with Year 8 pupils. During the week children were making speckled jelly frogs and ladybird and butterfly biscuits. The Early Years recipe book shows the wide range of cooking that children have undertaken, including funny face biscuits, bread hedgehogs, firework biscuits, pancakes, queen of hearts jam tarts and a rainbow cake. Links with multicultural education include the children's celebration of the Chinese New Year and children have in the past made Divali lamps. Children are introduced to the world about them, such as the school environment, and by visits into their locality. For example, during the week the children took a walk to the local flower shop and bought some flowers to present to adults back in the school. Children have many opportunities to take part in construction, using building blocks and a range of tools. Children make good progress in this area of learning and, by the time they start Year 1, most attain the ELG in knowledge and understanding of the world.

Physical development

103. The school's outside area is very well equipped and pupils have many opportunities to take part in physical activities and also to use the school hall regularly for indoor physical activities. Children play on bicycles, in the pirate ship, climb through tunnels and use small apparatus, such as balls and skipping ropes. Children are developing confidence in physical activities in the school hall by learning to be aware of their own and others' space, moving and jumping in and out of hoops. For example, the part-time children went into the hall with the nursery nurse to practise throwing soft-balls through hoops, and to bat small balls. After they had taken part in rolling and climbing in and out of hoops they then went on to practise for sports day. In this the children were in three teams and practised starting a race and running to the nursery nurse, who ensured that they were safe and did not run into the wall. Other small world activities include a Duplo zoo, cars and garage, Noah's ark, farm and castle. The theme of the 'frog' is continued in the lessons and children pretend to hop, skip and jump in a variety of ways. In class they use pencils, brushes, scissors and other small tools with increasing confidence and skill. The majority attain the Early Learning Goals in physical development by the end of the reception year.

Creative development

104. Children make good progress in this area of learning. The classroom is a rich environment and the colourful displays make interesting and stimulating areas for children to work and learn in. Children make three-dimensional frogs, paint flowers and create ladybirds painted on pebbles, and make symmetrical butterflies and clay snails. Opportunities are available for children to make three-dimensional models using Play Dough and clay. Children are able to choose from a variety of activities where they use varied drawing media, such as felt tips, pencil, crayons and chalk. They use a range of musical instruments to experiment with to find out what sound they make and, in the music lesson seen, the children were accompanying the pipe and drum band by playing along with their own interpretation of the rhythm. In addition, there are opportunities to sing number rhymes and nursery rhymes as well as music linked to a published music scheme. Children enjoy singing and listening to familiar songs and rhymes and love using the role-play area to play games and act out stories. By the end of the reception year the majority of children attain the Early Learning Goals for creative development.

ENGLISH

105. The test results for Year 2 in 2002 showed standards to be high. Attainment was well above average in writing and above average in reading. In comparison with similar schools, standards were average in reading and above average in writing. There has been a steady rise in standards over the last four years. However, inspection evidence indicates a marked drop in standards this year at ages seven and ten, against the trend, owing to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and below-average attainers in Year 2 and Year 5. Standards currently are below average in reading and writing but generally all groups of pupils make sound progress overall against their prior attainment. In writing, inspection evidence indicates that some pupils could achieve better, especially those who are higher attainers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are very well supported in lessons by support staff who have high expectations of them.
106. Since the last inspection, the school has conducted an internal review of the subject, correctly prioritised areas for development and put in place effective action plans to improve standards. There has, for example, been a very successful whole-school focus on developing skills in speaking and listening and as a result pupils make very good progress in the development of these skills.
107. By the end of Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills meet expectations. Most pupils speak clearly and express their thoughts articulately for their age. For example, Year 2 pupils participate confidently in contributing words to make a sentence more interesting and one higher-attaining pupil demonstrates his broad vocabulary with the suggestion of the word, 'deserted'. Pupils make very good progress in the development of these skills against their previous attainment because of the frequent planned opportunities for speaking and listening. Teachers are good role models in their own use of language to the pupils. In lessons, for the most part, teachers ask good open-ended questions that challenge thinking and motivate pupils to respond in discussions. Pupils are asked to extend their answers or rephrase them more appropriately and their oral contributions are valued. By Year 5, standards exceed expectations. Pupils benefit from well-planned opportunities to practise their skills in a variety of situations. For example, in a Year 4/5 history lesson, pupils applied the conventions of standard English in a formal forum when they used previously prepared questions to interview a visitor to the school about his recollections of the past. They posed appropriate questions and listened carefully and courteously to the answers, giving well-considered responses. Pupils are given direct strategies for improvement as, for example, they are encouraged in active listening through 'reflecting' back accurately what a partner has said to them. During the inspection some teachers missed opportunities for extending pupils' subject vocabulary and writing across other curriculum areas. For example, in a Year 3 music lesson that involved composition, there was no reference by the class teacher to such musical terms as tempo or dynamics.

108. Standards in reading by the end of Year 2 and Year 5 are below expectations for the seven and ten-year-olds but pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Reading is currently the focus of a whole school target for improvement and initiatives to raise standards have been instigated. These include the provision of extra sessions for independent reading to support the purchase of more books to attract boys and less able readers and the employment of a 'brain gym'¹ expert to maximise pupils' learning potential. This is an effective start to raising standards and is fulfilling the first aim of fostering an enjoyment of reading. Pupils have responded with pleasure to the wide range of texts available. Older pupils welcome the introduction of regular story sessions, which focus on familiarising pupils with the work of well known authors. For example, they recalled with obvious enthusiasm their enjoyment of the works of Dick King Smith, when read to them by their teacher. However, in guided and independent reading sessions there is insufficient rigour applied in reinforcing a consistently structured approach to acquisition of reading skills. For example, teachers' records make limited reference to the reading targets identified by the National Literacy Strategy. All are not yet fully aware of what they need to do next in order to increase their reading accuracy and comprehension skills.
109. By the end of Year 2, higher-attaining pupils read with developing accuracy. They use punctuation to assist their expression and use their knowledge of sounds to help them read unfamiliar words. One pupil gave a very articulate description of her book, 'The real story of the three pigs' and animatedly explained why she found it amusing. She confidently explained the difference between index and contents pages. However, in the current cohort of pupils, few achieve standards that exceed national expectations and a significant number of pupils have reading skills that are below expectations, mainly because of the high proportion with special educational needs. These pupils read familiar words competently but with little expression. They are hesitant when using their phonic knowledge to read unfamiliar words. The plots of stories are explained in simple terms, but most are unable to explain the purpose of contents and index pages. By the end of Year 5, most pupils read a range of texts with reasonable fluency. Some lower-attaining pupils are not always aware when they misread a word. Higher-attaining pupils are adept at using their reference skills to find information, using the school library classification system, and they have a sound knowledge of indexes, contents and glossaries. However, the higher-order skills of reference and inference are not so well developed. Most pupils are not proficient at scanning texts to extract the main points or to read between the lines to form assumptions or to conjecture about outcomes of stories.
110. Pupils' attainment in writing by the end of Year 2 and Year 5 is below average overall, although the school has endeavoured to improve writing through the introduction of individual targets and the setting of pupils into four ability groups for literacy but, at present, these targets are not sufficiently rigorous in clearly identifying how pupils can move on to the next level of attainment. The provision of one hour each week for cross-curricular writing provides pupils with the opportunity for extended and creative writing and for writing for other areas of the curriculum. However, the structure of these sessions is variable. Whilst it is satisfactory overall, opportunities are missed for pupils to make faster progress because of the lack of rigorous individual target setting and use of writing frames, so that pupils are very clear as to what they need to do in order to improve. For example in a Year 3 class, pupils reproduced an extended piece of writing which lacked focus in relation to setting of content and development of ideas. As with the measures implemented to improve reading, these initiatives are an effective start in raising standards. Pupils make satisfactory progress because, across the school, the basic skills of writing are taught well. However, progress is limited because these skills are not consistently carried through into pupils' independent writing. For example, within the daily literacy sessions, the concepts that are well taught in the whole class sessions are not sufficiently embedded in the guided group part of the lesson because of a lack of focused structure in linking what pupils have read to their writing activities. In addition, teachers infrequently provide writing frames or scaffolding strategies within which pupils can learn to structure their writing. There are limited opportunities for higher attaining pupils to extend their skills further through extension tasks.

¹ Exercise to stimulate mental activity and improve co-ordination.

111. Pupils in all year groups engage in a satisfactory range of writing for different purposes and different audiences. For example, Year 1 pupils develop their descriptive skills by writing stories, such as 'How the elephant got his trunk'. They construct simple sentences and higher-attaining pupils are beginning to pay attention to simple punctuation such as the correct use of capital letters and full stops. In Year 2, higher-attaining pupils write in a joined script and use punctuation such as question marks and speech marks. They can follow the teacher's instructions to change verbs and add adjectives to make sentences more interesting. Most Year 2 pupils write in a variety of forms, including poems, instructions and stories. In Year 3, pupils use descriptive vocabulary well, as when a Year 3 pupil refers to an 'evil, creeping, girl-eating dragon'. However, for pupils in Year 5, skills of sentence construction and punctuation are weak. In their independent writing, most pupils use simple sentences, with little variation of structure or use of powerful words to engage the reader. Whilst higher attaining pupils use punctuation, such as speech marks and commas, correctly, a significant minority of pupils consistently use capital letters in the middle of sentences. Few pupils use paragraphs in longer pieces of writing. The quality of handwriting improves as pupils move through the school because of the consistent application of a structured handwriting programme. A good proportion of older pupils can produce fluent, legible script and take pride in their work, although there is some evidence of scrappy presentation.
112. There is limited evidence of opportunities for pupils to draft and improve their writing through the medium of information and communication technology, but most pupils do not yet use it confidently as a tool to facilitate writing or as a medium for independent learning.
113. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some elements of good and occasionally very good practice seen. In one lesson seen in the juniors during the inspection, the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory as expectations were not high enough and, as a result, pupils did not make sufficient gains in learning. A strength of the teaching throughout the school is the very good relationships that have been established. Teachers manage pupils well, consistently applying the school's code of behaviour so pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Pupils are treated with respect and their opinions are listened to and valued. As a result, self-esteem is high and pupils are not afraid to make mistakes. Other characteristics of the good teaching are the lively, well-planned lessons that motivate pupils well and are conducted at a brisk pace. In these lessons, resources, such as whiteboards, are used well to support and add interest to the lesson. Pupils are frequently encouraged to work collaboratively, for example to discuss in pairs. As a result, they have positive attitudes and behave well in lessons. Learning intentions for the lesson are made clear and learning is enhanced because pupils know what they are expected to achieve and whether they have achieved it by the end of the lesson. Most staff have sound understanding of the National Curriculum and the literacy strategy. This enables them to structure their lessons appropriately, to make effective use of the plenary session at the end of the lesson and to use questioning well to develop pupils' understanding.
114. Where teaching is satisfactory, an area for development is in the aforementioned provision of opportunity to embed firmly, during the independent and guided part of the lesson, the skills that have been introduced in the main part of the lesson. In addition, in some lessons, learning objectives are too broad and, on occasion, teachers' expectations are too low, with tasks that present a lack of challenge for higher-attaining pupils. While teachers do allow for the differing needs of the pupils in the level of support they provide, so pupils with special educational needs are well included, there is little difference in the specific skills to be developed according to individual needs, linked to the level descriptors of the National Curriculum. This limits progress and is leading to an element of underachievement for higher attaining pupils. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, learning objectives were too broad, the teacher failed to adhere to the structure of the literacy hour and the pace of the lesson was slow. Consequently, pupils produced little writing by the end of the lesson and made unsatisfactory progress in developing their skills. Across the school, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. While there is some evidence of good practice, generally teachers' comments infrequently refer pupils back to their individual targets and opportunities are missed to move pupils forward in their learning by identifying exactly what they need to do in order to achieve a higher standard.

115. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The headteacher is currently managing the subject prior to a new appointee, who is an expert in literacy, taking over the role next term. The headteacher, together with good support from the school governor responsible for literacy, has monitored teaching and standards throughout the school and appropriate educational direction has been set in the school's plan to raise attainment. Assessment procedures for English are good. Useful data has been collected and analysed and used to support areas for whole-school development and to establish support groups and set individual targets. Staff are aware of standards pupils attain, but do not always use their assessments to plan work in lessons that is appropriate to individual needs. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' social and moral development, with much good interactive learning taking place in classes as pupils discuss their work together.

MATHEMATICS

116. Standards in mathematics are in line with national averages by the end of Year 2 and in line with expectations for ten-year-olds at the end of Year 5. Overall improvement has been satisfactory. Pupils' achievements are good in relation to their prior attainment, including pupils with SEN and those from ethnic minority backgrounds. This is largely due to the fact that the school has effectively implemented performance management targets to ensure that standards rise quickly and effectively. This is most noticeable in the increased percentage of pupils in Year 2 attaining the higher levels in the 2002 tests and teachers' assessments. Teaching is good and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are also good, in response to the quality of teaching. Overall, pupils' achievements are good and all groups of pupils make swift and fast gains in learning. However, in Year 1, teachers could challenge their higher attainers more as, too often, activities set consolidate skills previously taught, rather than extending them.
117. Attainment in mathematics had been very low in comparison with all schools until 2002, when standards rose so that the school's results were better than average when compared with all schools, and in line with those of similar schools. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in mathematics were judged as good, when pupils were ten years old, standards were seen to be improving and all pupils made good progress. Since then, the school has admitted a much higher proportion of pupils with SEN and below-average-attaining pupils. Despite this, standards in mathematics have remained average at the end of Years 2 and 5 because of the good additional support for pupils with SEN. The strong leadership and management in the subject have supported teaching well and made sure that the majority of pupils are suitably challenged most of the time so that progress is satisfactory. The school has worked very hard with the local education authority's numeracy consultants. Staff are secure in their teaching, thanks to the in-service training provided for them.
118. By the end of Year 2, pupils improve and extend their skills steadily. At first, they learn to double numbers up to five, read and write numbers up to 20, and make pairs of numbers to equal 10. They can identify change from a 20p coin and round up numbers to the nearest 10. They recognise symmetrical patterns. They begin to make accurate predictions about the heaviest item, or which vehicle will travel further than another. They know that different units of measure are used to measure in different ways, for example, the playground in metres, and liquid in litres. They use simple bar graphs to represent the numbers of cars of different colours in car parks. They carry out simple addition and subtraction and begin to work on division and multiplication. However, at times, their presentation skills are untidy.
119. By the end of Year 2, pupils learn to recognise whether all multiples of four end in an even number and note the alternate odd/even number as they count in threes to a chosen number and back. Some pupils reverse their numbers and, sometimes, above-average-attaining pupils are not challenged strongly enough in classes where there is a wide range of age and ability.
120. By the end of Year 5, standards are in line with those expected nationally of this age group. Pupils recognise obtuse and acute angles using a protractor, and recognise different directions, such as NE and SW. They can multiply numbers such as 8×9 , and divide 56 by 7. They can add and subtract hundreds, tens and units. They can work out the perimeter and area of a rectangle,

solve mathematical problems, and explain their methods. They can work out the difference between 3994 and 9007 in their heads. They learn to break down kilograms into grams, and litres into millilitres. They use line and bar graphs to represent different facts and make number patterns, convert simple fractions to decimals, and find out simple percentages and proportions. They work out true/false problems. They find some work difficult, however, for example recalling multiplication factors when learning or remembering the 9x table, and lower-attaining pupils sometimes find it difficult to keep pace with whole-class problem-solving, for example, in their Bridge St Project, which involves solving real-life problems.

121. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good. They are keen to learn because targets are challenging and appropriate. Modelling by staff is usually clear and helpful and pupils have good relationships with their teachers. When pupils make errors, these are used constructively as teaching points and all pupils' explanations and points of view are valued. Behaviour is good. Occasionally pupils call out and seek attention when teaching lacks pace, or where the challenge is not sufficiently rigorous to engage their learning. This is rarely the case but, in the reception class/Year 1, some of the above-average-attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged.
122. Teaching is good overall. It is better in Years 3 to 5 than in Year 1 and Year 1/2. In Year 1 and Year 1/2, challenge of above-average-attaining pupils is not always adequate and extension tasks are not always linked well enough to the main objective in the lesson, to extend and practise new knowledge. Sometimes teaching lacks pace and pupils lose interest temporarily. In the infants, the best teaching is in Year 2. Generally, teachers model and explain activities well. In the best teaching, modelling is good and pupils are given useful opportunities for independent learning. Pupils are prompted well and encouraged to explain their reasoning and ponder on problems. Relationships are very good throughout. In Years 3 to 5, teaching is competent and lively, with high expectations, good use of subject-specific vocabulary and good pace. Pupils are encouraged to check their own work and to be more independent. Occasionally, there is some weakness in explaining to pupils what they have to do and modelling it clearly, and this reduces the pace of pupils' progress when they are confused and the quality of their attention diminishes.
123. Worksheets and resources are well presented and set a good example to pupils. ICT is used adequately in the subject, but ICT resources in classes are fairly limited.
124. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The two co-ordinators work well together and have been very effective in raising standards through monitoring teaching, implementing the numeracy strategy and making sure that assessments are thorough and linked to objectives to support pupils' targets effectively. Assessment procedures are good and clearly identify what pupils know, understand and can do. Both co-ordinators are well trained and have shared their knowledge with staff effectively. They know the standards of pupils in the school well. The resources for the subject are satisfactory. The school has reintroduced a useful mathematics workshop for parents, which makes a good contribution to parents' knowledge of their children's work. Governors have been involved in monitoring lessons and the development of work in mathematics, as it has been extended to increase emphasis on speaking and listening, mathematical language, problem-solving, the importance of jottings, and different ways of presenting work. Links with the local high school are particularly good, and pupils share a mathematical project with them.
125. The main contributory factors to the overall good achievement have been due to good school self-analysis, good analysis of test results, good use of assessment to inform planning, effective leadership resulting in appropriate staff training, and good guidance given by the local education authority's numeracy team in helping the school to raise standards.

SCIENCE

126. The 2002 national teachers' assessments show that standards in science are in line with national averages and that the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels is broadly average. Inspection findings confirm these results and judge standards to be in line with national averages at the end of Year 2 and that, in Year 5, pupils meet the national expectations of ten-year-olds.

127. Overall, progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory because of the sound leadership and management of the co-ordinator, but standards are not as high as they were at the time of the previous inspection in Year 2 as there are now more pupils with SEN and below-average attainment in this year's cohort of pupils. This depresses end-of-Year 2 and Year 5 attainment as evidenced by test scores.
128. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, an effective start has been made to ensuring that pupils know how to set up experiments, but presently work in experimental and investigative science is not suitably graded to meet the different capabilities of all pupils and, at times, higher-attaining pupils are undertaking very similar work to their peers and, on occasions, are not sufficiently challenged; although an example of appropriately challenging work was seen in Year 2, when pupils were recording their findings in a variety of ways. Whilst most groups of pupils are working to their full capacity, above average attainers need to be challenged further. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, pupils can guess what might happen in their experiments, but too few opportunities are provided for them to compare the outcomes of their findings with their original hypothesis.
129. By the end of Year 2, pupils make fairly accurate predictions as to how far a toy car can travel on a ramp. They understand the concept of fair testing by explaining that it would be better if one person pushed the car and the ramp was consistently placed at the same height. Pupils use their measuring skills accurately and record their findings accurately. Pupils know that plants need water in order to survive and that roots take minerals from the soil. They know the importance of sunlight to growth and that green leaves denote a healthy plant. They know that plants and animals live in contrasting habitats and can classify them accordingly. They know that some materials are better suited to different purposes, that wearing wool can keep us warm and that some materials alter shape when they are heated. They can construct simple circuits and know how shadows are formed and can draw simple diagrams of circuits, but their diagrams are not always clearly labelled.
130. By the end of Year 5, pupils can set up experiments and identify a fair test by ensuring that not all of the variables are altered. They have good knowledge of food chains and understand the meaning of carnivore, herbivore and omnivore. They know the role of prey, predator, producer and consumer, and can extrapolate information from a food website. They can construct simple bar and pie charts, but above-average attainers do not have sufficient opportunities for constructing line graphs which they are capable of. Pupils can identify uses of common materials and are making good gains in developing their thinking skills by explaining that doors are made of metal and this material can be used to make spaceships. When measuring which tights have the most stretch, they calculate their findings well and write a detailed report explaining why they thought that the measurements might vary. However, this effective practice is not consistently applied throughout the key stage. The use of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall but could be better with further identification in teachers' planning.
131. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. Pupils with SEN and those who are from different ethnic minority backgrounds make good progress; all other groups make satisfactory progress. This is because support staff intervene at all times in pupils' learning. When they work with higher-attaining pupils, they also make good progress but scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that too often, these pupils are given the same tasks as their peers. On occasions, this limits their progress. Furthermore, assessment data is not sufficiently well used to plan the next steps of pupils' learning and over time this slows down the rates of progress, resulting in achievement that is overall satisfactory when it could be good. Assessments are satisfactory overall but record coverage rather than clearly identifying what pupils know, understand and can do.
132. Whilst the number of experiments undertaken in the juniors is improving, teachers' medium-term planning needs urgent attention because it does not sufficiently identify the progressive development of subject-specific skills and knowledge, and too often, different year groups cover the same work. Whilst the outcome is different, curriculum coverage is similar in all year groups and slows down the rates of progress. There is a lack of clearly defined expectations for each year group and too often pupils repeat skills previously learnt. At present, there is a lack of a

whole-school approach to developing pupils' experimental and investigative skills progressively. Assessments are satisfactory overall and focus appropriately on the coverage of knowledge, but they do not sufficiently identify the acquisition of scientific skills. The school has recognised this as an area for development and has already purchased supplementary material to ensure that the learning opportunities offered are more tailored to pupils' needs and capability levels.

133. Pupils in both the infants and juniors have good attitudes to learning. They are keen to learn, polite in lessons, behave well and share equipment appropriately. They are keen to learn, but too few opportunities are provided for them to develop their skills of independent learning.
134. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with good features, especially in the oldest classes, where teachers give good explanations and use challenging questions to move the higher attainers to reach higher levels. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge. They use time effectively and give good explanations. Pupils are managed well and regular praise is given, but at times, marking does not tell pupils how to improve on the quality of their work and too often, pupils are not given sufficient pointers as to what they need to do in order to improve the quality of their work.
135. Pupils' learning is satisfactory and they are keen to get down to work. Pupils with SEN make good progress because they are well supported by the support staff. However, higher attainers, whilst making satisfactory progress, do not have sufficient extension activities to challenge them even further. Teachers generally provide good opportunities for pupils to work in groups and this has a positive effect on their social skills. However, pupils do not always spell their subject-specific words correctly in their exercise books and they are often not corrected by teachers.
136. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Both the infant and junior co-ordinators work well together in trying to identify overlaps of skills taught to different year groups. They are aware that the next step forward is to identify clear expectations for all groups of pupils, in both skills and knowledge content, and provide further opportunities for pupils to use ICT in lessons to support learning and to develop further links with literacy and numeracy so that pupils can consolidate their learning further. Resources are satisfactory overall, but need supplementing, especially in the teaching of materials and their properties, and physical processes.

ART AND DESIGN

137. Standards in art and design are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 5, and pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. Pupils with SEN make good progress. The school has maintained average standards since the previous inspection, although further work on developing pupils' knowledge of art from different cultures could be more detailed. The school has recently started to use ICT in this subject and, whilst an effective start has been made, more rigorous identification of the use of this medium in teachers' planning would raise standards further.
138. The school is an attractive learning environment and all displays are well presented. A variety of different techniques used by pupils is on show, such as stained glass windows, batik, printing and sketching. However, pupils interviewed in Year 2 and Year 5 were unable to demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of great artists and their styles, although they were able to discuss techniques required for making stained glass windows and skills underpinning different styles of collage, such as the theme based upon the poem, "The Owl and the Pussy Cat". By the end of Year 5, pupils' skills of batik, executed in art club, are good. Group work undertaken, to make tiles with artists, shows details of pattern and adventurous use of colour. The school makes good use of visiting artists, resulting in staff improving their own subject knowledge. Whilst no teaching of art was seen, teachers' planning reveals coverage of the programme of study but insufficient detail of development of skills necessary to ensure fast rates of progress. The school has correctly identified the need to develop the use of sketchbooks further to ensure that a detailed record is kept of skills progression. Satisfactory use of art is made to support illustration of other

subjects, such as religious education and history, but pupils' art work in science lacks attention to detail, such as the drawings seen of pupils in the juniors' classifications of plants and animals.

139. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory but assessments are underdeveloped, and denote coverage rather than standards attained in skills and knowledge. Whilst the programmes of study are covered, as evidenced by teachers' long-term plans, skills required by different groups of pupils in different stages are not sufficiently well identified.
140. The co-ordinator has raised standards of presentation of art work round the school and these are neat, varied and attractive. She has organised visits from art work companies so that pupils have had the opportunity to take part in making permanent contributions to the look of the school by making murals and mosaics, for example, to mark the year 2000 (Millennium Project). There are long-and medium-term plans in place so that teachers have a clear direction for their work when covering necessary different curriculum areas in art, and the co-ordinator checks a cross-section of planning and sketchbooks each term to see that curriculum plans are followed and coverage is sound. There is no distinct analysis or detailed record keeping, to help teachers plan work to teach pupils to improve from lesson to lesson or module to module. There is some weakness in setting forward a progressive, challenging and specific programme of skills pupils need to learn in art to enable them to make good progress. The link between subject-specific skills and assessment of pupils' work to plan suitable targets for improvement is not identified clearly enough, especially where there are two year groups in one class. Resources are adequate for the subject to be taught effectively.
141. Pupils interviewed said that they enjoy art, especially the work that is undertaken in art club.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

142. Pupils reach the expected standards at age seven and their achievement in relation to their prior attainment is satisfactory overall. No judgement can be made on standards at age ten because it was not possible to observe any lessons for junior-aged pupils during the inspection and there was no completed work available from which to make a judgement on pupils' skills and knowledge acquisition. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall and satisfactory standards have been maintained but, whilst schemes of work have been implemented, there is still work to be done in the identification of progressive development of subject specific skills.
143. In Years 1 and 2, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from different ethnic minority backgrounds, make satisfactory progress as they follow the design process successfully from the original idea to the finished product. They acquire satisfactory skills in measuring, shaping, cutting and joining when making products. For example, Year 2 pupils explain how they looked at a variety of puppets before designing their own. They drew round templates on fabric, cut them out and sewed them together. They demonstrated their enthusiasm for the project as they recounted how they performed a show with the completed puppets. Pupils know that a design can be altered and modified and, through discussion, are encouraged to explain why they choose certain patterns and colours. When difficulties arise, pupils are encouraged to think how they might overcome the problems; this has a positive effect on developing their thinking skills. During the plenary session pupils give opinions as to how their designs might be improved. Pupils are introduced to a variety of resources, such as large construction apparatus, paper, card and fabric, but limited written examples of pupils evaluating their own work were seen.
144. Photographic evidence indicates that pupils continue to develop their skills in cutting and joining as they move through the school. For example, Year 3 pupils make musical instruments and construct photograph frames. Pupils explain how, in food technology, they analyse sandwich ingredients and carry out an investigation into individual preferences. They evaluate the finished product, making suggestions for improvement. In Years 4 and 5, pupils apply their numeracy

skills as they explore how the card net of a cube or cuboid can be assembled to make a simple box. There is limited evidence of the use of information and communication technology to enhance learning. In conversation, pupils demonstrated a limited knowledge of the use of tools and materials. For example, they had no recollection of using tools, such as hammers and saws, or of working with wood for any of their projects.

145. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. Pupils were designing a model using a winding mechanism. Pupils were well motivated from the start of the lessons as they were shown a range of models, connected with well known nursery rhymes and stories, and invited to explain how the mechanism worked. By the end of the lesson, all pupils had completed drawings of their designs in booklets which effectively reinforced their understanding of the process of design. Higher-attaining pupils' designs were realistic and imaginative. For example, one pupil designed a model of Incy Wincy Spider climbing up the spout. However, the learning objectives for both lessons were exactly the same. There was no difference in the work set or the skills to be developed for pupils of different ability, with lower attaining Year 1 pupils given the same task as higher-attaining Year 2 pupils. This weakness in curriculum planning limits pupils' rates of progress. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to evaluate their learning. Teachers generally have satisfactory subject knowledge, use resources well, ask good questions, consistently checking pupils' understanding, and give clear and accurate presentations.
146. The role of the co-ordinator is satisfactory in purchasing resources and keeping a watching brief over the subject overall, but it is underdeveloped in that she does not have sufficient time to monitor the progressive development of subject-specific skills. National guidelines are being used by the teachers to plan their work but there is a need, particularly in mixed-age classes, for teachers to be aware of the skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils should attain by the end of each year. The monitoring of teaching or of pupils' work is not yet undertaken. Assessment procedures, whilst satisfactory overall, are not sufficiently used to assess individual strengths and weaknesses in the subject or to identify areas for future development. Resources for the subject are satisfactory but ICT is at the early stages of implementation and needs to be developed.

GEOGRAPHY

147. Standards in geography remain broadly similar to those identified in the previous inspection in Year 2 but, in Year 5, standards are now in line with expectations of ten-year-olds rather than being above national expectations. This is because more time is devoted to teaching literacy. It was not possible to judge the quality of teaching as no lessons were observed. Overall progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory following the high emphasis placed upon teaching local geography. Pupils in both the infants and the juniors have good knowledge of the immediate locality of Shepshed. A display in the main entrance had an aerial photograph taken in 1997 and pupils were challenged to identify what changes have been made to the roads and school campus to make the area safe. This links in with the infants' study of identifying ways of making an area safer. Another booklet by Year 2 accompanies the display and shows the work pupils had already undertaken. For example, pupils had undertaken a survey of the traffic that used Forest Street and found out about the traffic calming methods and, following the survey, had identified the need to have another lollipop lady. Pupils wrote a letter to the local authority requesting that they provide a lollipop lady. In addition, good use of ICT was seen where pupils had designed a front cover picture using a computer design program.
148. By the end of Year 2, pupils can describe what it is like to live in the immediate locality of Shepshed and they use simple vocabulary relating to use of motorways, land and issues surrounding the local countryside. They can make simple maps and plans and they can identify rivers, towns and mountains on a map. However, the planned scheme of work focuses on all classes in the infants and juniors undertaking the same theme for each unit taught. Whilst this ensures adequate coverage of the programme of study, scrutiny of the samples of work seen shows that, as pupils move on year by year, their work does not fully show incremental skills progression. This is largely due to the lack of clearly defined expectations of what each year group should attain in both geographical skills and knowledge. Whilst pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, it could be better with improved curriculum planning and use of assessment to

inform the next steps of pupils' learning. The school has already recognised this as an area for development but, up until now, its main priorities had been to raise standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT so that all pupils can access the curriculum fully.

149. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, some pupils' own drawings and plans of their route to school were very similar in content, despite a difference in their age and year group attended. In addition, mapping skills are not consistently taught, with many year groups not building sufficiently on previously acquired learning, especially in relation to using scale and keys. However, there were examples of work seen on four figure grid references in the juniors but opportunities to identify continents, seas and oceans, including temperature zones, on world maps were missed. Pupils in both key stages have good knowledge of Mexico, including food, culture and Mexican dancing.
150. By the end of Year 5, pupils recognise changes in the environment caused by pollution, and how decisions about places and environments affect the future quality of people's lives. Pupils have sound knowledge of Chembokali, a village in India, and they can identify similarities and differences. However, from a scrutiny of the samples of pupils' work, pupils across the school were undertaking similar work in the form of worksheets and other tasks and, whilst the output of their work was more in the older classes, the knowledge covered was very similar. Pupils know that village life in India is different to town life and that temperature has an effect on vegetation. They eagerly describe the difference in buildings and temperature and the importance of clean water in a hot climate. However, pupils' standards of presentation of written work require attention because on too many occasions subject-specific words are not correctly spelled.
151. The subject co-ordinator has developed the subject in a satisfactory manner overall, and has undertaken a thorough audit of the present curriculum and scheme of work to ensure the present weaknesses in curriculum planning are addressed. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall but do not focus sufficiently on the acquisition of skills but provide an accurate record of coverage. The school is at present trialling new assessment procedures which will clearly identify what pupils know, understand and can do. The curriculum is enhanced with a good range of visits and visitors. Pupils undertake residential trips to Beaumanor for environmental studies and for outdoor adventure activities, Cropston water, the Sealife Centre in Birmingham and walks around the local environment. The use of a toy bear (Barnaby Bear) has had a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and pupils are keen to follow his adventures to different countries. Overall, all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress. Resources are satisfactory overall and the subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

152. Standards are in line with those expected of pupils of a similar age in both the infants and the juniors. This is a similar judgement to the last inspection and, overall, progress has been satisfactory. The curriculum is planned in line with national guidance on teaching and learning history and the work pupils have covered is confirmed in the work sampled. History is taught in the infant stage through a two-year cycle, with three history units covered each year, and where all classes undertake the same topic of work. This process is repeated in the junior stage where history is taught over a three-year cycle, also with three history units taught each year, and all classes undertaking the same topic of work each term. Whilst the medium-term plans aim to build in progression of skills through the set history unit, in practice this is inconsistently applied across the school and the sampled work showed little evidence of the building on of previously learned skills as pupils move through the school. With all years undertaking the same topic of work there is an obvious drain on resources and consequently some resources become overstretched. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the support they receive. Above-average-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress overall but they could be challenged even further if assessment systems and curriculum planning were more rigorous. At present, medium-term planning does not clearly identify expectations of mixed age classes in relation to knowledge and skills acquisition.

153. By the age of seven, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past, for example, by looking at the differences between a range of old and new toys and what homes were like in the past compared with today. They gain experience by looking at old photographs, videos and artefacts and from visits and visitors to the school. For example, in the present topic on castles, a falconer has offered to visit the school at the end of the term and pupils will be making a visit to Tamworth Castle. Evidence seen in their books, for this term, highlighted people from the past, such as Florence Nightingale, and pupils had used a video and photographs to research their information. They have learned to match dates in a chronological sequence from 1605 to 2000 and, in their learning about the Great Fire of London, pupils had written their own diaries of eyewitness accounts based on the example of the diary of Samuel Pepys.
154. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 5 they will have learned that the past can be divided into periods, such as ancient and modern, and what influence invaders and settlers, such as the Romans and the Vikings, had on life in Britain. They have studied the Tudor period and compared the life of the rich and poor in those times. Other historical studies link closely with geography when pupils study the seaside in history and compare seaside holidays from the past and today. The juniors are at present investigating how life in Shepshed has changed over time and are comparing life now with the past. The study linked very closely with geography skills in using street maps and comparing photographs of 50 years ago with those of today. A good example of using primary resources to investigate changes in the local area was seen in Year 4/5, where an elderly local resident was invited in to talk about his memories of Shepshed and answer questions set by pupils. However, the use of information and communication technology (ICT), whilst satisfactory overall, could be better. For example, in the work samples there was little evidence of ICT being used to enable pupils to present their work or to access information from the Internet.
155. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory, but there were some examples of very good teaching, notably from the history subject co-ordinator. For example, Year 2 pupils were investigating how people lived long ago and the teacher had brought in a range of artefacts from the middle ages for the pupils to observe and try to identify what they were used for. This was a very good lesson because the teacher inspired the children through the way she had planned and introduced the topic, the high expectation she has for her class and the interest that was generated in the lesson. The quality of teaching and learning across the school would be enhanced if the subject co-ordinator were to work alongside colleagues and share expertise. Teachers have sound subject knowledge; they give good explanations and share learning objectives with pupils. However, the marking of work is inconsistent and is unsatisfactory. It does not give pupils clear pointers for improvement, and the presentation of pupils' written work is untidy and clearly does not reflect the overall positive attitudes to learning that pupils have. Too often, spelling mistakes are left unchecked. Assessment in history is an area for development and the school is at present trialling new assessment sheets.
156. Resources are sufficient to teach the subject, but the subject co-ordinator has identified in her action plan the need to acquire more historical artefacts. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially with the 'living history days' and the visits by the Diversions Drama Group who enact historical themes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

157. Standards are in line with those expected of pupils of a similar age by Year 2 and Year 5. This is a similar judgement to the last inspection. However, there has been good improvement since the last inspection by the provision of a computer suite which has 17 computers and is well organised in terms of space for two pupils to share one computer at any one time. During the inspection, although the computer suite was used for whole-class lessons, very few pupils were seen working on the computers in the classrooms. This is largely to do with insufficient opportunities being identified in teachers' planning. In addition, there was very limited evidence of pupils' completed information and communication technology (ICT) work on public display where pupils could

exchange and share their completed work with others. Evidence of pupils' work tended to be stored on file, but this was inconsistent in quantity and quality across classes. Whilst there were some good examples in terms of images and designs for greetings cards and practising skills, such as designing titles and headings, there was limited evidence of the consistent use of ICT for drafting text and producing accounts and recounts within other subjects in both the infants and the juniors.

158. In the sampling of work, apart from evidence of graphical representations in pupils' numeracy books, there was little evidence of the use of ICT in other subjects, especially in researching sources, such as the Internet, or to produce word-processed accounts related to their studies. In the juniors the displays in the computer room were a good example of what Year 3 achieved in ICT work, where evidence of musical compositions was displayed alongside printouts of instructions for controlling a floor turtle with movements, such as forward, backward, left and right. In a display of combining text and graphics, pupils had designed posters for a toothpaste called 'super-gleamo' to encourage reading. In this they had entered text and dropped in graphics, resized and changed fonts and colour to produce the final copy. This was an example of good achievement but this is not consistently apparent throughout the school.
159. By the end of Year 2, pupils know how to save and store their work, know how to select from, and add to, information they have retrieved and can program a floor turtle, placing instructions in the right order, but they struggle with explaining how they can make their work better. They have undertaken a traffic survey and produced a graphical display of their findings of the timed traffic between 9.00 am and 1.00 pm. By the end of Year 5, pupils talk about the use of ICT in their adventure games. They know how to find information on the Internet and they can e-mail. They can set up very simple databases and spreadsheets but do not regularly refine their ideas by reorganising text and exploring models to identify patterns and relationships. All pupils know how to e-mail but few could identify opportunities to improve their work.
160. In both the infants and the juniors, ICT is used well to support learning in mental mathematics when pupils are working on their own, but opportunities are often lost for pupils to word process their findings of mathematical investigations and record them in a variety of ways. In these lessons pupils are able to challenge themselves at different levels to try and beat a previous time. For example, in the infants pupils were working in pairs to learn number bonds to 10 and they could not wait to move to a harder level. This mental starter prepared the pupils well for their main task where they used a 100 square to investigate multiples of three and four. In the juniors, older pupils were learning to label numbers and formulae in a spreadsheet and were confidently loading the program, entering labels and data from worksheets. Some pupils have computers at home and the opportunities to be able to continue their work at home enhance their skill development and confidence in the use of ICT. However, to give opportunities to pupils who wish to learn more about computing, the subject co-ordinator runs an ICT club which 14 pupils attend each week. They thoroughly enjoy these sessions and throughout the school pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons.

161. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but examples of good and very good teaching were seen in some lessons. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and are keen to discuss what they know and can do. However, not all lessons are planned for pupils needing extra help because all pupils did the same task. In these lessons, some below-average-attaining pupils were seen struggling and getting frustrated because they did not know what they had to do. Pupils who were above-average attainers and were capable of further challenge were not always sufficiently stretched and whilst they made satisfactory progress overall, they would have benefited from further challenge. This was the difference between satisfactory teaching and very good teaching because, in the better lessons in Year 4/5, the teacher had ensured all pupils had work that was matched to their ability. For example, in one very good lesson in the juniors, the teacher had ensured that, although the task was to enter data and formulae into a spreadsheet, each ability group had a worksheet that was well matched to their ability and yet moved them on in the skill being learned, so that by the end of the lesson all pupils were confident in what they had learned.
162. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The subject policy has been reviewed recently and an audit of the subject has highlighted the need to acquire equipment, such as interactive whiteboards and sensors to monitor environmental conditions and changes. The scheme of work is in line with national guidance in teaching and learning in the subject and assessment is undertaken in line with this scheme and the local education authority documents. However, although the subject co-ordinator monitors by looking at planning, talks to teachers and pupils, she has recognised that, as well as target-setting, this is an area needing development and has just started to develop a portfolio of pupils' completed work. Assessments are satisfactory overall but are not used to inform pupils of the next steps of learning. She is also aware that teachers' planning in other subjects does not always make reference to pupils' opportunities in developing their skills in ICT. All classrooms have computers and in addition some classes have laptops as well as a PC. The software in classrooms is the same as that in the computer suite, thus making it easier to follow up work individually in the classrooms after lessons in the suite. In addition, the school has a digital camera that is well used, Roamers and Lego Technic for control, an electronic microscope, listening centres and televisions. Resources are good overall but the school could benefit from more computers in classrooms as and when funds allow. The good provision of an ICT after-school club is helping raise standards.

MUSIC

163. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, standards in music exceed the expectations of seven and ten-year-olds, and pupils' achievements are good in relation to their prior attainment. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection and have improved in Year 5.
164. The school sets a high priority on enabling pupils to develop their musical expertise. Pupils can learn to play the violin, flute and percussion instruments. Violinists who were observed make good gains in reading music, and practise regularly to improve their technique. Throughout the school, the quality of singing is good. The choir sings particularly well with clearly defined rhythm. Pupils articulate their words clearly and their facial expressions are delightful as they convey the meaning of words sung to the audience.
165. By the end of Years 2 and 5, pupils know how to develop and change sounds and rhythm patterns by counting the beats appropriately. They know the difference between a minim and a semi-breve, and they can count one another in. Younger children can slow down the pace of a composition undertaken and they are making good gains in writing down the music they have played. Older pupils can talk about a range of composers such as Mozart, Vivaldi and Beethoven, and know the importance of creating atmosphere. They can sing in three-part harmony, demonstrate ostinati and know how to create pattern and texture in composition. They have listened to a range of music from different cultures and talk knowledgeably about contemporary popular music, justifying their personal likes and dislikes. They have good knowledge of musical vocabulary and many of the instrumentalists can read music appropriately. Acts of collective worship contribute positively to developing pupils' understanding of a range of composers as pupils listen to their works on entry to the hall. During singing sessions and lessons, both the infant and junior pupils

are well behaved and show a good deal of respect to one another. In lessons, when evaluating their own compositions, pupils offer constructive advice on how to improve the quality of their work.

166. The quality of teaching is good overall and results in all groups of pupils achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. An excellent lesson was seen in the juniors, where the singing teacher taught the junior choir. In this lesson, time was used very effectively and the lesson moved at a very brisk pace; all the pupils were attentive, focused and desperately wanted to learn their parts in preparation for a school concert at the De Montfort Hall. They hung on to the teacher's every word and made very good progress singing 'Ocean Commotion', resulting in a very polished rendering of 'The Great White Shark'. Their singing evoked emotional responses from listeners caused by the precise intonation and passion demonstrated by their singing. This was largely due to the expert modelling of the teacher, who would settle for nothing less than perfection.
167. In a good lesson in Year 1, pupils composed rhythms based upon the words of tick, tock, ticka, tocka – Big Ben, Boing, using a range of percussion instruments. The class teacher modelled what was required of the pupils and they soon got into the rhythm and evaluated their work, making valuable suggestions as to how to improve the texture of the piece. One pupil was intensely watching the teacher conducting and commented that hard concentration almost hypnotised him!
168. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are effectively supported by a commercial scheme of work which enables them to plan appropriately. However, more emphasis could be placed upon the teaching of subject-specific words which would enable pupils to develop their musical vocabulary.
169. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall and, at present, the co-ordinator is developing the satisfactory range of assessments to ensure that an appropriate record is kept of pupils' coverage and attainment of the music curriculum. Resources are satisfactory overall, and are clearly labelled and appropriately stored. The use of ICT is underdeveloped, although some effective examples of notation were seen in Year 3.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

170. During the inspection, athletics and games activities were seen in Years 3, 4 and 5. In these activities, standards were above those expected nationally by the end of Year 5. Pupils' achievements are good and all groups of pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress. These reflect the standards found at the time of the previous inspection. From interview with the subject co-ordinator it is apparent that standards in swimming are also above those expected nationally. It is not possible to make overall judgements in other aspects of the subject, or at the end of Year 2, as timetable arrangements prevented any lessons being seen in the infant classes.
171. Pupils aged seven to ten understand the importance of 'warming up' and muscle stretching before exercise and of 'cooling down' gently afterwards. Most are aware of the effects of exercise on their pulse rate. In athletics, pupils are developing their stamina by maintaining a consistent pace for distance running. They understand that maintaining a steady pace may help them to maintain their running for longer. They perform a timed sprint over 80 metres and work collaboratively in relay sprinting games. Pupils set themselves targets and aim to improve their performance through improved techniques. In games, pupils strike and field the ball with good skills, for example, throwing with good accuracy and distance. Pupils work well together, celebrating individual achievement and respecting each other's different skill levels.
172. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 have the opportunity to swim and, by the time they are ten, most have already reached the required standard for pupils aged 11. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities, including basketball, dance, cross-country running, netball, football, rounders and cycling proficiency. Pupils' learning is further enhanced by professional coaching in tennis. There are opportunities for competitive sport and this has a positive effect on pupils' skills of social and collaborative development.

173. In lessons the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are good. They are sensible and often mature and have regard for the safety aspects of the subject. Pupils are always appropriately dressed and, for athletics and games, proceed to and from the nearby playing field in an orderly fashion. Because of the very good relationships between adults and pupils, they listen attentively and are very willing to contribute to discussion and evaluation. They work with good effort and obvious enjoyment.
174. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is good, with many very good elements. Appropriate routines have been well established and lessons are thoroughly planned. This was particularly evident when the three mixed-age Year 4/5 classes participated together in their summer sports programme. Pupils were using the adjoining high school's playing field and an atmosphere of purposeful and enjoyable learning prevailed throughout the afternoon. Activities were very well organised with a clearly structured programme, which gave all pupils maximum opportunity to engage in physical activity. Pupils were very well motivated by the opportunity to work towards awards affiliated to a national scheme and worked hard to improve their performance. All staff worked very well as a team; support staff were very well briefed and the quality of their input was as valuable as that of the teaching staff. All staff were appropriately dressed to join in fully and to demonstrate techniques. The direct teaching of strategies and skills enabled pupils to improve their performance as, for example, when they were instructed to throw lower for greater accuracy. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, were well included and their contributions were valued. All pupils made very good progress in their learning.
175. The subject is led and managed well. The curriculum leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. A scheme of work, based on nationally recommended guidelines, directs planning, which has been very well adapted to meet the needs of the school by identifying the development of skills within mixed-year groups to ensure there is continuity in learning. Although teaching has not yet been monitored, the co-ordinator has interviewed the school council for their views on standards and pupils usefully identified the need for increased opportunity to appraise each other's performance. Teachers are knowledgeable about their pupils' performance because they know their pupils well. Assessments are satisfactory overall but the co-ordinator is aware that an area for development is the assessment of pupils' performance against the level descriptors of the National Curriculum. Resources for the subject are good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

176. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, pupils exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and make good gains in learning. Their achievements are good in relation to their prior attainment. All groups of pupils make good progress, including those with SEN. High standards have been maintained since the previous report.
177. By the end of Year 2, pupils know that there is a range of different faith communities and that they all celebrate holy days, use special books which contain spiritual teachings, and pray in places of worship. They have a good knowledge of Christianity, know that the cross is a symbol of Christians and that the Bible is a holy book. They have visited local churches and can name parts of the church such as altar, lectern and stained glass windows. They know a full range of stories that Jesus told and know the events leading up to the Resurrection. They have good skills of empathy and can describe how Jesus must have felt when his friends deserted him. They know that Hindus celebrate Holi, the festival of spring, and they know the story of Prahlad. They know that food plays a significant part in religious festivals and that there are traditional foods that are eaten at Christmas and Easter times. Pupils understand the concept of prayer and know that in prayer you can both ask and thank for things that you have received. Pupils understand the concept of being special and that they are all special in the eyes of God. They know that leaders have to make decisions and that it is not always easy to remain true to your beliefs. Pupils readily talk about artefacts and know about the importance of a prayer mat to Muslims and that Ramadan is a time of fasting.

178. Pupils' written work is sometimes untidy and is not as neatly presented as it could be. Too often, subject-specific words are spelt incorrectly and their written work does not fully reflect what they know. The use of ICT is satisfactory and several examples of word processing were seen. Pupils interviewed said they have used the Internet for research and have word processed prayers.
179. By the end of Year 5, pupils know about the Ten Commandments and the importance of rules in our lives. This contributes positively to their moral development. They know a full range of Creation stories from different cultures and write about them in considerable depth, but do not sufficiently word process and incorporate computerised images to liven up their accounts. They know the story of the Ramayana and that good always triumphs over evil. They know that Muslims undertake a ritual of washing before they pray and that respect for the Qu'ran is shown by wrapping it up in a special cloth. Pupils know about Jesus' temptations in the wilderness and that Lent is an important time for Christians. They are given good opportunities to discuss the difference between luxuries and essentials and that you cannot buy true friendship or compassion, and this has a positive effect on their moral development.
180. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and show a great deal of respect towards the other religions studied, such as Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. They are eager to learn but their written work needs attention, as not all of their work is presented neatly.
181. Limited teaching was seen in the infants during the inspection, but the quality of teaching is at least good throughout the school. Teachers' planning reveals clear learning objectives and secure subject knowledge. Teachers give good explanations and give pupils a range of opportunities to give their personal responses. For example, in a satisfactory lesson in Years 4 and 5, the class teacher asked pupils of their interpretations of angels and how they are depicted in the Bible and Qu'ran. Pupils were able to compare and contrast similarities and differences in the portrayal of angels and eagerly spoke about their interpretations of them. One pupil wrote "I don't believe in angels, they don't exist because I've never seen one". The class teacher immediately picked up on this and opened up a meaningful discussion on the concept of faith. This contributed well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
182. Relationships in lessons are good. Pupils respect their teachers because they know that their responses are valued. The quality of teachers' marking, whilst satisfactory overall, requires further attention because it does not sufficiently encourage pupils to improve their work. For example, spellings are not accurate and the presentation of work is clearly not the pupils' best. Assessments are satisfactory overall, but too few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their literacy skills in religious education and, on occasions, the higher attainers are not given sufficiently challenging work which would stretch them even further.
183. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory and staff are receiving adequate support in their planning. Resources are satisfactory and the library has a sound range of books to support learning of world faiths.