

INSPECTION REPORT

LANGHAM C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Oakham

LEA area: Rutland

Unique reference number: 120180

Headteacher: Miss C Bartle

Reporting inspector: Michael Buckley
30517

Dates of inspection: 25 to 28 November 2002

Inspection number: 248108

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	1 Burley Road Langham Oakham Rutland
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Lornie Taylor
Date of previous inspection:	10 July 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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Jennifer Mynett 9334	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Alan Hardwicke 14991	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education Special educational needs Educational inclusion	How well are pupils taught?
Clive Lewis 22831	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Langham is a small Church of England village primary school with 187 boys and girls aged from 4 to 11 years. The school has no nursery and children enter the reception class as full-time pupils in the September of the year of their fifth birthday. Of the 30 children in reception at the time of the inspection, 23 were aged under five years. The school is popular and the roll is rising, with pupils coming from 23 different villages and towns. Almost all the pupils are white British and there are no pupils learning English as an additional language. Only seven pupils (3.7 per cent) claim free school meals. This percentage is below the national average but it is not an accurate reflection of the school's socio-economic context because a significant number of parents choose not to claim this benefit. Overall, 44 pupils (23.5 per cent) have special educational needs. This proportion is about average. Three pupils (1.6 per cent) have Statements identifying the nature of additional external support they need and this figure is close to the national average. Most of the children with more pronounced needs receive support for dyslexia or difficulties with speech and communication. Attainment on entry is close to the level expected nationally. There are six classes, most of which contain mixed year groups. The school has been recognised by Investors in People for the second time. It has earned a 'Healthy School Award', a 'Life-long Learning' grant and an 'Achievement Award' from the Department for Education and Skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a more than usually effective school where pupils make good progress and the standards reached by pupils in Year 6 are above the national averages. The school is very well led and well managed and the quality of teaching and learning is very high. Taking these factors into account, together with the average attainment on entry to the school and the average cost per pupil, the school is giving good value for money. The school is no longer underachieving.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attainment has been consistently high compared with national averages over the last three years.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall.
- The leadership of the school is very good and management is good.
- The staff share a very high level of commitment and the school has the capacity to improve still further.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They behave very well and relationships are very good at all levels. Pupils co-operate well and care for one another. Their personal, social and moral development is very good.

What could be improved

- The school's planned systems for the systematic and regular assessment of pupils' progress are not yet fully implemented.
- The school does not do enough to raise pupils' awareness of the multicultural nature of society and of the richness of other cultures.
- The school does not provide enough information for parents about what is going to be taught or about pupils' attainment compared with national expectations.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvements since it was last inspected in July 2000. It has made very good progress in tackling all the key issues identified then, except two. It has made good progress in these two by establishing effective systems for assessing pupils' progress and by implementing an agreed policy for homework. In addition, the quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly. Unlike the last inspection, there were no lessons seen where the attainment of the class was judged to be below the expected levels.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The table shows that the results of the 2002 tests for Year 6 were in the top 5 per cent nationally in mathematics and above the national averages in English and science. Over a three-year period, standards have improved in mathematics and science. The results in English show no clear trend. Compared with the average for schools having a similar proportion of pupils claiming free school meals, the 2002 results are well above average in mathematics and close to the average in English and science. More significantly, when the results are compared with those of other schools that achieved similar results in the 1998 Year 2 tests, they were above the average in English and science and were very high in mathematics. This means that good progress was made in Years 3 to 6. Compared with national averages, standards in the Year 2 tests were above average in mathematics, close to the average in writing but below average in reading. The results were below the average for similar schools in writing and well below the average in reading. Nevertheless, the aggregated results for Year 2 over a three-year period have been above the national averages in all three areas. The school has set very challenging targets for Year 6 pupils to achieve in English, mathematics and science. Pupils reached all the targets easily in 2001 and exceeded the target for English in 2002 but did not quite reach the ambitious targets set for them in mathematics and science. Standards of work seen across all age groups were close to the nationally expected levels in most subjects and above national expectations in speaking and listening, mathematics and information and communication technology. The inspection took place halfway through the first term of the school year. The good progress being made indicates that, by the end of the school year, most pupils are likely to exceed the nationally expected levels and to reach the targets set for them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school and have very positive attitudes towards their work and to the activities offered.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are courteous and considerate to each other, as well as to adults. They greet visitors cheerily and politely in the corridors and they open doors or make way for adults with a smile.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good between staff and pupils and amongst pupils of all ages. Older pupils are very caring towards younger ones.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and there were no unauthorised absences in the last year.

Pupils are very willing to take responsibilities, such as acting as house captains or road safety officers or carrying out duties in assemblies. Older pupils look after younger ones very well and serve them their school meals at the 'family group' lunch tables. Pupils have a very well developed awareness of and respect for other people's feelings and beliefs. Too many parents bring their children to school late in the mornings.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. No unsatisfactory teaching or learning was seen. Teaching and learning were good or better in four out of every five lessons seen and very good in more than one lesson in every three. There was more good and very good teaching in the reception class and in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of their subjects and they teach the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics very well. They have very high expectations of their pupils' work and behaviour, they use very effective teaching methods, and they manage their classes very well. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are very well taught throughout the school. A combination of good planning, good pace of work, well-focused teaching and stimulating activities captures pupils' interest and enthusiasm and maintains their good rate of learning. Teachers emphasise key words so that the correct vocabulary for the subject is used in lessons. The quality of working relationships is very good throughout the school. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs are challenged, while providing support so as to promote positive attitudes and self-esteem. From the earliest stages, pupils concentrate well and show a positive work ethic, and these aspects are very well developed by the time they reach Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils show very good interest in their work, concentrate very well, and become increasingly independent. Teachers are good at carrying out informal assessments in lessons. They question their pupils skilfully, particularly at the beginnings and ends of lessons. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly and homework is generally set according to the school's sensible policy.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and provides a good range of educational experiences. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection and schemes of work have been implemented for all subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good and well matched to pupils' needs. Support staff all make a strong contribution. The timing of the occasions when pupils are withdrawn from class means that they miss the same subject each week.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very well promoted. Spiritual and cultural development is supported well, although not enough attention is paid to multi-cultural education. Moral and social development is very well promoted. Particular strengths include the reward system and the school council. Pupils know right from wrong and have been involved in developing the school's rules.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school does this well. There are good procedures for health and safety and good care and welfare ensure that pupils feel secure. Formal assessments are carried out at regular intervals. Teachers know their pupils well. They adapt the work well according to their day-to-day assessments of the progress made.

The school makes very good provision for literacy and numeracy and there is a very good range of extra-curricular activities. There are good and profitable links with the local community and with partner institutions. Relationships with parents are very good and parents make a strong contribution to the educational experiences offered both inside school and out. The parents and friends association supports the school very well and raises substantial funds.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school now enjoys very good leadership and good management. The headteacher's determined and purposeful approach has enabled the school to make very good progress on almost every front since the last inspection.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors now form a strong, well-informed and effective body that carries out its duties well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are good procedures for monitoring teaching. The senior management team and the governors carefully monitor the school's progress towards its targets, which are being met successfully.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well for their designated purposes. The school's computers are used well and support staff are well deployed to where they are most needed.

The headteacher is well supported by all the staff who are united in their very strong commitment to the school and its continuing improvement. The school's aims are very clearly reflected in all aspects of its daily life, combining a genuine love of learning and strong Christian values, and the school is very well placed to improve still further. Developmental planning is very good and the school closely follows the principles of 'best value'. There is a satisfactory match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum and the school has a satisfactory range of resources to support learning. The accommodation provides a very good environment for learning although the library spaces are too small and the outside fabric of the building needs some urgent attention.

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. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good and teachers have high expectations. • Pupils are achieving well and becoming more mature and responsible. • The school is well managed. • Parents feel comfortable approaching the school and feel welcome. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The split year groups sometimes make teaching and learning difficult. • Homework is not always set according to the school's policy. • Reports are sent out too late in the school year for parents to take any useful action. • The build up of traffic at the school gates constitutes a real danger at the beginning and end of the school day.

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents and with their concerns about the traffic danger, the split year groups and the timing of reports. However, they judge that homework is generally set in accordance with the school's policy.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Based on average point scores, the results of the Year 2 tests in 2002 were above the national average in mathematics, close to the national average in writing but below the national average in reading. When compared with the results of schools having a similar proportion of free school meals, Langham's results were close to the average in mathematics, below the average in writing and well below the average in reading. Over the past three years, there has been an improving trend in mathematics but no particular pattern in standards of reading and writing, which have moved from above average to below and back again.
2. Trends need to be treated with caution because, in this small school, each pupil can make a difference of up to 7 per cent. When scores in the Year 2 tests are averaged over the last three years, they are above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. In the 2002 teachers' assessments, the proportion of pupils who were working at the nationally expected level in science was below the national average, although a relatively large proportion of pupils reached the higher levels. There were no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls except in mathematics, where boys have done significantly better than girls in comparison with national, gender-related averages over the last three years.
3. The average point scores for the 2002 tests at the end of Year 6 were above the national averages for English and science and very high in mathematics, where they reached the top five per cent of results nationally. The results, taking all three subjects together, were well above the national average. Standards are improving from year to year at a higher rate than is seen nationally. Despite a drop in the standards achieved in English this year, the performance in this subject over the last three years has been well above the national results. Compared with gender-related national figures, boys have done better than girls in all three subjects.
4. Compared with the standards reached by other schools that achieved similar results in the 1998 Year 2 tests, the average point scores for the 2002 Year 6 were very high in mathematics and above average in English and science. This indicates good progress through Years 3 to 6. The percentage of pupils reaching higher levels shows that higher-attaining pupils do particularly well. The school's own tracking of individuals and groups of pupils also shows that particularly good progress has been made. For example, the number of Year 6 pupils reaching higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics was more than twice the number reaching higher levels in the 1998 Year 2 tests and a significant proportion of pupils who only just reached the basic level in 1998 succeeded in reaching or exceeding the expected levels in 2002.
5. Comparisons with schools having a similar percentage of free school meals show a similar pattern, with the performance in mathematics being above average and standards in English and science being close to the average. The fact that the school does less well by this comparison in both Year 2 and Year 6 is attributable to the artificially low proportion of pupils who claim free school meals. This places the school in the lowest band nationally for free school meals, alongside a majority of the highest-attaining schools in the country. A much more important comparison is with schools recording similar prior attainment in 1998 and Langham does well by this measure.
6. The attainment of most children when they enter the reception class is close to the

standards expected for their age and the majority achieve higher standards in number, in some aspects of social skills and in speaking and listening. Children make good progress in the reception class and most of them are on course to reach the standards expected nationally by the time they are five. Attainment is likely to be above the expected levels in personal and social development, speaking and listening and mathematics by the end of the school year.

7. During the inspection, pupils of all ages were seen to be reaching standards close to those expected nationally in reading and writing and exceeding them in speaking and listening. By the end of the year, if their generally good progress is maintained, a significant proportion of pupils in Year 6 are likely to be working at higher levels. Pupils in all year groups are making good progress in mathematics and standards in this subject are already above those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. Similarly, standards in information and communication technology are already above those expected for all age groups and pupils are making good progress. In other subjects, although the available evidence was limited, attainment is close to the national standards and pupils' achievements are generally satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in the junior section. Given the good progress seen in the first half term and the good progress made in lessons, it is likely that standards will be significantly higher in most subjects by the end of the school year in the reception class and in Years 2 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in all classes.
8. The school's academic targets are carefully thought out and designed to be challenging. Pupils have exceeded the targets in English for the last two years and they exceeded the targets for mathematics and science in 2001. However, pupils did not quite reach the high standards expected in mathematics and science in 2002. The standards of the work seen indicate that the targets set for 2003 are likely to be met.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good and high standards have been well maintained since the last inspection.
10. Pupils are very enthusiastic about coming to school and display very positive attitudes to their learning and to after-school activities. A good working atmosphere is achieved in the classrooms. Pupils settle quickly to the tasks set for them and their capacity for sustained concentration is very good. They enjoy their lessons and show great enthusiasm and interest in their work. They are attentive, listen well to instructions and to each other and are very keen to respond to questions. Parents are particularly pleased by the good teaching in the school and the way the teachers encourage pupils to work hard and achieve their best. They feel that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.
11. Pupils have very positive views about their school and were eager to share these with the inspection team. They like the small school, saying, *'It's easy to make friends'; 'There are nice teachers... they are helpful and kind... they are good at different things, such as taking the science club'*. Pupils admit to feeling challenged in some lessons but still feel, *'It's fun and we get to know things we didn't know before'*. The youngest children in the reception class are beginning to show confidence and maturity in their approach to work and in their relationships with each other. They listen attentively, concentrate well and develop good social skills as they engage in their tasks and activities. The children work and play very well together, happily sharing their toys and resources.
12. Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Parents commented on this and feel that the older pupils act as very good role models for younger children. The school's

ethos and the effective provision for pupils' moral and social development result in them responding in a mature and sensible way. The school has an orderly atmosphere and pupils are well aware of the rules for the school and for their classes, which they helped devise. They are aware of the merit and house point system and pupils speak enthusiastically about the headteacher's award, which they find very special and particularly motivating. Pupils are very friendly and polite, happy to talk about what they are doing and very willing to show their work to visitors. They feel that the school is a safe and secure place with no real incidents of oppressive behaviour or bullying.

13. Relationships in the school are very good, both between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves. The school works very hard to promote tolerance and kindness and to ensure that no pupil feels excluded. The older pupils are very caring and look after the younger ones. Lunchtimes offer a special family occasion, with older pupils heading up the table and serving lunch to the others. This is a very civilised affair and works very effectively in helping to promote pupils' social development. Pupils work well together in pairs and during small group activities, supporting each other well during literacy lessons and when working on the computers. In a dance lesson, pupils collaborated well whilst composing and performing their different dance sequences. This harmonious atmosphere promotes a good working environment and makes a positive impact on learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the school's activities.
14. The programme of personal, social and health education provides opportunities for pupils to talk about important issues. This promotes pupils' understanding of a good moral code, enabling them to share their views and feelings, values and beliefs. Pupils are regularly provided with opportunities to discuss and resolve any problems in a secure setting where they sit in a circle and really listen to each other. In one of these sessions, pupils were encouraged to talk about what they thought they did well, helping to raise their self-esteem and promoting a shared sense of value and respect.
15. Teachers create good opportunities for pupils' personal development. Since the last inspection, good progress has been made in extending pupils' independent learning skills. Pupils are encouraged to develop their investigative skills and to evaluate their achievements and, at times, they undertake different research projects or homework challenges. Pupils willingly take on roles of responsibility around the school. They take turns to act as class monitors, whilst older pupils in Year 6 have wider responsibilities, such as setting up the hall for assembly, acting as house captains or as road safety officers. The school council provides pupils with a forum where they can raise issues or make suggestions. Pupils are enthusiastic about this and feel it gives them a voice and provides an opportunity to become involved in the decision-making processes of the school.
16. The level of attendance in the school is satisfactory and in line with the national average, with very few unauthorised absences. However, punctuality in the morning is an issue. Many parents regularly bring their children to school late in the mornings. This affects the registration period and the start to the day. Attendance and punctuality are well monitored by the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. It is very good in the reception and the junior classes and good in the infants' section. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching or learning was seen and the quality was good or better in more than four out of every five lessons and very good in a third of the lessons seen. There were more good and very good lessons in the reception class and the junior section than in the infants. This is a very positive picture and represents good improvement since the

last inspection, when teaching was found to be satisfactory overall but with significant variations. There has not been time for the quality of teaching to have a full impact on standards, since there have been many changes in staff recently, but the already good progress made by most pupils is likely to improve still further.

18. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of their subjects, use very effective teaching methods and manage their classes very well. All these features were frequently seen during the inspection. The basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are very well taught throughout the school, not only in English and mathematics lessons, but in other subjects as well. Teachers and support assistants have a good understanding of how to teach pupils to associate sounds with letters and ensure that this skill is developed in all subjects. Teachers emphasise and use key words so that the correct vocabulary for each subject is used in lessons. Teaching objectives from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been adopted and teachers generally strike a good balance between the different parts of lessons.
19. Teachers' planning is generally good. They know their pupils very well and are sensitive to their individual needs. Lesson plans usually include clear learning objectives and teachers are good at explaining them to classes, so that everyone knows what they should be learning. When lessons come to an end, teachers usually go back to the objectives, both to consolidate learning and as an informal method of assessing pupils' understanding. Teachers are good at choosing a range of stimulating activities, securing pupils' interest and enthusiasm and maintaining their good rate of learning. The combination of good planning, good pace of work and well-focused teaching ensures that pupils work with good productivity throughout lessons.
20. Teachers generally have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes. They are sensitive to the needs of each individual pupil and expect the best in terms of work and behaviour. Pupils are praised when they do well and this helps to promote positive attitudes. As a result, the quality of working relationships is very good throughout the school and teachers have a very good rapport with pupils. Consequently, teachers generally manage their classes very well and pupils respond very positively. All contributions that pupils make to lessons are valued by teachers so that pupils feel secure, work hard and are eager to do their best. As a result, they develop good concentration and growing independence from the youngest classes onwards. They support each other very well and know their classroom rules and routines.
21. Teaching methods are very good in the reception and the junior classes and good in the infants. Teachers are well organised and prepared and clear about what they want their pupils to learn. Lessons usually start with a brisk introduction that immediately gains pupils' interest and attention and this lively pace is then maintained throughout the lesson. Lessons are generally composed of a succession of activities that keep all abilities fully involved. For example, in a very good art lesson in Years 5/6, pupils all responded very well to their teacher's questions. The computer was used effectively to produce a slide show about the work of William Morris. Some pupils looked carefully at the artist's designs, making careful observational drawings, while others applied different media to produce textured effects. The very good teaching ensured that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, were fully included in the work and made very good gains in learning. From the earliest stages in the reception class, pupils concentrate well and develop a positive work ethic and these aspects are very well developed by Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils show very good interest in their work, concentrate very well and become increasingly independent.

22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good so that they make good progress in all year groups. Teachers are careful to ensure that the work set for these pupils has the correct degree of challenge while, at the same time, giving them enough support to promote positive attitudes and self-esteem. The quality of support is very good in the classroom and in groups withdrawn for special help. Specialist peripatetic staff and support assistants all make very good contributions that help these pupils to learn well. They are well prepared and work effectively, often meeting a variety of specific needs and ensuring that all pupils are included in the opportunities offered. Pupils with special educational needs are generally fully integrated into the work of the class. However, they are withdrawn from classes at the same times each week so that they always miss the same subject. This can limit their access to the full curriculum.
23. Teachers are good at carrying out informal assessments in lessons. They question their pupils skilfully, particularly at the beginnings and ends of lessons. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly and there is a consistent approach to marking throughout the school. Teachers generally provide good guidance on how to improve. Homework is provided at all stages as part of the regular working routine. The work set, such as spellings, reading, or number work, reinforces the regular classroom lessons. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own learning and to understand what they need to achieve next. They set sensible targets to assist this process.

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

24. The school provides a good range of worthwhile learning opportunities that successfully meet the interests, aptitudes and special needs of all its pupils. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements to teach all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education. There has been a significant improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in the adoption of nationally recommended schemes of work in all subjects and in the quality of planning. These arrangements provide a structure for continuity and progression in learning and give helpful guidance to teachers. The complications arising from mixed-age classes and yearly changes in the numbers of pupils in each year group have been successfully overcome in most areas of the curriculum by planning activities over a two-year cycle. However, the planning for science does not fully ensure proper progression in learning.
25. The curriculum for the youngest children is carefully planned to take into account the nationally recommended early learning goals. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies very effectively, following the recommendations for the content and structure of lessons. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education through assemblies and through the planning for science and religious education. The governing body has a clear policy for sex education. A very good range of well-supported extra-curricular activities includes the school choir and orchestra, recorder clubs, an information and communication technology club, a 'puzzle' club and sporting activities, such as football and netball. A good programme of additional educational visits is provided to support and enrich pupils' learning. The school has good links with the local community through contributions to the village magazine and through the school's new website. A wide variety of visitors bring their expertise to the school to work with the pupils and the school has good and developing links with its partner institutions.
26. The school makes good provision for equality of opportunity for all pupils. This is fully addressed in all the school's aims and objectives as well as in curricular planning and organisation. Pupils of differing abilities, including those with special educational needs, are all given work that matches their needs and abilities. There is a good balance

between in-class support from class teachers and support assistants and individual and group support outside the classroom. Good use is made of specialist agencies and peripatetic teachers, such as a specialist in dyslexia, who make a good contribution to the school's work in this area. However, pupils who go out of class for individual or group work, whether it is to support their special educational needs or for instrumental tuition, miss the same lessons each week. This can disadvantage them in those subjects as they are not fully included in all aspects of class work while still receiving the benefits of out-of-class work.

27. Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Since the last inspection, the school has focused on providing more opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development across the curriculum. This is now effectively done through religious education lessons, church services and the daily acts of worship that provide a good foundation for pupils' spiritual development. Religious education lessons provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their own and other people's lives. Pupils develop a good knowledge of Christianity and other major world religions, such as Judaism and Hinduism. In other areas of the curriculum, they are given good opportunities to question and reflect on human relationships and achievements and to explore the feelings and the views of others.
28. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. Very good standards of behaviour and respect for other people are expected in and around the school. These expectations are emphasised in the rules that are drawn up by the pupils and displayed prominently in each classroom. The school aims to develop the pupils' spirit of co-operation with positive reinforcement. This is achieved through the recognition and celebration of successes at the weekly 'achievement' assembly. Pupils speak positively about the reward system - particularly the headteacher's award - and how it encourages them to work hard and behave well. Pupils develop a keen awareness of environmental issues through geography lessons. They have considered issues to do with pollution and how world resources are being exploited. They care about the planet and feel very strongly about these issues.
29. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school encourages pupils of different ages and abilities, including those with special educational needs, to mix and work together. This is particularly important in mixed-age classes. Older pupils look after the younger ones, helping them to get changed and serving them their lunches at the 'family' lunchtimes. The older pupils undertake a residential visit, which raises their self-esteem and confidence and challenges their adventurousness. The very good extra-curricular activities, such as the many sports clubs, the science club, drama productions, the choir and orchestra, help to develop pupils' co-operation and team spirit as well as their skills and abilities. They also provide wider opportunities for pupils to work and compete with others and to become involved in local festivals. Pupils value these opportunities and speak positively about the variety offered. Pupils have also participated in community events and church activities and have successfully organised fund-raising activities to raise money to support local and national charities. The recent 'wacky hair' day organised by the school council was a great success and raised £171 for the 'Children in Need' appeal.
30. The good provision for pupils' cultural development is effectively promoted during lessons and educational visits and through the contributions of visitors, including musicians, authors and theatre groups. Pupils have the chance to learn to play a musical instrument and the choir performs locally. Awareness of their own heritage has been well promoted through the Oakham festival celebrations. European links are less well developed, although pupils study the paintings of Mondrian and Matisse to produce work in the style of these artists. There are few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds in the school.

Although there is some recognition of other cultures with a display to celebrate the Hindu festival of Diwali, there are few resources or displays to raise pupils' awareness of cultural difference or to recognise or celebrate the cultural diversity of life within the United Kingdom. The school is aware of this. Previous links with an inner city school have ceased and the school is now looking to develop new contacts.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school's provision for pupils' health, welfare and guidance is good and makes a significant contribution to their personal and academic development. Parents speak very highly of the school. They find the teachers very caring and supportive and prepared to listen. They also say that teachers are alert to issues or concerns and resolve problems very quickly. Teachers closely monitor pupils' personal development and work sensitively to challenge and support their specific needs. There are good systems to support the academic and personal development needs of pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Teachers know their pupils well and provide targeted support where it is needed.
32. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good, and this is reflected in pupils' very good behaviour and in the orderly atmosphere in the school. The recently revised behaviour policy provides very clear guidelines for dealing with any disruptive pupils. It clearly highlights the school's expectations and identifies the responsibilities of staff and pupils. It also explains the reward system based around house points and the headteacher's awards. Parents feel that the system works well and encourages pupils to work hard and behave well. However, pupils feel that staff are not always consistent in their approach to the award of merit points. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are well developed and are explored through the personal, social and health education programme. Pupils feel that bullying is not a problem and say that there is only the occasional name-calling. They know whom they would approach should anything happen and are confident that the matter would be dealt with promptly and effectively.
33. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good. Most parents call in promptly to inform the school when their children are away ill; otherwise the school telephones home to check on absences. This is a good check system when pupils make their own way to school on the buses. The school's prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents and regular updating letters remind parents about their responsibility for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Parents are also encouraged not to take their children on holiday during term time. However, many parents bring their children to school late in the mornings. This lateness is not systematically followed up and no incentives are offered to promote punctuality. The morning registration period provides an orderly start to the day.
34. The school has good systems for child protection and for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare. The headteacher is the member of staff with designated responsibilities for child protection. She is well aware of the processes involved and of the changes to legislation and knows that the newly appointed staff need to be trained in the correct procedures. There are well-established systems for the medical care of pupils who may fall ill or have accidents during the day and several members of staff are qualified to provide first aid treatment. The school has good links with the various support agencies.
35. A comprehensive policy covers the health and safety of pupils when they are in the school and when they are out on visits. The headteacher, the premises officer and the health and safety governor undertake regular health and safety checks and risk assessments, as well as reviewing security arrangements before reporting back to the governing body. The

governors take their responsibility for health and safety seriously and, together with the staff and parents, they are concerned about the safety of pupils at the school gates. The inspection team agrees that in the mornings and, more particularly, at the end of the school day, the area outside the school gate is very dangerous. It is located on a busy junction and on a narrow road used by heavy lorries. School buses, parents' cars and the busy passing traffic all help to create a potential accident black spot. Although there are flashing school lights and a school-crossing warden, these have not solved the problem. Plans to purchase an adjoining field to act as a car and bus park have been hindered by lack of finance.

36. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. The school has worked hard to introduce a range of formal assessment systems, such as non-statutory testing at the ends of Years 3, 4 and 5, verbal and non-verbal reasoning tests, and basic tests of understanding in English and mathematics. These have enabled subject co-ordinators to gain a good overview of strengths and weaknesses. Evidence from these tests is now being used to raise standards.
37. Teachers keep notes on their pupils' progress from day to day. They know their pupils well and frequently adapt the work in accordance with the needs of individuals and groups. In subjects such as geography, history and art and design, teachers often carry out end-of-topic assessments to ascertain what has been learnt. These systems are largely informal at present, and there is no standardised approach to assessment across the curriculum. A new system has just been introduced in English and the senior management team intends to monitor it and to introduce it progressively across all subjects. This should provide a more unified approach and more reliable data.
38. A system of target-setting has been introduced in English and mathematics. This involves pupils in assessing their own work and identifying what they should do next in order to improve. Pupils have target sheets inside their workbooks so that they can check regularly and mark off the targets as they are achieved. Teachers are good at explaining to their pupils what is to be learnt. They regularly look back at the ends of lessons and ask if pupils think they have achieved their learning goals.
39. Pupils with special educational needs are well cared for in the school. They are well included in the day-to-day work and activities of the class, and the school's caring ethos ensures that their needs and problems are understood and respected by all.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school has a very effective partnership with parents. It provides many opportunities for them to become involved with its work and to have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The quality of information provided for parents is very comprehensive. Information regarding the school and its activities is detailed in the attractive prospectus and in the governors' annual report to parents. The school has just launched its own website. Parents feel that communications from the school have improved, with frequent newsletters informing them about forthcoming events and activities. However, the school does not systematically inform parents about what work their children will be doing each term and it does not correctly report the national test results in its documentation. The school has good procedures for consulting parents and runs occasional workshops to keep parents informed about new developments and activities.
41. Parents generally expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school in the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the meeting held for them before the inspection. They feel that the school is well led and managed and very accessible. They are very comfortable approaching the school with questions or concerns and feel these are dealt with sensitively

and promptly. However, some parents feel that they are not sufficiently well informed about the progress their children are making. They feel that the annual reports are issued too late in the summer term for any remedial action to be taken and that the time allocated to speak to teachers at the parents' evenings is too short for useful discussion. Other parents feel that the school's 'open door' policy addresses these issues.

42. Parents are informed about the individual targets set for their children and the annual reports clearly identify what work their children have covered. However, the reports do not always explain what pupils know or can do, nor do they consistently provide a clear picture of how well pupils are progressing in relation to what is expected for a child of their age. A number of parents expressed concerns about the amount of homework given and the range of activities offered outside school. The inspection team considers the amount of homework given to be appropriate and the range of extra-curricular activities provided to be very good. Parents are given details about the homework policy and advised about how they can support their children at home and this is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.
43. The school warmly encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning by helping out in the school. A large number of parents volunteer to provide regular help with various activities, such as listening to reading, working with small groups for art, craft or computer activities, or helping with hymn practice and assemblies. Parents also help with swimming and other sports. They are well briefed for these activities and they make a very important contribution to the educational experiences provided by the school. Parents are encouraged to attend events, such as class assemblies, church services, concerts, parents' evenings and fêtes. The school ensures that parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully consulted and actively involved at all stages. They are regularly invited to discuss their children's progress, and consulted about any changes in provision. Parents of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are given full information about support and other provisions.
44. The Parents and Friends Association is run by an enthusiastic group of parents and staff. They successfully organise and run a number of fund-raising and social events each year. The funds generated in this way are used to provide additional resources, such as an interactive white board. The association also organises and runs the after-school club, which provides a valuable facility for working parents, and the pre-school provision, that makes a very important contribution to the early development of children under five.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The headteacher provides very good educational leadership. Her clear view of the way forward and her determined and purposeful approach have enabled the school to make very good progress on almost every front since the last inspection. She is well supported by all the staff, who are united in their very strong commitment to the school and its continuing improvement. As a result, the school's aims are very clearly reflected in all aspects of its daily life, combining a genuine love of learning and strong Christian values, and the school is very well placed to improve still further. The school is well managed. The recently-appointed deputy headteacher is settling into his post successfully and is an effective manager, as well as being a very good role-model in the classroom. Responsibilities are being increasingly delegated to the senior management group which meets each week to plan and to monitor progress.
46. The headteacher monitors teaching both formally and informally and she records her formal observations, using them as a guide for planning teachers' professional development. She has ensured that subject co-ordinators have time to monitor teaching and curriculum development in their areas and a comprehensive timetable has been

drawn up, covering the whole year, stating when these activities will take place. Lesson observations are recorded and records show that the co-ordinators are taking these responsibilities seriously and carrying them out well. Nevertheless, most of them would benefit from specific job-descriptions and some further opportunities for professional development. The special needs co-ordinator is new to her post but has already made a good start on the day-to-day tasks involved, with strong support from the headteacher. All the basic procedures and documentation are now in place. Further planned professional development will build on the support already received from the local education authority's inclusion officer and from the nearby 'Beacon' school.

47. The governors, too, are strongly committed to taking the school forward. They have made significant improvements in the way they carry out their duties and each of their main committees meets twice a term. Every governor has a link with a particular subject or aspect of the school's work and liaises regularly with the relevant co-ordinator. Governors also have a schedule of formal visits that generally take place three times a term, when they sit in classrooms, observing teaching and learning. They regard these as monitoring visits and report back regularly to the full governing body. This system, together with the headteacher's comprehensive reports, ensures that governors are fully informed about and understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, they have been able to support and guide the school towards its goals, taking effective steps to deal with a previously incurred overspend and ensuring that the necessary targets are established to raise standards. The governing body is now a strong, well-informed and effective group.
48. The school's improvement plan is very carefully constructed, identifying targets for development based on the previous action plan and on the school's own assessment of what it needs to do to improve. The well-chosen targets are securely based on educational principles, and progress towards them is closely monitored by the headteacher, the senior management team and the governors. The plan includes agreed deadlines and costings, and names the people responsible for each aspect. Financial planning and management are good, with the headteacher, finance governor and bursar working closely together to ensure that the school's educational priorities are met. Astute financial management enabled the school to reduce a large deficit to a break-even figure by the end of the last financial year. The headteacher follows the principles of 'best value', particularly in negotiating services and obtaining resources. The school secretary efficiently handles the day-to-day finances and administration in the school and all the recommendations in the recent audit report have been met. The school makes good use of the additional grants it receives.
49. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good and take due account of teachers' personal needs and the objectives identified in the school's plan for improvement. Aspects for development are discussed during the well-planned performance-management process. There are good procedures for the induction of staff new to the school. The use of a 'buddy system' ensures that new staff are fully briefed on routines, curriculum planning and resources. Although class numbers are high, the school has enough suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the early learning goals for children under five. The school has plans to free up an additional classroom, enabling an additional teacher to be appointed. This would be of great benefit, as it would avoid having to place pupils in mixed-age classes. Classroom assistants and lunchtime welfare assistants support teachers effectively and ensure the wellbeing of the pupils.
50. The indoor accommodation provides a very good learning environment for pupils and classrooms are of a good size. Outside, the school has attractive grounds and a large field, although there is no covered area for the children in the reception class to work and play in poor weather. The library areas of the corridor provide space for small group work

but the libraries themselves are too small for effective sessions with a whole class. The hall offers plenty of space for physical education lessons, assemblies and the 'family' lunchtimes when all pupils can eat together. A programme of refurbishment has provided hot water in some classrooms and renewed toilet facilities in the lower school. The external fabric of the building is in need of attention, with rotting window frames causing some safety concerns. The school has satisfactory resources for learning, overall. It does not have a separate computer suite but there are enough computers in each classroom. These are well used by pupils and staff across the curriculum. The resources for music are also good and pupils' musical development is well supported by the employment of peripatetic music specialists.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. In order to continue the school's very good improvement and raise standards of attainment still higher, the senior management and governors need to:
- implement fully the school's planned systems for the systematic and regular assessment of pupil's progress (paragraphs 36-7, 71, 77, 81, 92 and 96);
 - take steps to raise pupils' awareness of the multicultural nature of society and of the richness of other cultures (paragraph 30);
 - improve the information given to parents about what is going to be taught and about pupils' attainment compared with national expectations (paragraph 42).

Minor issue

- as resources permit, repair and improve the exterior fabric of the building (paragraph 50).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	13	18	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	34	48	18	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	187
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	44

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	15	12	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	15
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	22	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (94)	85 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	15	13
	Girls	11	12	11
	Total	23	27	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (100)	100 (100)	89 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	12	5	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	14	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (93)	88 (89)	88 (93)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	10
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	13	15	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (85)	88 (81)	82 (93)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
179	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.3
Average class size	31

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	385,975
Total expenditure	382,550
Expenditure per pupil	2,224
Balance brought forward from previous year	-2,836
Balance carried forward to next year	589

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
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 52%

Number of questionnaires sent out	187
Number of questionnaires returned	97

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	30	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	39	7	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	32	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	43	14	1	5
The teaching is good.	60	34	1	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	44	15	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	30	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	47	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	40	52	7	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	59	33	7	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	43	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	37	2	0	9

Other issues raised by parents

Parents have concerns about the split-year classes and about road safety outside the school gates at the beginning and end of the school day.

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

52. Before they enter the reception class, most of the children attend some form of pre-school provision – usually the in-school playgroup organised by the Parents and Friends Association. The local education authority's policy is for pupils to enter school in September of the school year in which they will be five years of age. This system means that at the time of inspection, six full-time weeks into the new school year, there were several children in the reception class of thirty children who were just four years old and seven who were already five years old. Comprehensive daily assessments undertaken by the reception teacher and nursery nurse indicate that children's attainment on entry is broadly at the levels expected for their ages, with above average attainment in number, some aspects of social skills and speaking and listening. Children make good progress during their time in the reception class because of the very good quality of teaching and most of them are on course to reach the standards expected by the age of five. Attainment is likely to be above expectations in personal and social skills, speaking and listening and mathematics by the end of the school year.
53. Teaching and learning in the reception class are very good. The teacher bases all lessons on the nationally recommended early learning goals, using her assessments to plan for continuity and development. As the year progresses, higher-attaining children are provided with suitably challenging activities from the National Curriculum's programmes of study for Year 1. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is well experienced and has a very good knowledge of the needs of young children. As a result, learning is very carefully planned, with the focus on developing personal and social skills during the first few weeks in school. The teacher creates a very good learning atmosphere and pupils remain interested and very attentive – even at the end of a long and busy day. The teacher and full-time nursery nurse work together very well as a team, and other helpers, including volunteer parents, co-operate with them very well, giving good support and encouragement to the children.
54. The teacher and nursery nurse have very good relationships with the children. They value and encourage speech, stressing the use of correct vocabulary and providing clear explanations. They use questioning very skilfully to challenge and they listen to the children's responses, so that the children quickly gain confidence and make good progress. The staff resource and organise an interesting and exciting variety of activities, with clear educational aims, that produces a high level of confidence and growing independence. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, with very early identification and sensitive management of pupils who have specific learning needs. Accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good overall. A small but secure outdoor area beside the classroom offers satisfactory provision for outdoor activities and a large playground area is used regularly, when the weather permits, for playing with large wheeled toys.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Teaching and learning in this area of learning are very good and children's personal, social and emotional development is good. They are confident in their surroundings and move to their chosen tasks or activities independently. They are able to concentrate for lengthening periods. They sit quietly and alertly on the carpet for introductions to lessons, or when they are involved in a task and remain quiet and attentive even in whole-school assemblies. They know when they need help and ask for it confidently. They understand the need for agreed values and codes of behaviour. They respond positively to a range of

experiences, taking turns, sharing and co-operating well, and paying attention to the task given to them.

56. Children become involved in the classroom routines, such as helping to return resources to their correct places, and demonstrate care, respect and affection for other children. They change their shoes and put on coats independently before going out to play, wash their hands after handling plasticene and tidy their work away in their drawer at the end of activities. They develop good relationships with their peers and with adults, approach activities enthusiastically and positively and behave very well in the classroom and around the school. They develop a sense of community through the range of interesting experiences offered to them, such as a series of linked lessons looking at the Harvest Festival, the Jewish tradition of Sukkot and American 'Thanksgiving' celebrations. These help them to experience a range of feelings and develop an understanding that people have different needs, views, cultures and beliefs.

Communication, language and literacy

57. Children's attainment is satisfactory overall in this area and their speaking and listening skills are particularly well developed. Teaching and learning in this area of learning are very good. The youngest children are beginning to associate sounds with patterns, words and letters. They recognise some letters and pronounce them accurately when they point them out on the page. They enjoy making marks and experimenting with basic writing, using a range of marking implements for drawing, marking, scribbling and writing. They are beginning to form letters correctly by tracing over or copying under their teacher's written examples and some older children write their names in a recognisable script. Although a small number of children do not yet have the confidence to speak when the whole class is working as a group, most speak grammatically about their wants and interests. For example, when they were asking and answering questions about their parents' toys, one boy sitting was asked, 'When did your mummy get it?'. He replied confidently, 'When she was in hospital, when she was about five'.
58. Children make a very good start to reading in the first few weeks in school. All have book bags and take home a picture book from their first day in school, building up the vocabulary needed for the first reading books. Parents are provided with a 'home reading' booklet that explains the school's systems and offers tips on how they can help their child with reading. Children develop a love of books. For example, during free choice activities, children choose to enter the book corner and sit quietly looking at large picture books, 'reading' from front to back with obvious enjoyment. When the teacher deliberately puts a big book the wrong way around on the easel, there is a mass cry of, 'It's upside down!' They recognise books' front and back covers, know what the title is and some know that the publisher's notes on the back of the book are sometimes called 'the blurb'. Older and higher-attaining children are beginning to relate sounds to letters to help them identify words. Most children correctly hold up the 'c' card when the teacher takes a candle out of her bag and the 'm' card when a magnet is revealed. At the time of inspection, a small number could read the first 45 words of the appropriate key word vocabulary.

Mathematical development

59. Teaching and learning in this area of learning are very good and attainment is above expectations. The youngest children count from one to five and beyond and most recognise the numerals and place them in correct order. They develop their ability to write and recognise numerals through such activities as drawing numerals in sand. The majority are beginning to use their developing mathematical understanding to solve real-life practical problems. In one session, most children knew that 'zero' was another word for 'none' and one girl suggested that 'nought' could also be used. Most can accurately identify the comparative size of different objects or shapes. For example, they successfully sorted five cut-out illustrations of bears in order of height, using such

terminology as 'bigger', 'smaller', and 'taller'. They develop their understanding of pattern, shape and colour through activities such as threading coloured plastic shapes onto lace. One boy confidently identified a square, a triangle, a diamond and a triangle and, on finding a cream-coloured circular shape, exclaimed, 'It looks like a vanilla ice-cream!'

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. Teaching and learning in this area of learning are good and children's attainment is at the expected level. Children talk readily to adults and to other children about day-to-day life and about events important to them. They develop good building, constructing and joining skills through such activities as model-building with construction kits, working with play dough and sticking and gluing models made from carefully chosen materials. Children regularly work at computers and approach them confidently. During the inspection, they were taking digital photographs of 'Baby Bear', with help, and using the computers to make pictograms of differently coloured bears. They indulge in role-play with gusto. For instance, one girl said in a deep voice, 'Who's been sleeping in my bed?' when she was playing in the 'Three Bears' Cottage'. On another occasion, a boy donned a rucksack and marched around the classroom saying, 'I'm going rock-climbing'. When they investigated the old toys sent in by their parents, they looked closely at similarities, differences, patterns and changes. Through this activity, they began to understand that things change over time. They accurately use words such as, 'then and now' and 'old and new'. They are beginning to learn about their own and other cultures and beliefs through such activities as the 'Harvest' activities seen during the inspection. When asked, 'Why did we have a harvest service?', they responded, 'We were saying 'thank you' to God'.

Physical development

61. Physical development is satisfactory and teaching and learning are good in this area. Children develop their manual skills using a wide range of small construction equipment, such as 'Lego', with confidence and making models using malleable materials such as plasticene. They develop their pencil grip and control through a range of writing and colouring activities. Outside, they climb the wooden 'castle' and drive large-wheeled vehicles around the playground and they work on the apparatus set out in the large school hall. In one lesson, children demonstrated a good physical control and awareness of their own bodies, responding to the activities with enthusiasm and, in most cases, confidence.

Creative development

62. Teaching and learning are good in this area of learning and attainment is satisfactory. Children enjoy activities in the role-play corner, which serves as several different settings, such as a kitchen, a veterinary surgeon's office or the 'Three Bears' Cottage', and they become engaged in imaginative games. They are given opportunities to explore a good range of media and materials and produce a wide range of art work, some of a good standard. They join in with songs, using their voices expressively, singing a range of traditional songs and nursery rhymes with enthusiasm and matching their body movements to the moods and tempo of the music.

ENGLISH

63. At the ages of 7 and 11, pupils are achieving standards that are in line with those expected nationally in reading and writing, and they exceed them in speaking and listening. By the end of the year, if their generally good progress is maintained, a significant proportion are likely to be working above these levels. At the time of the last inspection, standards were in line with expectations at the age of 11 and the school is likely to improve on these standards by the end of the year.
64. In the infant classes, pupils learn well and their achievements are satisfactory. In the juniors, pupils learn very well and they achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Their individual education plans are well constructed with clear targets. The tasks they are given are well planned, and lessons are organised to include their individual needs. Many of these pupils benefit from opportunities to work in small groups. Class teachers, specialist support teachers and skilled and well-trained support assistants all contribute effectively to the well-judged support provided for these pupils. However, when pupils are taken out of their classes for additional support at the same time each week, they regularly miss valuable learning opportunities in the same subject and lose equality of access to the entire curriculum.
65. Pupils in Year 2 talk confidently to their friends, teachers and other adults and their responses show that they have been listening carefully. They generally explain their ideas clearly and talk about their work using the correct vocabulary introduced by their teacher. Standards in reading are satisfactory. Pupils read simple passages with accuracy and understanding. When they come across words they do not know, most pupils use a range of strategies to help. They sound out words, look at pictures and use the context of the story to work out what the word is. Most pupils link letters to sounds accurately. They talk about their reading, showing that they understand simple stories and factual writing. Pupils' success in reading is helped by the school's very good implementation of the reading element of the National Literacy Strategy and by regular reading practice both at school and at home, with generally good help from their parents. Teachers and support assistants have good levels of expertise, and they give their pupils well-judged help and support.
66. Year 2 pupils achieve satisfactory standards in writing. The National Literacy Strategy is very well used by teachers to ensure that pupils are given a wide range of writing activities, not only in English lessons, but across the curriculum. Higher-attaining pupils use sequences of sentences to extend their ideas logically. They use imaginative language and adapt their writing for a variety of purposes. Most pupils show growing confidence. They form sentences correctly and their grammar and spelling are usually accurate. Handwriting is of consistent size, and letters are properly formed.
67. By Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills have continued to develop well, and they achieve standards above the nationally expected levels. They talk and listen well in a range of contexts, including formal ones, such as school assemblies or meetings of the school council. They are good at listening to the opinions of others, asking questions and taking their turns in discussions. These activities make a good contribution to their social and moral development. Pupils understand the need to adapt speech to a range of formal and informal contexts and know when it is important to listen carefully. In a Years 5/6 mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher used correct vocabulary when talking about the 'range' and 'frequency' of data in a bar chart. He asked searching questions, requiring pupils to express themselves clearly when replying. Such lessons, where pupils are actively involved in discussing the work, greatly help to develop pupils' speaking skills. Additionally, in nearly all lessons, teachers make it clear that they expect pupils to pay attention to instructions and to what their classmates are saying.

68. Reading standards in Year 6 are in line with national expectations. Most pupils understand the significant ideas, characters and themes in a range of writing. They talk about what they have read, showing where ideas have come from and justifying their views. Although pupils understand about reference sources and information books, the school library is not used enough. Pupils are generally well supported in their individual reading. They are given many opportunities to read and adults often listen to them, both at school and at home. Good attitudes towards reading are developed, and pupils have a good knowledge of a range of authors. For example, pupils talk in an intelligent and informed way about favourite authors, such as Roald Dahl and J R R Tolkien. A wide range and variety of authors are offered to pupils in their literacy lessons.
69. Standards in writing in Year 6 are close to the nationally expected levels and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the junior classes. Most pupils know how to plan a story and have good ideas on how to introduce characters. They understand the use of sentences and know how and why a new part of a story is started by a new paragraph. They know how to improve and edit their work and understand that drafting can often be more easily done using the computer. Teachers' very effective adaptation of the National Literacy Strategy provides pupils with a very good range of writing opportunities. This enables them to write confidently in a variety of subjects. In a Years 4/5 history lesson, for example, pupils made notes to present as a 'fact page' as part of topic work on the Victorians.
70. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers are good at introducing their lessons briskly, gaining their pupils' interest and promoting positive attitudes from the start. They usually discuss what was done last time and share what is to be learned in the new lesson. Teachers use questions particularly well, challenging pupils to think clearly and to express themselves well. Teachers generally have very good knowledge of the subject, so they are good at explaining tasks and ideas clearly. Their teaching of the basic skills of reading and writing is very good and they have very high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Classes are generally well managed and the teaching methods used are well judged to match the ages and abilities of pupils. In all these respects, the quality of teaching is better in the juniors than the infants. In a Years 5/6 lesson, for example, pupils were working on the biography of Mary Seacole. The class was very well managed, and there were very good working relationships. In the introduction, the teacher used questions very well, challenging pupils to answer and to explain their ideas. This approach produced very good responses from the pupils and the very good teaching ensured that their involvement and behaviour was very good throughout the lesson. Such very good work makes worthwhile contributions to pupils' social, moral and cultural development. Work on the story of Mary Seacole gave good opportunities to discuss the moral issues of slavery and racism.
71. The school has done much to introduce the assessment and analysis of pupils' work in English. As well as National Curriculum tests at the ages of 7 and 11, pupils are also given regular reading and verbal reasoning tests and non-statutory tests at the ends of Years 3, 4 and 5. Data from these tests are analysed and shared so as to adapt the curriculum to the identified needs. Spelling was identified in this way as an area in need of attention. The school has since adopted the 'Attack Spelling' scheme, where intensive spelling sessions are conducted for pupils of all abilities, giving them regular practice in well-focused and purposeful lessons. These sessions are already producing improved standards in spelling. In another response to assessment findings, the school plans to provide better opportunities for pupils to extend their writing to longer stories and passages. A new assessment structure is just being introduced in English and this approach will gradually be extended to other subjects over the next year or two. This will

be more manageable for teachers, and enable information about pupils' attainment to be used and shared more effectively.

72. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject manager is experienced and has a good overview of the subject. The school has been good at identifying areas in need of improvement and has successfully implemented strategies to tackle shortcomings. Although there have been many changes in staff recently, a good focus has been kept on what needs to be done and the issues identified in the last inspection have been well addressed. Resources for the teaching of English are satisfactory although the range and quality of books available in the library is in need of further improvement. The library itself is small and uninviting, despite some efforts to make it more appealing. At present, it does not adequately promote a love of reading or present information books in an accessible or engaging way. For these reasons, many pupils do not see the library as the natural place to go for information, relying rather on computer-based sources or on books in the classroom. Skills in using reference books are not sufficiently developed and this means that pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop as independent learners.

MATHEMATICS

73. Year 2 pupils have made good progress from a generally above average level of attainment on entry and are on course to attain standards above those expected nationally by the age of 7 years. In the juniors, pupils make good progress and, by the time pupils leave the school at age 11, their attainment in mathematics is similarly above the nationally expected standards for their age. This is an improvement in both age groups since the previous inspection when attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations.
74. The school has adopted and implemented the National Numeracy Strategy very well, ensuring that pupils undertake a wide range of activities in all areas of mathematics. For example, pupils in all year groups work on shape, space and measures and tackle a range of problems involving handling data and investigation during the course of the school year. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in other curriculum areas, such as science and information and communication technology. There is particularly good use of information and communication technology in mathematics lessons at both stages.
75. By Year 2, most pupils count in tens up to 300 and can draw and name simple two-dimensional shapes. A significant proportion are beginning to recognise fractions, such as one-fifth, one-third and one-sixth. In Year 6, a significant proportion of pupils are working at higher levels than are expected for their age. They demonstrate above-average mental arithmetic skills, trying to outdo each other in providing more complex answers to the teacher's questions. For example, they found several different and complicated ways of creating multiples of sixteen. They can solve problems by representing, extracting and interpreting data in tables, graphs, charts and diagrams, including those generated by a computer. Several pupils are already, near the start of the school year, achieving the targets set for the end of Year 6 and are beginning to work within the programme set for Year 7.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Teachers provide a good variety of interesting activities and use approaches that gain and maintain pupils' attention and generate a high level of motivation and good progress. They follow the nationally recommended lesson format closely, plan lessons very well, provide a good range of resources and use praise and questioning well. They ensure pupils are paying attention, use correct mathematical vocabulary and provide good opportunities for pupils to explain their methods and practice what they know by working together. They provide a

well-varied range of activities for the different ages and levels of ability in their classes, challenging higher-attaining pupils and, in conjunction with learning support assistants, supporting and including pupils needing additional support very well. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. The great majority of pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics work, especially the mental and oral warm-up activities. They respond well to their teachers and work together well without the need for constant intervention.

77. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy very well. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and funding has been allocated sensibly to purchase additional resources to support the teaching of numeracy. The new co-ordinator for the subject is very enthusiastic and is developing a good overview of standards throughout the school. Individual targets are provided for pupils and effective booster classes are held throughout the year. Teachers use day-to-day assessment well and, in the best practice, amend their planned lessons in the light of the progress made during the previous lesson. However, insufficient use is made of the large amount of data available to identify trends or strengths and weaknesses or to modify the curriculum or teaching methods.

SCIENCE

78. The attainment of pupils in each age group is close to the levels expected nationally and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 understand that living things grow and reproduce and identify some of the ways they have changed since they were babies. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of the structure of teeth and how to look after them and most use words, such as 'molar', 'premolar', 'incisor' and 'canine' correctly. They have a good idea of how much sugar is contained in different foodstuffs and they know that sugar is bad for their teeth. In Years 3 and 4, pupils talk sensibly about different types of skeletons and about bone growth and repair and they measure and compare the length of one another's bones. In Year 5, pupils know about the effects of exercise on pulse rate and they record the pulse rates of everybody in the class using information and communication technology. Pupils in Year 6 know that different plants require different habitats and they are developing a useful vocabulary of technical words, such as 'nutrient' and 'photosynthesis'.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' planning is very thorough and detailed with clear objectives and they prepare resources well for lessons. Teachers manage their classes very well and they use questions very well to encourage pupils to think out their responses. Pupils are keen to respond and they form intelligent hypotheses in response to their teachers' challenges. Teachers in the older classes place due emphasis on the need for investigation and on the need for verifying findings. Generally, teachers provide tasks that are well matched to the different needs of pupils in the class, supporting those with special educational needs with good help from the support staff. In most classes, information and communication technology is used well to make recordings, build up databases and give presentations. Teachers structure lessons well and skilfully vary the pace and the activities to retain interest and momentum. As a result, pupils stay engaged, try very hard and work well throughout the lesson. The ends of lessons are used well to reinforce and evaluate what has been learned. Pupils enjoy the subject and behave very well in lessons.
80. The curriculum is based on a nationally recommended scheme and planned on a two-year cycle so that pupils in the split-year classes do not repeat a topic unnecessarily. In theory, the plans should cover the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, the books of pupils in different year groups contain very similar work. For example, Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 have all undertaken work on the skeleton, human growth and a healthy diet since September. Although the quality of the work improves as pupils grow older, the content and the kind of tasks set do not show sufficient progression across the age groups. It is

clear from talking to pupils and from the school's results that progression does take place but the planning and monitoring of the curriculum for science have not yet been fully implemented by the recently appointed co-ordinator. The school is aware of this and a review is planned in the new year.

81. The co-ordinator is still finding out about teaching and learning in the subject. She has already monitored some teaching and looked at a selection of books and has planned time to do more of this next term. Systems of assessment are not consistently practised but, when new course books are purchased, end-of-unit assessments will be undertaken. In addition, a very detailed, school-wide system has been agreed and will be implemented across all subjects next term.

ART AND DESIGN

82. No art lessons were observed during the inspection in the infants, providing insufficient evidence on which to make secure judgements about pupils' attitudes and behaviour or on the quality of teaching. Two lessons were observed in the junior stage. Lesson observations and a scrutiny of work on display around the school confirm that pupils throughout the school have good opportunities to undertake a variety of art activities, printing repeated patterns, making collages, drawing in a variety of materials including chalk and charcoal and making pencil studies of a satisfactory quality. Pupils make satisfactory progress and standards at the ages of 7 and 11 are close to those expected nationally.
83. Pupils in Year 2 have undertaken a topic on relationships, looking carefully at a range of artists' work, discussing the feelings of the characters, making a tableau and drawing themselves in the tableau. Pupils in Year 6 are comparing ideas, methods and approaches in artists' work. At the time of the inspection, they were looking at the work of William Morris, particularly his wallpaper designs, carefully isolating a small area of the design by means of a view frame and enlarging it. Their standards of attainment in the evaluation and development of art are above national expectations.
84. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during the two art lessons observed were very good. Pupils clearly enjoy their art activities and are well motivated by the tasks, working together well. The quality of teaching and learning in both of the lessons seen was very good and, consequently, pupils made very good progress. The teachers maintained a very good pace throughout the lessons, had very high expectations of work and behaviour and motivated pupils well with their own enthusiasm for the subject so that pupils set about their work with zest.
85. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work planned over a two-year cycle. The new co-ordinator for the subject is well qualified and enthusiastic and has prepared a detailed action plan for developing the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. No design and technology lessons were undertaken during the inspection, making secure judgements on the overall quality of teaching and learning in the subject impossible. The inspection took place shortly after the first half term break of the school year and since design and technology topics are alternated with art and design topics on a half-termly basis, some classes had only just begun their first design and technology topic of the year. Furthermore, most examples of work undertaken in the previous school year had been taken home. However, photographic evidence shows that, throughout the school, pupils work with a range of materials and tools. They undertake a good variety range of activities in which they design, make and evaluate products, working together, listing the resources

needed, giving step-by-step instructions and testing and evaluating their designs. This evidence, together with a survey of the samples of work that were available and discussions with teachers and pupils, indicates that attainment is in line with national expectations for Years 2 and 6. This was also the case at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology as they move through the school.

87. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work for the subject and units of work are undertaken over a two-year cycle, to avoid repetition, alternating with the programme for art and design. The co-ordinator has only very recently taken over responsibility for the subject and, understandably, has not yet had time to develop an overview of the strengths and weaknesses. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall.

GEOGRAPHY

88. By the time they reach the ages of 7 and 11, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. They generally make satisfactory progress through in the infants' section and good progress in the junior section. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory.
89. In the infant classes, pupils learn about simple maps and plans. For instance, they draw plans of the local area, plotting routes between their homes and school and noting the buildings and other physical and man-made features passed. By the time they are 7, they ask and answer questions about local places. For example, pupils in Year 2 watched a video-recording showing their village and made notes about good and bad features that they identified. They expressed their views on environmental issues and could see how people influence the environment. They enjoyed the work and were fascinated to see themselves on screen.
90. By the time they reach the age of 11, pupils know, for instance, that a building such as a pumping station is specially located so that it can fulfil a function. They know that human and physical processes have effects on the environment. They know more about maps and how places can be located by means of grid references. This work makes good links with their mathematical understanding. Again, good links are made with the local area, and the participation of the older pupils in a residential visit enables them to compare their home locality with a contrasting one.
91. The teaching of geography is good but the changes in staffing that the school has recently experienced mean that there has not yet been a significant impact on standards. Teachers communicate their enthusiasm very well and are good at capturing their pupils' interest. They manage their classes very well, and have a good knowledge of the subject. Pupils enjoy the work and show positive attitudes because of the interesting and often exciting teaching they receive. They enjoy practical tasks and are good at sharing and working together. They are given good opportunities to discuss ideas, making a good contribution to the development of their language.
92. Management of the subject is satisfactory and the newly appointed co-ordinator has made a good start at identifying what needs to be done. She has already noted that there is a need to improve resources for the subject, and to continue the development of information and communication technology as a tool for learning. At present, resources for the subject are satisfactory. Assessment is still largely informal, although some teachers carry out assessments of what has been learnt at the ends of cross-curricular topics.

HISTORY

93. Seven and 11-year-olds are reaching standards close to those expected nationally. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the infants and good progress in the juniors. Standards have improved since the last inspection. History is one of the cross-curricular topics that are planned on a two-year cycle to take account of the mixture of ages in each class. This approach is effective, and careful planning and tracking of the work covered ensure that all pupils are given the full range of experiences.
94. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the topics they have studied, such as those on the Roman and Victorian eras. In cross-curricular topics, they have also looked at historical features of the local area, such as the buildings of Langham and Oakham. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils are aware that there are similarities and differences between their own lives and those of people in the past. In Year 1, for instance, pupils made a collection of toys from the past. They displayed them in their own 'toy museum' and wrote about what the exhibits were made of. The work made a good contribution to their historical understanding, as well as being an enjoyable, practical activity.
95. The teaching of history is very good overall but, because of the many recent changes in staff, new schemes of work, and new planning systems, it has not yet had time to have an effect on standards. Teachers show good knowledge of the subject and manage their classes very well. They are good at providing interesting activities and use the local area well to make the work relevant and meaningful to their pupils. In lessons seen during the inspection, pupils showed positive attitudes to their work. For example, in a Years 4/5 lesson about the Victorians, pupils worked sensibly, discussing the work in their groups, and were able to read confidently from their notes to the whole class when asked to feed back. One group used the Internet to find additional information to follow up a visit to the Abbey pumping station.
96. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Due to recent staff changes, the headteacher is overseeing the subject and this is working well as a temporary solution. The school has adopted the national guidelines along with guidance on planning for mixed-age classes, and this has produced a good structure for the subject. There are, at present, no formal assessment procedures, although some teachers carry out end-of-topic assessments for their classes. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall, although there is not enough software to support topics, so that information and communication technology can be better used as a tool for learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

97. Attainment in all year groups is above national expectations and pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils use the Internet confidently and regularly to research topics and there is particularly good cross-curricular use of information and communication technology in other curriculum areas such as literacy, numeracy, history and geography. This constitutes a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
98. Pupils in Year 1 know how to use the 'shape' and 'fill' tools, drawing the outline of a teddy bear and filling it in with their chosen colour. Pupils in Year 2 have been developing their keyboard skills and have composed and sent e-mails to the Years 3/4 class. Year 3 pupils have used a word-processing program to format their poems, changing the font, size and colour before printing, and have sent e-mails to the pupils in Year 2. Years 4 and 5 pupils have used 'Wordart' and 'Autoshapes' programs to produce designs based on the work of Kandinsky. They have used the Internet for research on topics in history, science and mathematics and they are beginning to learn how to use a spreadsheet. As a direct result

of their teacher's enthusiasm and skill, Year 6 pupils have made very good progress in a short time with the new classroom computers. They have made confident multi-media presentations about Victorian life, inserting 'hyperlinks' and 'bookmarks' into a document and using the Internet to acquire additional illustrations. They are using a spreadsheet program and control and monitoring equipment to make a weekly diary of temperature in the classroom.

99. Pupils are keen to use computers in other subjects and they work together well, taking turns and working independently where required. No overall judgement on the quality of teaching is possible. Funds obtained from the government's 'National Grid for Learning' scheme have been used well to purchase a number of new computers and related equipment and to provide in-service training for all the teachers. The school has employed a consultant to develop its own website, which has only very recently come on line and which will be used to display examples of the work of older pupils and to publish information for the village community. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic and makes very good use of information and communication technology in his own teaching. There is a good range of resources for this subject and they are used well.

MUSIC

100. Standards of attainment and progress in the lessons seen were satisfactory. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 recognise the different pitch of notes. After listening to part of 'The Carnival of Animals' by Saint Saens, they identified some of the creatures by the sounds they heard. They are beginning to understand how sounds can be organised and how musical elements can be used to create different effects. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 were learning about basic rhythmic structure and, with prompting from the teacher, devised a very short and basic sequence of sounds to accompany a promenade. They sustained the sequence of sounds reasonably well, using clapping, whistling, vocalisation and a glockenspiel. They ended the lesson by singing parts of tape-recorded songs from a commercially produced teaching programme. They managed to keep a satisfactory rhythm and pitch. Neither teacher was a music specialist and some opportunities to reinforce learning were missed. Nevertheless, teaching and learning were satisfactory and the lessons were well planned with clear objectives. Correct vocabulary and the importance of pitch and tempo were stressed. The lessons were managed well and both teachers and pupils clearly enjoyed the work.
101. The music assembly involved three teachers and the whole school. Pupils sang a number of songs with gusto and began to learn another. The quality of singing was often good. Pupils sang enthusiastically with good control of pitch, volume and rhythm and reasonable tone. There were reminders from the teachers about the need to keep chins up. This is a worthwhile initiative that is taken seriously by the teachers involved and the pupils work hard. They not only enjoy the activity but they are clearly improving their singing. They could improve further if they stood, rather than sat to sing and if teachers concentrated more on breathing and phrasing. This would help to produce sweeter high notes and better control of changes in pitch.
102. The curriculum is planned on a two-year cycle, as it is in the other subjects, and it covers the National Curriculum adequately. There is no co-ordinator for the subject at the moment and the headteacher is providing temporary cover. Resources are good. There is plenty of enthusiasm for the subject but the school recognises that it needs to recruit a specialist who can take the subject forward.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in the infant classes and good in the juniors. Satisfactory standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The school has good resources for the subject, with a large, level field and a well-marked playground, permitting the full range of outdoor activities. The hall, too, is large and well equipped, although some mats are worn and in need of replacement. Swimming takes place at the local pool and the annual residential visit provides good opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities.
104. By the age of 7, pupils know how to exercise safely, and understand the effects of exercise on their bodies. They perform basic skills and simple movements with growing control and co-ordination. In a Years 2/3 lesson, for example, pupils in Year 2 worked with partners to perform dance sequences. They made notes to remind them of basic movements and they are developing their sense of rhythm, dynamics and expression well. Pupils join in warm-up and warm-down activities well and are good at getting the mats out and putting them away safely.
105. In the junior classes, pupils continue to develop their basic skills. By the time they are 11, they have acquired precision, control and fluency in their work and they show understanding of tactics and fair play in team games. They explain the value of health and fitness and know how exercise affects their bodies.
106. Teaching is good. Teachers provide challenging and exciting activities that are well matched to their pupils' needs. Good attention is paid to safety and pupils are given good social training in getting out and replacing equipment. Pupils are not always given opportunities to comment on each other's performance or to suggest ways to improve.
107. Planning for the subject is based on the national guidelines. As yet, no formal assessments are carried out but good long and medium-term planning ensures that there is a good progression of skills throughout the school. The subject is effectively managed, regular checks are carried out to see that all equipment is safe, and the co-ordinator is aware of resourcing needs. The curriculum is considerably enriched by the school's very good provision of after-school sports clubs and activities for junior pupils. These are very well attended and enthusiastically and efficiently run by staff, with very good assistance from parents.