

INSPECTION REPORT

**CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 120221

Headteacher: Mrs Pat Galvin

Reporting inspector: Colin Henderson
23742

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th November 2002

Inspection number: 248114

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Glenfield Road Leicester
Postcode:	LE3 6DF
Telephone number:	0116 285 7261
Fax number:	0116 254 0896
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Ian Knight
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Colin Henderson 23742	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Physical education Pupils for whom English is an additional language	How high are standards? Pupils' results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Len Shipman 14061	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Stephanie Cook 14842	Team inspector	Foundation Stage History Special educational needs	
Sylvia Gatehouse 26945	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography	
Virginia Bridge 32204	Team inspector	English Art and design music	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Lynn Lowery 13805	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Educational inclusion	

The inspection contractor was:

TWA *Inspections* Ltd
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 7JX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Christ the King Catholic Primary School is situated in a residential housing area in the city of Leicester. It has a wide catchment area, serving three parishes. Pupils come from a mixture of private and rented housing with some coming from areas of social and economic deprivation. The school is larger than average. There are currently 335 pupils on roll (177 boys and 158 girls), which is similar to the number at the last inspection. The school is fully subscribed in some years. Pupils are mainly of white, United Kingdom ethnic backgrounds. Only 3 per cent come from ethnic minority groups. There are 12 pupils for whom English is an additional language. Nearly 10 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. The school has 65 pupils on its register of special educational needs, mainly with moderate learning and behavioural difficulties. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. This is below average within the local education authority's area. Assessment information shows that attainment on entry is just below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Christ the King Primary is a good and effective school. It is a friendly, well-behaved and harmonious school community that is valued by parents. The headteacher, working closely with an effective staff team and supportive governing body, gives a good, positive lead to the work of the school. They have established a caring and supportive Catholic ethos. Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to their work. Teaching is sound overall. It is often good, especially in Year 2 and Year 6. This enables Year 2 pupils to maintain above average standards and Year 6 pupils to improve standards. The good leadership and management are developing good procedures to target school improvement. These procedures are not always rigorous enough or consistently implemented to raise pupils' attainment. The school copes well within the limitations of its accommodation. It makes effective use of its resources and gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils consistently attain well above average standards in English and above average levels in mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in mathematics.
- Pupils have good attitudes to work. They are enthusiastic and keen to learn.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- The arrangements for supporting pupils' personal development are very good. They promote good relationships and a strong sense of community.
- The school has a very good partnership with parents that contributes significantly to pupils' attainment.
- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs.
- Very good extra-curricular activities enhance the range of learning opportunities.

What could be improved

- The standards attained by Year 6 pupils in information and communication technology.
- The range of opportunities for pupils to use their information and technology skills to support work in other subjects.
- The use of on-going assessment information in some subjects to ensure that learning activities match pupils' needs and build consistently on prior skills and knowledge.
- The teaching of English to match the good teaching in mathematics.
- The quality of pupils' learning targets.
- The range of physical education activities for junior pupils by including swimming.

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 sound progress overall since the last inspection in October 1997. It has made some progress on all the key issues, especially those relating to standards in art and design, design and technology and music and procedures for monitoring teaching, curriculum and assessment. The issues on providing more open-ended work, challenging higher attainers more, increasing personal study opportunities and promoting greater choice and independence in lessons have not been fully developed. The school has maintained pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the good quality of leadership and management. Teaching is similar to that reported previously for junior pupils. It has improved for infants.

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	D	C	C	C
Mathematics	D	C	C	C
Science	D	C	C	C

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

Year 6 pupils are attaining similar standards to those reported in the last inspection, although they are now higher in mathematics and writing. The results of the 2002 national tests show that standards meet the national average. They reflect an improving trend, particularly in mathematics and writing. For example, the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 4 in mathematics increased from 70 to 78 per cent, compared with the national average of 73 per cent. The proportion attaining a higher level also increased to 27 per cent, in line with the national average. The school did not quite achieve its challenging targets of 86 per cent of pupils to achieve Level 4 or above in mathematics and 90 per cent in English. Inspection evidence shows that pupils attain standards at the end of Year 6 that are above the national average in mathematics and average overall in English and science. Standards in mathematics are improving, promoted by good teaching in Year 6 and pupils' positive attitudes to work. Pupils are achieving higher levels in writing, supported particularly by the school's focus on improving their writing skills. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

Year 2 pupils are attaining higher standards than those reported at the last inspection. Inspection evidence confirms the above average trend in recent national test results in for seven-year-olds. Year 2 pupils are currently attaining average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By the end of the Year 2, with continued good teaching in Year 2 and pupils' enthusiastic attitudes, they are likely to be attaining well above average levels, especially in reading and writing. Year 2 pupils attain standards in information and communication technology that meet nationally expected levels. Standards in Year 6 are below those expected. Older pupils have not had enough opportunities to use the new resources to meet the higher levels expected for their age. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain expected standards in all other subjects. Their progress in some subjects, for example, history and geography, is restricted because their skills and knowledge do not build consistently on their prior learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the learning targets in their good individual education plans. They receive good, and often very good, support from the co-ordinator and support staff. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are given good support. They make good progress in developing their English language skills. Pupils make sound progress overall throughout the school. Progress is good in Year 2 and Year 6. It is not consistent when teachers do not ensure that they match learning activities to the full range of pupils' needs.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Some aspects are very good and are linked to very good teaching.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Overall pupils behave well both in class and around the school. They know how they are expected to behave and respond well in a friendly manner.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. Relationships are good and often very good. Good personal development, although opportunities to take initiative and promote independent learning are not yet fully developed.
Attendance	Satisfactory and in line with national averages. There is an improvement this term.

The good standards of behaviour and pupils' positive attitudes are strengths of the school and support pupils' learning. The good relationships and friendly atmosphere contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is sound throughout the school. Teaching was good or better in 31 out of the 57 lessons observed, especially in Year 2 and Year 6. It was often very good, and occasionally excellent in Year 6. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson. An analysis of pupils' work from the current year and last school year shows that teaching is sound overall. Teachers control and manage their classes well. This helps pupils to settle quickly and sustain their attention. Teaching is good in mathematics and enables pupils to make good progress in developing their numeracy skills. The teaching of English is sound overall. It is good in some years, for example, Year 2. Teachers do not always use the National Literacy Strategy well to give a clear and specific focus to learning. They develop pupils' writing skills effectively in literacy sessions. They do not consistently challenge pupils to extend their literacy skills by using them to support their work in a good range of subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory for the Foundation Stage ¹ and for infants and juniors. A very good extra-curricular programme enhances the range of activities. Curriculum coverage has improved, although pupils' skills and knowledge in some subjects, for example history and geography, do not always build on prior learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. A good co-ordinator makes effective use of support staff to provide good help and guidance to pupils. This enables pupils to make good progress towards their learning targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school provides good individual support for the small number of pupils. They make good progress in developing their English language skills. Occasionally, teachers do not ensure that learning activities are matched closely to their language needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision promotes pupils' personal development. The very good spiritual, moral and social provision contributes significantly to the school's caring Catholic ethos. It encourages pupils to respect and value each other and their contributions to a harmonious community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance and behaviour are good. Procedures for personal development and for assessing pupils' attainment are very good.
How well the school works in partnership with the parents.	Very good. Parents appreciate the high quality of care their children receive. Some help in school to improve the quality of education. These links are a strength of the school and support standards

The school's caring approach and its very good partnership with parents are important factors in encouraging pupils' positive approach. An enthusiastic Parent Teacher Association helps the school to improve resources and facilities for learning.

¹ [The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class.](#)

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher gives strong, positive leadership to the work of the school. She works in an effective partnership with the deputy headteacher, a good staff team and supportive governors, to focus clearly on school improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors work closely with the headteacher and staff to fulfil their duties and responsibilities. They monitor the school's performance well and have a good understanding of its strengths and areas for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has developed good procedures for monitoring teaching and learning, focused mainly on literacy and numeracy. Very good assessment procedures are used effectively to set achievement targets. These are not always closely linked to specific areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The governors work closely with the headteacher and school bursar to ensure that the school uses funds efficiently and targets them on development priorities. They monitor spending levels and apply the best value principles effectively.

The school is well staffed with enough skilled and experienced teachers to teach the full range of curriculum subjects. A good number of support staff contribute well to an effective staff team. The accommodation is satisfactory. It is well maintained, although a lack of space in some classrooms creates difficulties in providing some practical activities. Resources are satisfactory. They have improved considerably for information and communication technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parental responses are the 104 questionnaires, the 19 written comments and from the views of the 18 who attended the parents evening prior to inspection. A number of parents were interviewed during the inspection.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Pupils mature and take responsibility • Teaching is good. • School is well led and managed. • There are high expectations that the children will learn, and a strong Roman Catholic ethos. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consistent use of homework (a few parents) • Information on what is being taught (a few parents) • The range of extra-curricular activities, especially swimming and residential trips for Year 6 pupils. • The 'settling in' induction process for new pupils in Year Reception (a few parents)

Inspectors support parents' positive views. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good, although there is no swimming. There are some inconsistencies in homework but overall it is used well to support learning. The quality and variety of information are good, especially for those parents of children with special educational needs.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the reception classes with varied levels of skills and knowledge. Assessment information shows that attainment on entry is just below average overall. Teaching and support staff work closely together to provide skilful support and monitor children's progress closely in the Foundation Stage. Staff put a strong emphasis on promoting children's personal, social and emotional development. This emphasis helps to improve children's self-confidence, to build trusting relationships and to settle into the routines of school life. Teachers prepare and organise their activities well. They plan in detail to include the required areas of learning. Their planning does not always identify the key skills and learning objectives to be covered in each activity, with the result that children's skills and knowledge do not always build consistently on prior learning. Children make satisfactory progress overall in their learning. They are on track to attain the early learning goals² in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Many are likely to exceed the goals on personal, social and emotional development and in aspects of creative development, especially music.
2. Year 2 pupils attain standards in reading and writing that are well above average nationally and for similar schools. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The results of the national tests for seven-year-olds over the last four years show that standards overall in reading have remained well above the national average. The school almost achieved its challenging targets in 2002 of 96 per cent of pupils to achieve the nationally expected Level 2 or above in reading and 94 per cent in writing. Pupils are improving their writing skills. Year 2 pupils attained above average results in the 2002 national test. Inspection evidence shows that current Year 2 pupils are likely to achieve well above average levels. Good teaching, especially in Year 2, together with the school's effective use of its Early Literacy Strategy, are raising standards. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are not as high and so only meet expected levels. Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to extend their speaking skills. Year 2 pupils attain standards in mathematics that are above the national average. These are reflected clearly in the national test results over the last four years. In the 2002 tests, 45 per cent of pupils achieved higher than average levels compared with 31 per cent nationally. This was well above the national average and the average of similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 2 are already achieving levels expected of pupils by the end of the year. It is likely that, with continued good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes to mathematics, many will attain higher than average levels. Similarly teacher assessments in science in 2002 showed that Year 2 pupils attained above average results. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 2 is likely to maintain these above average standards because most pupils are already achieving levels expected for their age by the end of the year.
3. Pupils attain standards at the end of Year 6 that are above average in mathematics and are average overall in English and science. The results of the 2002 national tests, and results over the last four years, show that standards meet the national average and the average of similar schools in all three subjects. There is an improving trend, especially in mathematics, supported by good teaching in Year 6, pupils' enthusiastic attitudes and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The number of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in mathematics has improved steadily. In 2002, 78 per cent of pupils attained the expected Level 4 or above, compared with 73 per cent nationally. The school did not quite meet its challenging target of 86 per cent. The

² Early learning goals are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer to achievements children make in the following six areas of learning; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

proportion achieving above average levels, 27 per cent, was higher than previous years and met the national average. In the 2002 English tests, Year 6 pupils attained above the national average in writing and just below average in reading. The school was close to achieving its challenging targets of 90 per cent of pupils to achieve Level 4 or above. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 6 achieve average levels in reading. They are likely to attain above average standards in writing, promoted by the school's increased focus on writing, good teaching in Year 6 and the good use of booster and revision activities. Pupils are making sound and often good progress in their ability to write for different purposes, although they are not consistently challenged to extend their literacy skills in subjects other than English. Inspection evidence in science confirms that Year 6 pupils attain average standards, reflecting the most recent national test results. Pupils are improving their investigative skills, although they still rely too much on teacher direction.

4. Pupils make sound progress overall in their learning in the infants. They make good progress in Year 2 and sound progress in the juniors. Progress is good in Year 6 and often very good, for example, in mathematics. This good progress results mainly from teachers' consistently higher expectations and a closer match of learning activities to pupils' needs. Some teachers challenge pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, for example history. This level of challenge is not consistent, though, and does not encourage pupils to extend their skills enough to improve standards, particularly the literacy skills of junior pupils. The school's very good assessment and tracking procedures allow teachers to check closely on differences in the progress of different groups of pupils. For example, there is no noticeable difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
5. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their good quality individual education plans. They receive good support from teaching and support staff and attain in line with their abilities. The special educational needs co-ordinator, working closely with staff and parents, monitors the standards attained and checks progress carefully. Her teaching is particularly effective and helps pupils to make very good progress. Learning activities do not always match the range of special educational needs in whole class sessions. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language make sound progress overall. It is occasionally good and some attain above expected levels for their age. Those with specific weaknesses in their basic English language skills are given good support to enable them to be included fully in learning activities. On occasions, teachers do not always ensure that these activities match the language needs of this group of pupils.
6. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with nationally expected levels at the end of Year 2. It is below expectations at the end of Year 6. Teachers are using the new resources to promote pupils' basic skills effectively in most required aspects. However, Year 6 pupils have not had enough opportunities to benefit from the new resources in order to reach the higher levels expected for their age. Teachers do not provide junior pupils with sufficient opportunities to apply their skills in a broad range of other subjects. Pupils attain standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 that meet expected levels in all other subjects. The school's strong focus on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has led to some other subjects, for example, history and geography, being taught in rotation over a specific block of time such as five weeks. Although this allows the different aspects of the curriculum to be covered, it does not ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge build consistently on prior learning, especially in mixed-age classes. This restricts the rate of progress made by pupils and the extension of their skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Since the previous inspection, the school has built effectively upon the many positive

aspects featured in the report. Pupils' attitudes to learning, behaviour and personal development are good and sometimes very good. However, there are still limited opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning in lessons. Levels of attendance are satisfactory compared to the previous report.

8. Pupils enter the school in an orderly manner. They are smartly dressed in the school uniform and settle quickly into the school routine without being told. At the beginning of the day they discuss things with their teachers, present their reading records, exchange reading books or engage in quiet reading. This creates an efficient start to the day and promotes a positive attitude to learning. Pupils have good and often very good attitudes in lessons. These good attitudes are linked to good or very good teaching. Pupils are eager to answer questions and take part in class activities, for example, when using whiteboards to write answers in a mental mathematics session. This enthusiastic spirit promotes their involvement and their learning. Most take a pride in demonstrating their work. In a few instances, however, more able pupils complete the required work but do not seek to extend their skills, for example, by using the remaining time to research further information.
9. Behaviour in and around the school is good and often very good. Pupils clearly know what is expected of them and understand that they are at school to learn. Parents are confident that standards of behaviour are good. Behaviour in lessons is especially good where teaching is lively and stimulating. However, where direct teaching occurs for too long, there is some fidgeting and inattentive behaviour.
10. A few older pupils have the potential to be disruptive. Staff are alert to this and are quick to deal with any misbehaviour. For example, some older pupils going from play to lunch became involved in a scuffle. The midday supervisor stepped in quickly to prevent the matter escalating. Pupils with special educational needs, including behavioural needs, receive good support from both staff and outside agencies. There are no permanent exclusions, though in the past the headteacher has used occasional fixed term exclusions.
11. Pupils' personal development, including relationships are good and at times very good. Good manners and courtesy were often features during the inspection. Occasionally a few pupils ran thoughtlessly in and around the school but in the main they walked calmly and sensibly. In lessons there are opportunities for personal reflection, such as thinking of others in need. Clearly pupils respect their school by the absence of damage or graffiti. Relationships between the pupils are good and often very good. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and mutual respect is shown. Teachers encourage pupils to listen to each other and give them time to finish speaking.
12. Children in the Foundation Stage have good opportunities to take initiative in developing their learning. Older pupils have limited opportunities to develop independent learning in some lessons as they are too teacher directed or too reliant on work sheets. This is an issue from the previous inspection that has not been addressed fully. House captains are elected each term and a school council is elected with a representative from each year group. Each class has a school council suggestion box. Comments are encouraged, anonymously if preferred. Monitors perform routine tasks quite happily. As pupils progress through the year groups, they undertake more complex tasks and have more opportunities for taking responsibility.
13. Levels of attendance have fallen slightly from the previous inspection but this is due mainly to a sickness bug. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average. Levels for this term show an improvement to over 95 per cent. Registration is taken swiftly and this has a positive influence on the attitudes to learning. The afternoon registration is more relaxed, giving time for the pupils to calm down after play. The marking of the registers is consistently good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. Teaching is sound overall in the Foundation Stage and for infant and junior pupils. It is frequently good. Teaching is similar to the standard reported previously for juniors and has improved for infants. Teaching is good in Year 2 and very good in Year 6. This is a significant factor in enabling pupils to make good and often very good progress in those years. During the inspection, teaching was good in 40 per cent of lessons. It was very good in a further 9 per cent of lessons and excellent in 5 per cent. Teaching was unsatisfactory in only one lesson when the teacher did not ensure that classroom support staff developed pupils' skills and knowledge effectively. The scrutiny of pupils' work from the last school year shows that teachers' expectations were not consistently high enough. Teachers did not always use assessment information to match learning activities closely to the range of pupils' needs. This restricts standards. The teaching of mathematics is good in both infants and juniors. It is very good in Year 6 and enables pupils to make very good progress in developing their numeracy skills. The teaching of English is sound overall. It is good in some year groups, for example, Year 2. Teachers do not always use the National Literacy Strategy well to give a clear and consistent focus to lessons. They do not consistently challenge pupils to apply their literacy skills in a good range of subjects. This does not always enable pupils to improve their skills and limits the effectiveness of the school's literacy strategy.
15. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils. They know and control them successfully to enable them to focus attentively and try to achieve the lesson objective. Teachers use praise and encouragement to recognise achievement and pupils respond positively. For example, in a good Year 5 lesson, the teacher's good control of the class ensured a lively start to the lesson. She worked successfully with support staff to ensure that all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, contributed fully to the opening activity. The teacher used questions effectively to encourage pupils to put forward their ideas. She then challenged pupils to extend and improve their answers, for example, by replacing 'had' with other words such as 'possessed'.
16. Some teachers, for example, in Year 2 and Year 6, have high expectations of pupils to which they respond very well. They maintain a good pace and challenge pupils to achieve as much as they can in the lesson. For example, in an excellent Year 6 numeracy lesson, the teacher challenged the class 'Do you think that you can get this done in five minutes?' She regularly reminded pupils of how much time they had left which encouraged them to sustain their interest and achieve their target. Teachers do not always maintain such a brisk and demanding pace. Most organise interesting and stimulating introductory activities. However, teachers do not always ensure that the main activity is well paced or matched closely to the range of pupils' needs. For example, in an infant numeracy lesson, the teacher used a good opening activity using a dice to capture pupils' interest. Although the main activity was also using dice, it did not sustain pupils' attention effectively. There was only one dice to be used by a group of eight pupils so they had to wait for their turn. Some pupils were slower than others in recording their numbers. The pace of the lesson dropped and many pupils, especially the more able, were not challenged enough to extend their number knowledge.
17. Teachers make good use of homework to reinforce and extend pupils' skills and knowledge. They use it well to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, for example, to extend Year 3 and 4 pupils' understanding and use of multiplication tables. Many teachers also use it successfully to prepare pupils for history and science topics, for example, when Year 2 pupils were asked to use their research skills to find out who was king at the time of the Great Fire of London. Some teachers use interesting methods, for example, drama and role-play, to improve pupils' understanding of people's beliefs and feelings, for example, how they would feel if their house was burnt down. Teachers do not

use information and communication technology enough to support pupils' work in other subjects. Although some use word processing, for example, to create poems in English or to create bar charts in mathematics and science, they do not provide regular and frequent opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and promote higher standards.

18. Where teachers have good subject knowledge, they use it successfully to raise standards. For example, the specialist music teacher's very good musical knowledge encourages pupils to improve the quality of their singing in assemblies. They respond positively to her enthusiastic encouragement and sing loudly and tunefully, with clear diction. Where teachers and support staff are not so confident in their subject knowledge, this often restricts the development of pupils' skills and the standards attained. The teaching in an art lesson did not extend pupils' knowledge and skills, for example, of different artistic techniques or how to create different shades of colour. Pupils were not encouraged to think carefully enough about their initial designs. This led to a standard of work that was below expected levels. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, especially to encourage and praise pupils' efforts. However, few identify clearly and consistently what pupils need to do to improve the quality of their work. Where work is presented untidily, teachers do not point out specifically what pupils need to focus on. Similarly, teachers are beginning to establish pupils' improvement targets. Most are retained in the front of pupils' workbooks to provide an effective reminder. However, the targets are not specific enough to promote clear improvement. Although many pupils know what their targets are, for example 'improve punctuation', few know how or on what they specifically needed to focus to raise the quality of their work.
19. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall and is sometimes good or very good. As a consequence children make steady and sometimes good progress towards their early learning goals. Progress is better in personal, social and emotional and creative aspects, particularly musical, than it is for the other areas of learning because the teaching is better. Positive features of the teaching are the constructive manner in which staff interact with children while they play. Teachers usually ask good questions to promote children's thinking, and have warm, caring relationships with children. Teachers plan and prepare lessons conscientiously and ensure that the necessary resources are to hand. Teachers base their planning on the government guidance for children of this age. They do not always identify what is to be learnt from each activity, particularly in many of the play activities such as the use of construction sets, sand and water. This means that sometimes children spend too much time at one stage of learning before moving on. Teachers have a sound understanding of how young children learn and manage them very well. The classroom for the mixed age class is cramped. This hampers the way that teachers set out the classroom to enable resources to be used to best advantage. For example, children have little space to use construction kits for their model making and children have to write on their 'wipe clean' boards wherever they can find a space. The room is not well organised to promote maximum learning.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Early assessment and identification ensure that the school addresses learning difficulties as soon as possible. The individual education plans, which are drawn up by the class teacher and co-ordinator for special educational needs, are good. Targets for pupils are very specific and are regularly reviewed. Interviews that are held between the co-ordinator, classroom assistants and teachers provide a good forum for discussion about pupils' individual progress. These meetings are mutually beneficial allowing a frank exchange of information, guidance and sharing of strategies for using in the classroom. In lessons the pupils with special educational needs are well supported both by teachers and support assistants. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides an excellent role model in her teaching and pupils make great strides in their learning in these lessons. In the best class lessons classroom assistants take an active part in all aspects of the lesson. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, the classroom assistant helped pupils achieve in the

oral part of the lesson by whispering questions and prompts, extending the pupil's knowledge. By giving silent signals to the teacher when the pupils wanted to answer a question addressed to all the class, she ensured their active involvement. Not all classroom assistants offer this good level of support during oral sessions. Pupils mostly receive good support during lessons both by teachers and other adults.

21. Teaching for the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is sound overall and often good. Pupils with low level English language skills are assessed and their learning needs identified. The school works closely with external agencies to address pupils' specific language needs successfully. The good use of support staff enables these pupils to be included fully in most lessons. Teachers do not always ensure that they match activities to the learning needs, for example, to meet their English language ability.

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

22. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides a sound range of learning activities that meets the statutory requirements for all National Curriculum subjects, with the exception of physical education, where swimming is not taught. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the coverage of the art and design and design and technology curriculum. The school does not cover all aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum, for example, multi-media aspects. In subjects, such as art, geography and music, some elements of the curriculum are not consistently developed. This is due to the organisation of curriculum time, some limited resources and variable teacher subject knowledge. As a result, lessons do not always build effectively on pupils' prior learning. Pupils do not increase knowledge and skills steadily year by year. The school does not place enough emphasis on the skills of investigation and enquiry. There are not enough opportunities to develop information and communication technology and library research skills across the curriculum.
23. In the Foundation Stage, pupils receive a curriculum that covers all the elements in the recently introduced national guidance. Teachers of reception pupils do not plan together. As a result pupils in the two classes receive a different range of learning activities.
24. The school has introduced clear policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Schemes of work are based on national subject guidance. Long term planning follows a two-year programme, effectively ensuring that pupils in mixed age classes receive the same coverage of the curriculum as those in single age classes. Teachers use this framework to inform their weekly and termly planning. The introduction of the schemes of work is beginning to improve the balance between the different curriculum aspects within subjects, but plans are not used consistently to extend skills and knowledge. Subject co-ordinators monitor curriculum plans, but do not always evaluate their impact on teaching and learning.
25. The school has fully implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. This is having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and standards achieved, particularly in mathematics. Teachers are less consistent in implementing the literacy strategy and the skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing are not developed fully across the curriculum. The school has made effective use of the national 'catch up' programmes, such as 'Additional Literacy Support' and 'Springboard' to accelerate the progress of pupils with difficulties in English and mathematics. Much of this work is helping such pupils make good progress. Occasionally, some pupils are withdrawn from the whole of their class literacy lesson to receive this support and miss valuable class teaching time.

26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. The school ensures that all pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement to a broad range of learning activities. This has a positive effect on learning. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of school life. When pupils are taken out of a lesson to receive extra help, this is mostly done sensitively and is well planned to meet particular pupils' needs. The special educational needs Code of Practice³ is fully implemented.
27. Teachers make good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, through the effective implementation of the behaviour policy, assemblies, religious education, science and other lessons. The school has a good programme including healthy living and sex education. The school encourages all pupils to work in harmony and participate fully in school life. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds have full access to the curriculum. The English co-ordinator has recently introduced a lunch time book club for older pupils, which is encouraging boys to read. In some clubs, such as choir and drama, few boys participate. The school does not monitor equality of access to out-of-school provision and has not put in place steps to encourage all groups to participate. The school has identified gifted and talented pupils. They benefit from links with a local secondary school and with the local education authority and Leicester University as part of the Excellent Schools' Initiative. Teachers do not always provide sufficient challenge for pupils already working at higher levels in lessons.
28. Pupils have access to a very good range of extra-curricular and out of school activities that enhance the curriculum considerably. In the infant years pupils visit Beaumanor Hall and a local farm, park and café. Older pupils visit a Sikh temple, local historical buildings and Snibston Discovery Park. A Year 6 residential trip is planned for later this school year. Recent visitors to the school have included writers, poets and a story-teller, theatre groups, a saxophone ensemble and a drummer. Some pupils benefit from the chance to learn a musical instrument. Junior pupils attend a wide range of out of school clubs, run by staff, including choir, drama, art and sports.
29. The school has good links with the local and wider community. Representatives from the local fire, police and health services visit regularly. Pupils visit St Catherine's old people's home at Christmas. They raise funds for a range of national charities and support the Catholic Children's Homes. Every December, pupils collect toys to donate to the Leicester Voluntary Action Group. The choir performs at an annual concert to raise funds for a local charity for mentally and physically handicapped. The school has good links with partner institutions. There are strong links with the local Catholic secondary school and local playgroup. This ensures good continuity for pupils as they move between different phases of their education. The school welcomes students from the local university and college and offers good opportunities to support their training.
30. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement since the last inspection when provision for spiritual and moral development was judged to be good, and that for social and cultural development was satisfactory.
31. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. The daily assemblies are very special occasions when pupils are given many imaginative opportunities to recognise the importance of the spiritual element in people's lives, and to relate these to their own. There are very good links with music and literacy, through readings, drama and poetry. These enrich pupils' experience, providing time for quiet and meaningful reflection. For example, a teacher read a poem by Wilfred Owen during an assembly preparing pupils for

³ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Acts.

the approaching Remembrance Sunday. All pupils listened attentively in perfect stillness. Afterwards, one pupil was moved to remark, 'Fighting solves nothing'. The high quality of pupils' singing makes an especially effective contribution to the daily acts of worship: pupils sing songs and prayers beautifully, with true feeling, conviction and reverence. There are very good opportunities to support pupils' spiritual development further in religious education lessons, when teachers follow up themes on initiation, belonging, and standing up for what is right. However, opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development in other lessons are not consistently promoted.

32. The school provides very good opportunities to develop pupils' moral development. Staff implement the agreed behaviour policy, and its principles are widely displayed around the school building. The school brochure carries clear guidelines, and the school's strong stance on moral development is embedded in its mission statement. The policy emphasises positive and responsible behaviour, tolerance and respect towards others. It is operated through encouragement and praise rather than censure. The values of right and wrong are promoted imaginatively in class and in assemblies. For instance, pupils improvised short plays demonstrating the importance of being honest and kind. These were presented to the school in assembly. Thus drama is used powerfully to illustrate the relationship between right and wrong, clearly showing pupils acceptable ways to behave towards each other. For example, one play showed how a group of pupils welcome an outsider into their game on the playground. Younger pupils explained what it felt like to be a new member of a club, team or association: 'At the beginning I was excited and a bit nervous, but then people made friends with me and let me sit with them'. The school promotes and recognises good behaviour at weekly assemblies when certificates are presented to pupils whose behaviour has been exemplary. Mid-day supervisors are empowered to award certificates for good behaviour at lunchtimes.
33. The provision for social development is very good. The school has established circle time⁴ and a school council which provide good opportunities for pupils to air their views and opinions. The school council was established two years ago, and meets regularly. It enables elected pupils from all year groups to exercise their qualities of responsibility towards the community. For example, the school council discussed whether girls should be allowed to play football or not. Circle time provides the opportunity for pupils to discuss matters that concern them. One pupil writes 'I enjoy circle time very much because it's a time when I can share my feelings about things with my friends'. The school's mission statement, behaviour policy and code of conduct very clearly emphasise assuming responsibility for one's own actions and having respect for others. The school has also set up informal systems enabling pupils to develop socially, such as the 'buddies' scheme and the 'friendship benches' so that pupils are not left out of playground games at playtimes. Paired reading between Year 6 and Year 2 pupils provide opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of mutual respect, responsibility and commitment. Activities within the local community also foster pupils' social development. For instance, there are regular visits to a nearby special school, and annual events such as carol-singing to elderly people in a local residents' home. The school encourages pupils to respond to appeals and disasters as part of its ethos of care and concern for others. Year 6 pupils have assumed complete responsibility for a daily book club which they organise every lunchtime, giving up their own free time in the service of others. The school recognises and promotes achievement in social development by awarding certificates in weekly assemblies.
34. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when it was satisfactory. Pupils learn about their own culture in lessons such as history. The way people lived in Victorian times is brought home vividly by visits to local places of interest, where pupils can dress up and become Victorian school

⁴ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference of interruption from other children.

children for a day. Ancient cultures are brought to life by visits from 'Roman soldiers' resplendent in their uniforms. Pupils experience for themselves what it must have been like to be a Roman as they are drilled and march to order on the playground. The school is developing ways in which it can extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures other than their own. For example, a visit to a local Sikh Temple enabled some pupils to gain an understanding of and respect for how different people worship. Festivals such as Divali are celebrated, and pupils experience the intricacies of Rangoli and Mendhi patterns. The school has organised a number of visitors to provide pupils with a greater insight into the different cultures in Britain today. An Islamic storyteller, Indian and African musicians and dancers have visited school, and a musician thrilled pupils by bringing a range of percussion instruments including many different drums which he encouraged all pupils to play. The school has started to address the weaknesses in art and music identified at the time of the last inspection. There are still not enough musical instruments from other countries, nor are the art resources in place that would enrich pupils' experiences of the work of artists beyond Europe. Pupils sing songs from other cultures such as Shalom, and listen to woodwind music from South America as they enter the hall for assembly. However opportunities are not always taken to develop their knowledge and understanding of this music because there is rarely any explanation or discussion of it.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved upon its care for all pupils. It is now good with many examples of very good practice. The ethos is underpinned strongly by the Roman Catholic faith. Every pupil irrespective of background is valued. The parents and carers' appreciate the good quality of care their children receive.
36. The school has good procedures to monitor and promote the pupils' welfare. It has adopted the locally agreed procedures for child protection. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are both fully trained in this aspect. In 2003 there will be whole staff re-training to ensure all members of staff are aware of issues. There is a designated member of staff for first aid and an adequate number of fully trained staff. Accident books are in place and all injuries properly recorded. Health and safety, including security, are given high priority and regular risk assessments conducted. Governors acted upon the recommendations of a recent local education authority health and safety audit and all maintenance checks are in place.
37. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance are good though there is no formal policy. The school uses computerised forms that make monitoring attendance more effective. The education welfare officer visits regularly, examines the registers and meets with the headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator. All absences below 90 percent are discussed. Good attendance is celebrated in assemblies by awarding certificates. Parents are reminded of their responsibilities, through the prospectus and other publications, to ensure their child attends school.
38. Procedures to monitor and promote behaviour are good. There is a whole school policy that the pupils clearly understand and generally adhere to. The policy is consistently applied, especially in class. As a result, lessons flow well and learning is not interrupted by poor behaviour. The developing School Council and older pupils' involvement in a 'Buddy' system for playtime contribute to promoting behaviour standards. The midday supervisors supervise playtime effectively and are alert to any form of bullying or racism. In the unlikely event of an incident occurring, there are good monitoring and reporting forms. The good standards of behaviour support the positive views of the overwhelming number of parents. A few parents raised the issue of pupils being isolated by their fellows. Playtime was carefully observed but there was no evidence to support this concern. The school is aware of previous incidents and takes measures to prevent re-occurrences in the future. Pupils play happily together, regardless of gender or origins. For those pupils with

behaviour needs, the special educational needs co-ordinator has good links with all relevant outside agencies.

39. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. They have improved since the time of the last inspection when procedures were judged to be sound.
40. Pupils' attainment and progress are carefully tracked throughout the school and recorded in a series of regularly written reports. All subject areas of the curriculum are included, as well as information about pupils' personal development and attitudes. Each section contains targets for future development. In October and February teachers complete pupil monitoring reports, which are sent home before open evenings, when parents are welcomed to discuss their children's attainment and progress. In the summer term, teachers write a third, more detailed, narrative report. Again, parents are invited to school to discuss the report. These end-of-year reports constitute the pupil profile: they are bound together and follow the pupil from year to year. At each stage, parents and pupils contribute to the reports in writing. Assessments of attainment include statutory standard assessment tasks in Years 2 and 6, optional tests in Years 3, 4, and 5, and annual reading tests. In addition, teachers maintain mark-books of other informal assessments they conduct during the term.
41. Monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Pupils are encouraged to consider their behaviour and attitudes, and to recognise the impact of their actions on others. All classteachers take their pastoral care responsibilities very conscientiously. In assemblies once a week certificates are awarded promoting good behaviour as well as effort and achievement academically. Circle Times are further occasions when personal development is fostered and monitored informally by staff. In Year 6, pupils write a Weekly Journal recording their own assessments of how they are doing, both academically and personally. The use of the very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress varies across the school. For instance, the marking policy is not implemented consistently. Target-setting for pupils is in place but the systems are not developed fully at present and are inconsistent from year group to year group. For example, targets are not always matched to the pupil or clear enough to be of great value. In conversation, some pupils are unaware of their targets. This is especially so in English. In mathematics, however, targets for pupils' individual needs are more precise and relate more closely to the individual pupil.
42. The deputy headteacher is very effective as the assessment co-ordinator. She has worked closely with the headteacher to establish a broad school-wide range of assessment systems to record and predict pupils' academic achievement and likely performance in the core subjects. They have worked hard to make the systems meaningful and useful, providing teachers, pupils and parents with valuable information about individual progress. All teachers have very detailed assessment information so that they can gain a clear understanding about the pupils in their care. This represents a considerable improvement since the time of the last inspection when assessment arrangements were judged to be sound.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Since the previous inspection the school has improved its links with parents, which are now very good and a strength of the school. The parents make a significant contribution to improving the quality of education provided. Prior to the enrolment of reception pupils, members of staff visit the children's playgroups and nurseries. This gives an opportunity to create confidence and allow for an early assessment of children's skills to be conducted. One or two parents would like to see a staggered method of induction for the very young rather than the present system. Those parents felt that the impact on learning was lost for a few days due to their child being upset.
44. Parents feel very comfortable with approaching the school and feel welcome. Parents' views are gathered in a number of ways, including the school's own questionnaire. Parents are given the results of these surveys. This helps the school plan for future improvement. The special educational needs co-ordinator has very good links with parents. They are fully involved in reviews and given advice so that they can support their child's learning. Routine information, such as newsletters and the prospectus, is detailed and well presented. A few parents would like better information as to the curriculum and topic work going to be taught. The governors' annual report to parents is detailed but does not include the requirement relating to disabled pupils.
45. Many parents help in the life of the school, for example, helping with reading to improve standards in literacy. Another helps with information and communication technology using good subject knowledge and experience to benefit the pupils' computer skills. A dedicated and enthusiastic 'Parent Teacher Association' organises fund raising events that are extremely well supported by parents and staff. The profits from the events purchase much needed resources, such as books. This co-operation helps improve the quality of education for the pupils.
46. Some parents were disappointed with the range of extra-curricular activities and also disappointed that swimming and last year's residential trip for Year 6 were cancelled. The school has planned to reintroduce residential trips this academic year. Overall, however, inspectors found that the range and quality of extra-curricular activities are very good and improve the quality of pupils' learning in many non-curriculum areas.
47. Most parents are happy with the quality of homework, though a few felt there were inconsistencies between classes. Reading books are changed frequently and most parents do help with homework. Comments are made in the diaries and feedback is given. Many parents are confident that they can see the progress their children make by homework. Homework can be fun and involve the whole family. This was exemplified clearly in assemblies. Pupils had to think about, elect and write about their 'Greatest Briton'. Parents and grandparents became involved. Such activities encourage pupils' research skills and help to improve learning.
48. The school has held literacy and numeracy workshops for parents. In addition, a tutor from Leicester College holds regular lessons for parents to explain modern teaching methods in literacy and numeracy. This scheme called 'Partners in Reading' is a structured course leading to accreditation. The long-term objective is to provide parents with the skills to support their children's learning at home better.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership and management are good. They have been maintained at the good quality reported previously. The headteacher provides good, strong leadership. She continues to give a clear and positive direction to the work of the school based on the school's strong mission statement and clearly stated aims. Many of these are reflected well in the daily routines of the school, especially the routines relating to its caring Catholic ethos, pupils' personal development, equal opportunities and partnership with parents. The school has not yet managed to establish a consistent focus on enabling pupils to develop to their full potential. Staffing changes during the last school year led to some management restructuring, which has contributed to an increasingly effective team approach. The good partnership between the headteacher and her deputy, working closely with a good staff team and supportive governors, is focused strongly on school improvement. The school is now well placed to raise standards of attainment, particularly for junior pupils.
50. The school has improved its monitoring and evaluation procedures, a key issue at the last inspection. The headteacher has worked closely with subject co-ordinators, local education authority inspectors and governors to develop a detailed programme for monitoring teaching and learning. This programme has focused mainly on literacy and numeracy. It has identified good practice within those subjects which has been shared between staff to raise standards of teaching, particularly in numeracy. Opportunities for other subject co-ordinators to evaluate teaching and to focus strongly on, and share, key features of good teaching are not yet fully established. The school has planned a programme for extending these opportunities, although it has not yet provided training for other subject leaders. The senior management team makes good use of staff meetings to develop teachers' knowledge and understanding of pupils' levels of attainment. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have made very good progress, since the last inspection, on developing school assessment procedures. These are used effectively to track pupils' progress and to set class, year and school targets for improvement. They are contributing to raising standards. The school is developing improvement targets for individual pupils. The targets are shared with pupils and their parents to give an agreed focus on improvement. However, many are not specific enough to give the pupils precise targets for improvement and to inform the assessment procedures more fully.
51. The governing body continues to provide good support to the headteacher and staff. Governors are kept fully informed about school developments by regular, very detailed reports from the headteacher. The chair of governors maintains frequent contact with the headteacher and has a good understanding of school priorities for improvement. All governors are linked to subjects. They come into school regularly to observe lessons and to discuss developments with the different subject co-ordinators. Many governors have benefited from training and are becoming increasingly confident and influential in their roles. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. A detailed school development plan provides a good direction to the work of the school. It is drawn up by the headteacher and staff and presented to the governors' school improvement and finance committees for ratification and costings. Governors monitor progress in the different planning priorities effectively. They are involved in some aspects of strategic planning, for example, when discussing issues with their linked subject co-ordinators and financial planning. Governors monitor spending levels closely to ensure that funds are targeted efficiently on school improvement. The current higher than usual level of budget carry-over is planned to be used once the new building is in use. Governors make a good constructive contribution to improving the school's effectiveness. They fulfil most of their statutory responsibilities, although some requirements in their annual report to parents are not met fully.

52. The new co-ordinator for special educational need manages the provision for these pupils very well. Procedures for tracking the progress of pupils with special educational needs and for identifying how best to support their needs are thorough. Recently the co-ordinator has made many improvements in the recording of pupils' progress and the involvement of parents. This has been a very positive development, which improved the quality of provision for the pupils. The co-ordinator has further plans to make improvements and to monitor teaching.
53. The school is well staffed with a sufficient number of teachers who share an appropriate range of skills and experience. Members of staff who are new to the school, including newly qualified teachers, are well supported. The induction programme and the support provided by senior staff are much appreciated by new entrants to the profession. The school also supports teachers in training on a regular basis. The schools' strategy for performance management is good. Targets are agreed and personal development opportunities are linked appropriately to whole school, as well as individual, needs. Opportunities for all staff to attend courses are generally good, although there is a need for training in music and art. Teachers effectively share the knowledge and skills gained with their colleagues. There is a good number of learning support assistants who provide teachers with a good level of support during lessons. The secretarial and clerical staff contribute very effectively to the administration and organisation of the school. The caretaker and cleaning staff keep the school very clean and well maintained.
54. The overall quality of accommodation is satisfactory. The school is old but well cared for. Parents contribute towards the upkeep of the building and there is a regular programme of redecoration. Good use is made of display to create an interesting and attractive learning environment. The difficulties associated with the use of three mobile classrooms are managed well. The school is about to embark on a building programme which will replace these within a year. Some classrooms for older pupils lack space and make practical work in art and science difficult. The lack of space in the Reception and Year 1 classroom means that it is not possible to provide the full range of practical activities suited to this age group. The school has an attractive garden and wildlife area, with provision for outdoor and adventurous activities as a result of the Millennium Appeal. The playground is adequate in size. The school does not have its own playing fields, but has access to them locally and makes good use of these.
55. There is a satisfactory range of learning resources and they have been improved since the last inspection. The range and quantity of books are good and the pupils benefit from the increased number of computers in the new computer suite. Resources for art are limited in range, which restricts what can be taught. The library has a satisfactory range of information books, although there was little evidence during the inspection of pupils using it to extend their research skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In the context of its many strengths, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) raise the standards attained by Year 6 pupils in information and communication technology by:
 - enabling pupils to apply their skills in a broad range of subjects;
 - extend the range of resources to develop pupils' skills in all required aspects;
(paragraphs 6, 17, 22 and 115-6)
- (2) ensure that teachers use assessment information consistently to:
 - match activities to pupils' learning needs;
 - ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge build on prior learning;
(paragraphs 14, 16, 74, 82, 89, 92, 104 and 110)
- (3) improve the teaching of English to match the good teaching in mathematics by:
 - identifying clear and specific learning objectives and sharing them with pupils;
 - extending the range of opportunities for pupils to complete extended pieces of written work;
 - enabling pupils to apply their literacy skills to support work in a good range of subjects;
(paragraphs 3-4, 14, 25, 71 and 73-4)
- (4) improve the quality of pupils' learning targets by making them more precise and linked more closely to learning objectives;
(paragraphs 18, 41, 50, 75 and 93)
- (5) meet the curriculum requirement of including swimming in the areas of activity for physical education.
(paragraphs 22 and 126)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	3	5	23	25	1	0	0
Percentage	5	9	40	44	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents almost two 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)	335
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	65

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	27	22	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	23	27
	Girls	22	22	20
	Total	45	45	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (96)	92 (98)	96 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	26	26
	Girls	22	20	22
	Total	45	46	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (98)	94 (100)	98 (96)
	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	28	23	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	24	26
	Girls	17	16	18
	Total	43	40	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (80)	78 (70)	86 (89)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	20	24
	Girls	14	14	17
	Total	34	34	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (93)	67 (87)	80 (96)
	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
228	3	0
0	0	0
33	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
18	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)	12.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.9
Average class size	29.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	219.75

FTE means full-time equivalent

Financial information

Financial year	2001 / 02
	£
Total income	680,495
Total expenditure	676,189
Expenditure per pupil	2,001
Balance brought forward from previous year	34,936
Balance carried forward to next year	39,242

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 33.4%

Number of questionnaires sent out	335
Number of questionnaires returned	112

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	3	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	48	46	5	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	55	3	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	49	12	4	2
The teaching is good.	48	47	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	50	15	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	43	3	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	33	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	49	9	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	47	43	0	1	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	43	3	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	37	11	5	11

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

57. Children are admitted full time in September with the older 20 children forming a mixed age class with 10 Year 1 pupils. The younger 27 children whose birthdays fall after March are in a separate class.
58. The curriculum planned for children under five is satisfactory. It is securely based on the guidance for learning recommended for young children and prepares them satisfactorily for the National Curriculum. Assessment information shows that most children enter the reception classes with slightly below average attainment. Children attain the expected standards for children of this age by the time they enter Year 1. In the areas of personal, social and emotional learning and in aspects of creative development, they exceed the expected standards. This is not quite as good as it was at the time of the last inspection when children achieved standards above those expected nationally in most areas of learning. However, direct comparisons are not possible because of the changes to the national structure of the Foundation Stage. Children who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress as adults closely monitor the children's learning and provide skilful support when it is needed.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Staff place a strong emphasis on this area of learning and the teaching is good. Staff are caring, supportive and encouraging towards the children. They celebrate children's successes with praise in order to develop their confidence and self-esteem. They set good examples for the children by treating them with respect and expecting them to be responsible and to play together. This leads to trusting relationships and helps children to understand one another's points of view. Children develop good levels of independence because they have plenty of opportunities to choose activities and equipment for themselves. As a result children are often engrossed in activities for more than 20 minutes, a good period for children of this age. Several boys played meaningfully with a construction kit making models, quietly discussing what they were doing with one another. Children fully understand the rules and routines of school life and have positive attitudes to learning. There is a clear expectation that pupils will behave well, and they do. In both classes children take turns when playing games. They share equipment willingly because staff promote and encourage children to do this. Children understand the need to put up their hands to answer questions and most remember well. Staff encourage children to tidy up after themselves and they do so to the best of their ability. Most children are on track to achieve the early learning goals in the development of social skills. Many are likely to exceed these by the end of the reception year.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Many children enter school with immature skills in reading and writing but their speaking skills are average for their age. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is satisfactory overall. By the end of the reception year many children achieve the expected standards in this area of learning. Staff provide good opportunities for children to answer questions and to speak at length in whole class lessons. Younger children listen with rapt attention to the story of 'Mr Wolf's Pancakes' and answer the teacher's questions at length. They ask their own questions confidently and are keen to volunteer information. The role-play area is very popular and children are keen to re-enact the story of 'Red Riding Hood'. Teachers join in the play, asking suitable questions to increase children's vocabulary and use of language. The good provision for promoting children's speaking skills has a positive effect on their reading and writing. Staff use large reading books well to create enthusiasm for stories. They put a strong emphasis on the teaching of letter sounds and children are making good progress in the recognition of these. Many know a few letter

sounds and some higher attaining children already know some of the words in their reading books.

61. Parents are very involved in helping their child, particularly in reading. This makes a very positive contribution to their child's progress. Some children, including a few of the younger children, can already write their name. A few higher attaining children write one or two words independently. The older children, often the girls, are keen to learn to write and enthusiastically choose to practise their writing on 'wipe clean' boards. However, both classes lack a stimulating designated area where children can choose to write. Although children use the role play area to write in the mixed age class, it is more because of the lack of available space in the room rather than being motivated by the equipment and resources. Although staff are keen to promote children's writing they do not always organise the lessons in the best possible way. For example, on occasions too many of the children are writing at the same time. Staff are unable to monitor effectively what the children are doing because they spend a long time with each child writing down what the child has said. As a consequence some children waste time waiting.

Mathematical development

62. Most children are on track to attain the early learning goal by the end of the year because the teaching of this area of learning, particularly numeracy, is often good. Staff provide good opportunities for children to practise counting and to choose games and puzzles which will reinforce numerical concepts. Children are learning to count to 10 and beyond. Many of the younger children are confident recognising and counting numbers to 5. The teaching of the oral parts of lessons is good and teachers use motivating resources such as puppets to fire children's enthusiasm. They ask questions well such as 'How do you know?' to help children think through their answers. Many children, including some of the younger ones, identify simple shapes, such as circle, square and triangle. Staff take every opportunity to promote children's knowledge of numbers and use registration time to practise counting. Staff provide good opportunities for children to learn through practical activities such as games and puzzles. Children investigate how much liquid different containers hold and many know terms such as 'full and empty'. Staff do not identify in their planning what they want children to learn from some of the play activities such as sand and water. This means that children do not build on their knowledge and skills as systematically as they might.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. The school makes satisfactory provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning. Staff introduce and reinforce children's understanding of the passage of time through looking at the child's own development and through the use of artefacts. Children learn about the life cycles of frogs and mini-beasts. They learn about the characteristics of animals such as lizards and how to handle baby chicks with care through first-hand experience. Children develop their early geographical skills through the use of simple road layouts. Children make models using construction kits to a good standard and show perseverance in their construction. Staff use relevant computer programs, often linked to language and mathematical learning. Children have average skills in using the computer. They click on icons on the screen and use the mouse confidently. Many children are on track to reach the expectations in all aspects of the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes.

Physical development

64. Children make satisfactory progress in their physical development because the teaching is sound. Children have regular access to a good-sized outside play area. Staff satisfactorily monitor children's learning in the outside area but teachers have not identified ways of ensuring that skills are built upon systematically. As a result many children repeat some of the same skills they already know, rather than using them in more challenging

ways. Staff teach lessons in the hall where children explore the large apparatus. Many children are confident jumping from quite high benches, using the ropes and climbing apparatus. They show determination and reasonable control when balancing on a narrow beam that is off the ground. The teacher offers good suggestions and gives children opportunities to practise and refine their movements. Their progress is not as good as it might be because some time is wasted while children queue up for a turn on the apparatus. Children's skills in using pencils, scissors and paintbrushes are developing satisfactorily. However, teachers rarely check if children are holding pencils and paintbrushes correctly. Higher attaining children have good physical skills and most children will achieve the expected standard by the end of the year.

Creative development

65. Children make satisfactory progress in their creative development, and good progress in music, particularly in the mixed age class. They sing simple songs in tune and explore the sounds different percussion instruments make. In a very good music lesson children tapped out a simple rhythm and described how to play their instrument as a result of the teacher's high expectations. Teachers provide good support in painting when mixing skin tones but do not provide children with enough opportunities to mix colours themselves or, in the mixed age class, to paint. Children love to paint in the weekly lesson in the mixed age class, enhancing their picture of fireworks with glitter with great enthusiasm. Good use is made of the classroom assistant in the mixed age class. In an art lesson the classroom assistant kept up a stream of questions to help children observe their features in mirrors and draw their face. As a result of this support children made very good progress and produced detailed drawings. Children have satisfactory opportunities to choose their own materials for collages and to experiment with materials. The displays on the wall indicate that sometimes they fill in an adults outline drawing with small pieces of paper. This practice limits the progress children make in their creative development. Staff provide children with good opportunities to develop their imagination and creativity when playing in 'Red Riding Hood's' house and children enjoy dressing up and pretending to be the characters in the story. Most children are on track to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

ENGLISH

66. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards in reading and writing that are well above the national average. This reflects the results of the national tests over the last four years. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Standards in speaking and listening are not as high although they meet nationally expected levels. By the end of Year 6 pupils attain average standards overall in English. Their speaking and listening and reading skills meet expected levels. Their writing skills are improving and many are likely to achieve above expected levels by the end of the year. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection.
67. Infant pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. In lessons pupils listen well to their teacher and to each other. This is a reflection of the good standards of behaviour and emphasis on mutual respect throughout the school. Pupils are keen to join in class and group discussions. They respond appropriately to the teacher's questions and know how to wait for their turn to speak. More able Year 2 pupils work well collaboratively and negotiate with each other effectively, to interpret complicated written instructions. Pupils make good progress in lessons where teachers ask challenging questions and prompt children to build up extended, thoughtful answers. However, in some lessons pupils have few opportunities to speak at length. Some teachers accept one word answers too often and do not give enough time for thinking and rehearsing answers.

68. Junior pupils maintain satisfactory progress in developing their speaking and listening skills and attain expected standards. They listen attentively for sustained periods of time and understand and follow instructions well. In good lessons, teachers focus on developing vocabulary, for example, by inviting pupils to explain their opinions. Teachers prompt pupils to search for precise vocabulary and to extend their answers. In a Year 4 lesson, where pupils were comparing two different types of poetry a pupil answered 'A Tanka is similar to a Haiku, only it has fewer syllables.' Teachers often encourage pupils to use 'pair talk' well to rehearse and formulate answers. This helps them to improve confidence and fluency before presenting their ideas to the whole class. However, teachers ask questions that only require short answers. They accept brief or vague responses and do not spend time interrogating word meanings. Support staff provide effective help for pupils with special educational needs, by repeating or rephrasing teachers' questions. They explain difficult words and help pupils formulate answers so that they can contribute to the lesson. As a result pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
69. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards in reading that are well above the national average. This results mainly from the good teaching in Year 2 and the effective use of the 'Early Literacy Support' programme for pupils with identified difficulties. Infant pupils are introduced to a wide range of stories and non-fiction books. Teachers use whole class and group lessons effectively to build pupils' knowledge of letter sounds and to help them use this knowledge effectively, with other clues, to work out unfamiliar words. Pupils check for meaning and self-correct when the text does not make sense. Pupils read regularly in school and at home. Most clearly enjoy reading. Average and more able pupils read aloud accurately, fluently and with confidence. They explain how to work out difficult words and read words such as 'celebrate' and 'knowledgeable' without hesitation. They are beginning to use expression to reflect the meaning of the text. Average and more able pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction, although many are not able to explain the library classification system. Less able pupils read more hesitantly, but with increasing independence. They recognise common words on sight and use letter sounds and pictures effectively to help work out longer words, such as 'ceiling' and 'painted'.
70. By the end of Year 6 pupils achieved below average standards in the 2002 reading tests. During the inspection week, however, inspectors found the current Year 6 pupils to be achieving average standards. They make good progress in reading fluency and accuracy and satisfactory progress in comprehension skills. Pupils make less than expected progress in library and research skills, including the use of information and communication technology. Teachers introduce junior pupils to a broad range of different text types, including different types of stories, poetry and non-fiction. Pupils read regularly at school and at home. Only the older junior pupils use the school library and they have a basic understanding of its classification system. Teachers encourage pupils to refer to what they have read to explain their opinions. In these lessons pupils make good progress in reading. In less effective lessons teachers' questions are not challenging enough to enable pupils to extend their knowledge and skills. Average and above average pupils read aloud fluently and use intonation well to reflect the content of the text. They discuss their reading in depth and talk about the main characters, for example 'She is easily led and can be stubborn'. Many pupils use appropriate examples from the story to justify their opinion. Less able pupils read complex texts aloud fluently and do not hesitate over words such as 'precious' and 'entirely'. They do not yet use intonation effectively.
71. In the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 2, pupils achieved above the national average in writing. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 2 are likely to achieve well above average levels by the end of the year. Average and more able pupils use a variety of sentence constructions, use a good range of vocabulary and make plausible attempts to spell long words. Less able pupils use simple sentences to communicate meaning and

spell a range of common words accurately. Infant pupils write in a good range of different forms, for example, stories, poems and letters. They do not have enough opportunities to write more extended pieces, particularly in Year 1, where pupils often spend too much time completing worksheets that do not extend their skills. Teachers use reading texts effectively to provide a model for writing and demonstrate in 'shared writing' sessions how to apply writing skills successfully.

72. In the 2002 writing tests at the end of Year 6, pupils achieved above average standards. This was mainly as a result of the whole school priority on improving writing standards, good teaching in Year 6 and the effective use of booster and revision programmes. From an analysis of current work, inspectors found that many Year 6 pupils are already attaining average standards. They are likely to achieve above average standards by the end of the year, promoted by the factors outlined above. Average and above average pupils organise ideas logically, and use varied sentence structures for interest and effect. Average pupils attempt to use longer sentences to join ideas, but not always with success. They choose words for effect and precision. One pupil wrote 'A slimy snake, who had been watching with a careful eye'. Less able pupils write short pieces with a simple structure and use mainly simple sentences.
73. Pupils do not always make consistent progress in writing through the junior years because teachers' expectations vary. Pupils learn to write in an appropriate range of writing styles, for different purposes and audiences. There are not enough opportunities for developing sustained pieces of writing. In the earlier junior years, teachers make too much use of isolated exercises to develop writing skills and pupils do not transfer these skills to their sustained writing. Teachers' subject knowledge is variable. In good lessons, teachers explain and demonstrate effectively how to organise ideas coherently between and within paragraphs and sentences. They focus on helping children to understand the importance of choosing words carefully and precisely for their effect on meaning. This leads to good progress in pupils' writing. However, in other lessons pupils are given too little guidance as to how to develop these skills and they make less progress. Pupils have some good opportunities to extend their literacy skills in other subjects, as in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were learning to write an historical account of the battle of Marathon. In other subjects, such as science, history and geography, pupils' writing is often limited to copying from the board. This does not promote consistent progress in writing and does not encourage pupils to extend their literacy skills in a broad range of subjects. The presentation of written work is satisfactory overall but inconsistent. In some classes pupils do not join their handwriting consistently. Teachers do not use information and communication technology enough to support the teaching of writing.
74. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but with significant variation. Teaching is good in Years 2 and 6. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy conscientiously, but some teachers are attempting to follow it too rigidly. This results in lessons that attempt to cover too much and lack a clear focus. Lesson planning varies in quality. The best plans are detailed and provide good support in guiding lesson structure, pace and content. Other plans do not identify daily lesson objectives or indicate how pupil activities will be adapted to meet the range of learning needs. In a significant proportion of lessons, daily learning objectives are not sufficiently specific and are not clearly explained to pupils. Teachers do not always use assessment information well to inform teaching and match activities to pupils' learning needs. Too often all pupils complete identical tasks. This results in insufficient challenge for more able pupils and tasks that are too difficult for the less able and limits progress. Pupils with special educational needs are often well supported by teaching assistants. However, they are not challenged enough to try the activity first before receiving help. Teaching and support staff also offer good guidance to the few pupils for whom English is an additional language. They ensure that pupils understand the learning task and extend their knowledge and use of their English language skills.

75. In the best lessons, the teacher maintains a good pace to the introduction, using a varied range of activities and providing frequent opportunities for all pupils to participate. In less successful lessons, pupils spend too long listening to the teacher. Teachers do not use the review sessions at the end of lessons to reinforce key teaching points and to review progress against the learning objective. All pupils have individual writing targets. These targets are not always precise enough to help pupils improve their work and are they are not given sufficient priority within lessons. In some cases targets are not based on an accurate assessment of pupils' learning needs and more able and less able pupils have the same targets. Teachers mark work regularly and many give constructive feedback to pupils. This does not always give a clear focus for improvement linked to the learning objective and pupils' targets. The subject co-ordinator, in close consultation with the literacy consultant from the local education authority, has evaluated teachers' marking and is focusing increasingly on improving this aspect.
76. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. She has monitored teaching and its impact on learning, for example, an effective evaluation of the school's Early Literacy Strategy led to clear points for improvement. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans. She uses guidance from the local education authority to analyse the results of national tests. This evaluation of pupils' literacy skills and the standards attained identifies areas for improvement. This information is not always used consistently to inform pupils' individual improvement targets.

MATHEMATICS

77. Standards in mathematics have continued to rise and pupils attain above the national average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Results of the national tests over the last four years show an improving trend in the proportion of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils who achieve the nationally expected levels. The proportion of pupils achieving higher than expected levels also increased. For example, almost half of the Year 2 pupils attained higher than average levels in 2002. Nearly a third of Year 6 pupils attained the above average level. Inspection evidence confirms these improving results.
78. The evidence from inspection is that Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are presently attaining average standards. Few are attaining higher than average levels. However, lessons observed during the inspection indicate that pupils are well on course to continue improving standards and achieve the targets set by the school by the end of this academic year. This judgement is based mainly on the following factors:
- the high quality of teaching especially in the Year 6 classes;
 - the good provision and support for pupils with special educational needs;
 - the very good behaviour and attitudes of pupils towards mathematics;
 - the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy;
 - the regular setting of good homework activities.
- Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the standards expected of them in numeracy and most other required areas of mathematics. Standards are lower at present in data handling due to less coverage and limited use of information and communication technology to extend pupils' knowledge and skills.
79. In accordance with the school's strong stance on educational inclusion and supported by its very good procedures to track pupils' progress, there are no marked differences in the attainment of girls and boys or different groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from learning assistants and class teachers enabling them to make good progress in lessons. The small number pupils for whom English is an additional language also benefit from good support and make good progress.

80. In Year 2 pupils count forwards and backwards accurately in multiples of 2,3, 5 and 10. They put a range of numbers in correct order, and at the start of lessons use their knowledge and understanding to calculate problems involving addition and subtraction at speed. For example they calculate three more than 17, and four less than 20 rapidly in their heads. Using individual whiteboards they record their calculations as they play a fast-paced game – ‘Three in a Row’ – involving addition and subtraction. They recognise simple two-dimensional shapes such as squares, rectangles and triangles and know that dice are cubes. They are beginning to apply their knowledge and understanding of number successfully to construct addition and subtraction sums based on three numbers only. By the age of 11, pupils speedily work out calculations in their heads, and are investigating the relationship between multiplication and repeated addition when working out problems. They understand simple fractions, and are beginning to investigate the properties of quadrilaterals and other two-dimensional shapes. They are beginning to measure accurately in centimetres, for example, when comparing the diagonals of different types of quadrilaterals, and use set squares to measure right angles. They use protractors well to measure acute, obtuse and reflex angles.
81. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the infants is good and very good in the juniors. In Year 6 the quality of teaching observed during the inspection ranged from very good to excellent. In these lessons the best teaching was characterised by a number of factors:
- lesson objectives made explicit at the start;
 - crisp pace, pushing forward pupils’ learning with a strong sense of purpose;
 - clear explanations and instructions;
 - challenging work matched to pupils’ needs;
 - frequent intervention and effective questioning;
 - summing up at the end leaving pupils with a strong sense of achievement.
82. In the excellent lessons, teachers encourage pupils to make predictions and solve problems in their own way, using practical apparatus such as set squares. They provide challenging tasks that make their pupils think really hard. Pupils respond well to demanding questions such as ‘What does that tell us about the diagonals of a rhombus in relation to diagonals of a square?’ Teachers use encouraging remarks and comments to promote perseverance and effort: ‘Make a prediction – be a maths detective!’ These strategies sustain the pace of the lesson and motivate pupils very effectively. Where lessons are satisfactory, teachers are not yet matching work well enough to challenge the more able pupils. At times, in the main activity part of lessons, teachers allow the pace to slacken and pupils’ learning slows down. Very occasionally pupils lose concentration and waste time because they do not understand fully what they have to do.
83. Experienced and well-briefed classroom assistants provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs and the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language in mathematics lessons. A very good feature of teaching throughout the school is the close liaison between class teachers and assistants so that pupils are asked specific questions and given the opportunity to ‘shine’. For example, a Year 2 pupil is keen to suggest two different addition sums using only 6,2, and 8, and an older pupil is invited to sing his own problem involving multiplication for the rest of the class to calculate.
84. Teachers know the National Numeracy Strategy and they use questioning well. Their lesson plans follow the three-part format, although occasionally the ‘warm-up quick-fire’ introductory part is not ‘quick-fire’ enough and lasts too long. Teachers use resources such as whiteboards effectively so that all pupils are engaged in calculations and time is used efficiently. These activities generate interest and a sense of fun as well as providing teachers and assistants with the opportunity to conduct immediate assessments. Some teachers promote numeracy skills where appropriate in some subjects. For example in Year 2 pupils complete the scale in litres on a measuring jug when writing instructions

about making jelly. However, teachers do not consistently extend pupils' numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics.

85. Pupils enjoy mathematics, showing interest and determination. They respond positively in the initial warm-up sessions, being keen to answer and eager to contribute their explanations. They use mathematical vocabulary very confidently, such as 'quadrilateral', 'rhombus' and 'adjacent'. When required they work together very well, sharing resources properly and tidying them away carefully when lessons end. They do not always take enough care when recording their work. Many have not yet developed strategies to enable them set out their calculations neatly, sometimes leading to mistakes when the place value of numbers is muddled.
86. The school uses a range of assessment procedures very well to assess pupils' mathematical attainment and progress. Regular reports are made to parents about their children's achievement, progress, and future targets. Pupils have targets to help them develop their mathematical skills further, although the targets are not always specific enough to meet individual needs. The marking of pupils' work is not in accordance with the school's detailed policy, and the presentation of pupils' work varies between classes. Nevertheless, the school has made admirable improvements since the time of the last inspection. The dynamic mathematics co-ordinator, in her role as deputy headteacher, is regularly released from teaching her class. She uses some of this time to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the subject throughout the school. The rigorous analysis of test results is used to tweak the curriculum and homework is regularly set. Standards are rising, teachers are more confident and pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics.

SCIENCE

87. In the 2002 teacher assessments of pupils in Year 2, attainment was above the national average. The evidence from inspection is that pupils are currently working at the nationally expected level. Few are working above this level at this early stage of the year. Year 2 pupils are making good progress and are likely to achieve similar standards to last year. Pupils produce a satisfactory amount of work in lessons, although only a limited amount is recorded in their books. They are much more competent orally than their written work indicates.
88. Most Year 2 pupils follow instructions accurately to carry out simple investigations. They are developing an understanding of the need to make tests fair. The higher attaining Year 2 pupils did this well when they investigated which would be the best material to make a waterproof hat for a teddy. They name all the major parts of the body successfully and identify accurately the similarities and differences between themselves and a friend. Pupils know whether things are living or not. Most classify mini-beasts according to the number of legs they have or how they move. All pupils can name the main parts of a flower and show a good understanding of what plants need to grow well. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 named the materials used to make a wide variety of objects. All classified them well according to properties such as hard, soft, smooth, rough or shiny. The highest attaining pupils described why the materials were particularly suited to different purposes.
89. In the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 6, the school's performance was in line with the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 6 pupils are on target to achieve similar standards to last year. They are working hard to improve their investigative skills and to show more independence when planning and recording their results. As a result, it is likely that more pupils will achieve above the nationally expected level this year. Progress from Year 3 to Year 6 is satisfactory. However, the school is aware of the need to plan work more carefully to ensure that pupils in different year groups do not do the same work at the same level. This currently restricts overall progress.

90. By the end of Year 6, pupils carry out investigations competently and record their results and conclusions clearly. However, they rely too much on teacher direction. Their ability to plan their own fair tests and methods of recording results is improving although is still under-developed. Their explanations of what they have done or seen often lack precision. The skills of precise explanations and their use of appropriate scientific terminology are both under-developed. Pupils have a sound understanding of the work they do and their factual knowledge is secure. For example, most have a good understanding of factors affecting our health. They know which foods are good for us, and which are not. Pupils know the differences between solids, liquids and gases and correctly apply the terms to materials. They know that some changes in materials are reversible and that others are not. They use this knowledge effectively to separate mixtures. Years 3 and 4 pupils understand why we need electricity and identify dangers associated with it. They are able to make circuits to light a bulb. During the inspection they were beginning to develop their understanding of insulators and conductors so that they could make switches to include in their circuits. Pupils complete a satisfactory amount of written work in the time available, but many do not take care with its presentation and work is often untidy. Too much of the work is copied from the teacher and, as a result, the pupils' ability to explain work in their own words is limited. Despite this, pupils have a good general knowledge by the end of Year 6 and this allows them to achieve as well as they do in the tests.
91. Pupils who have special educational needs are integrated well into lessons. They receive effective help from classroom assistants when they are present, or, from the teacher or more able friends. As a result, they achieve well for their ability. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language receive good guidance to ensure that they understand fully what is required of them. They benefit from good help in using and understanding scientific terms and make sound, and often good, progress.
92. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, with a significant number of good features. During the inspection, almost half the teaching was good and none was unsatisfactory. This is an improvement on the last inspection. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, who behave well and enjoy the lessons. Teachers organise in detail and plan interesting activities. They use questions effectively to find out what pupils have understood and to get them to apply their knowledge. Teachers all create an atmosphere where pupils feel confident to answer questions, even if they are not sure whether they are right. Pupils know teachers will value their contributions and as a result, they are always keen to answer or to volunteer to take part. They listen carefully to each other and to the teacher in order to do this. Classroom assistants have a positive impact on the work of those pupils they are working with in class, although these pupils make less progress when support is not available. Teachers plan their lessons based on recent national guidance and their planning is clear and detailed. However, teachers do not always take enough account of the fact that they have a wide variation of age and ability in their classes. Consequently, pupils often do the same work and for some it is too challenging and for others it is too easy. Teachers of pupils in the juniors are often too prescriptive about what they expect pupils to do. As a result, pupils are not as independent as they need to be to achieve the highest levels at the end of Year 6.
93. Teachers are conscientious about ensuring work is marked promptly and they always try to make positive comments. However, their marking does not prepare pupils properly for the precise answers that are required in national tests. The opportunity to improve pupils' work by identifying what they have done well and what could be improved is rarely taken. Teachers have developed the use of target setting and use it consistently. It is useful in making pupils clear about what is expected of them in each unit of work. However, the targets are not refined enough to be effective. They do not reflect the different expectations of pupils of different ages and abilities in each class. Teachers do not make as much use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning as

they could. The co-ordinator is fully aware of the need to develop this aspect of the curriculum and has already purchased additional software.

94. The relatively new co-ordinator has a secure understanding of the subject. She has effectively monitored teachers' planning and pupils' work and identified the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She has a realistic action plan which is being implemented and is already leading to improvements in teaching and learning. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Attainment has improved. More attention is now given to providing opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations. Resources have been increased and updated. The school now monitors teaching and learning in science more effectively. Ongoing assessment is now used to track pupils' understanding and progress. However, work is still not matched closely enough to pupils' age and ability and opportunities to develop initiative remain limited. The consistent use of extension activities to challenge the highest attaining pupils is still under-developed, although they are effectively used on occasions.

ART AND DESIGN

95. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve average standards. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, although there are still gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Pupils have increased confidence in choosing materials and resources and in exploring their ideas. They have made less progress in close observational work and learning to use a wide enough range of media. Their knowledge of the work of artists and craftworkers from different times and cultures is not developed fully. Planning for art is based on national guidance and provides for sound curriculum coverage. Assessment of the knowledge, skills and techniques pupils have learned is not firmly in place, so teachers are not able to identify strengths and weaknesses. This means that pupils do not build their skills steadily on prior learning.
96. Infant pupils learn to express their ideas and feelings through drawing, painting and collage. They experiment with mixing colours and with folding, tearing and weaving paper for different effects. Year 1 pupils paint in response to different stimuli, for example, hearing a musical triangle. Pupils have limited opportunities to make careful drawings from close observation or to explore a wide enough range of media and techniques, such as pastels, charcoal, printmaking or three-dimensional work. Teachers' expectations of pupils, particularly the more able, are too low. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to make their own choices and decisions and develop their own ideas.
97. Teachers introduce junior pupils to a wider range of media and techniques, such as printing, charcoal, chalk, painting and collage. They learn about designs and patterns from different cultures, including Islamic patterns, Mehendi patterns and Aboriginal paintings. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make small and large-scale drawings, paintings and models of Tudor houses. Year 5 and 6 pupils paint Greek pots. They have limited opportunities to draw from close observation, to work in three dimensions or to experience a wide range of printmaking media. Pupils in Year 3 use information and communication technology well to create illustrations for a poem about fish. Years 3 and 4 pupils learn about the work of Van Gogh, but opportunities to study the work of a wide range of artists remain limited.
98. The quality of teaching of art and design is satisfactory overall, but too variable. Inspectors observed three lessons during the inspection week. Teachers organise resources well and encourage pupils to experiment with their ideas. There are strong links with other subjects, particularly history. This sometimes leads to a reduced focus on art and design as a subject in its own right and there is not enough emphasis on modelling and discussion of artistic techniques.

99. The recently appointed art co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of art and design. She has plans to address these, including increasing the range of resources and staff training. She has recently introduced sketchbooks, although these are not yet being used effectively to enable pupils to record, explore and evaluate selected materials.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Pupils attain standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 that are similar to those of pupils of the same age nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was below the national expectation.
101. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 quickly begin to use the design process. They start to make simple drawings of what they intend to make and to choose the materials they need. By the end of Year 2, they produce two labelled designs, before deciding which one is the best to make. After they have made something, they say what they do or do not like about it and say what they found difficult. They develop a suitable range of practical skills, including cutting, joining in different ways, sewing and using simple mechanisms to create movement. For example, they made winding mechanisms with bobbins to create their 'Incy Wincy Spider' models to a good standard. When making puppets, pupils investigated the suitability of different materials before making their final choices. They tested their ideas by making tiny finger puppets before finalising their designs and techniques. As a result, the quality of finish on their final glove puppets was high.
102. Pupils continue to develop their designing and making skills as they move through the juniors. They also begin to write more detailed evaluations of their finished products and suggest how they could be improved. Their practical skills become more refined and the quality of their finished products improves. A good example of this is seen in Year 3 and 4, where pupils have used their understanding of the features of Tudor houses to create some very good realistic models. The quality of finish on their houses is high. Pupils benefit from more freedom than there was before to make decisions about the materials and methods they intend to use, but this aspect still requires further development, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 responded particularly well to the challenge of making stable structures which would safely hold an egg, using 10 art straws and sellotape. Their structures varied enormously and showed real initiative and co-operation in their groups. The quality of their work is as good as that seen in Year 6. It indicates that standards are now being systematically improved and that attainment in two years time is likely to be better than that of pupils of the same age nationally. Year 6 pupils made musical instruments using junk materials. Their drawing skills are satisfactory, but would benefit from more detailed annotation and the use of accurate measurements. Their practical skills lack refinement and consequently their work is of an average standard.
103. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully integrated throughout the school. They receive the help they need from competent learning assistants, the teacher and their friends. This allows them to be fully included in all activities, to develop and apply their skills and to achieve success.
104. It was not possible to observe the teaching of design and technology during the inspection because most pupils are doing art this half term instead of design and technology. Consequently, the judgement on the quality of teaching is based upon the large amount of work on display throughout the school and the wealth of photographic evidence provided by the co-ordinator. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, and has a number of good features. Teachers understand the design process and plan an interesting range of activities, which motivate the pupils. They base their lessons upon recent national guidance, ensuring that all the National Curriculum requirements are now met. However,

the planning does not yet ensure that pupils consistently build upon their prior knowledge and skills. Consequently, the oldest pupils in each class do not always do more challenging work than the younger ones. There is evidence that this aspect of planning is improving but there has not yet been enough time for it to raise the standards achieved by the Year 6 pupils. Their work is at a similar level to that of the current Year 4 pupils, who are working beyond the level expected for pupils of their age nationally. Teachers frequently plan activities which link well to work being done in other subjects, for example history and literacy. This makes the work more relevant to the pupils and often increases their enjoyment of the other subjects. Teachers demonstrate practical skills well and as a result, the quality of practical work is often good. Teachers achieve an appropriate balance between designing and making activities. It ensures that pupils realise the importance of designing and evaluating work, but it does not take away the pleasure of making. An effective assessment strategy has yet to be systematically implemented. This makes it difficult for teachers to plan to build upon pupils' achievements in the previous class and consequently there is some repetition of work at the same level.

105. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards and resources have improved, teachers' planning is better and there is now breadth and balance in the curriculum. Appropriate attention is now given to developing pupils' designing and evaluating skills. More opportunities are provided for pupils to show initiative and independence, but this aspect still requires further development, particularly with the oldest pupils. Teaching is now at least satisfactory throughout the school. The acting co-ordinator is monitoring pupils work and providing effective support for teachers. She has a good understanding of the subject and has accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses in the school. She has sensible plans for the further development of the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

106. The limited evidence from inspection indicates that pupils attain satisfactory standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. The large majority of pupils are meeting nationally expected levels as they were in the last inspection.
107. Infant pupils explore their immediate neighbourhood, visiting the local park near to the school. They observe the features of their walk, and gain an understanding of direction and features such as roads, junctions and signs. Year 2 pupils confidently explain geographical terms such as globe, map, country and town. They know and indicate the main points of the compass correctly. They know that Britain is an island and that London is its capital city, and 'much, much bigger than Leicester'. They describe the local shopping centres and know that some towns they have visited such as Bradford and Leeds, can be reached by road or rail. Some describe confidently their route from home to school, using terms like 'turn left then right', and some know that the ring road goes round in a circle.
108. Junior pupils extend their geographical knowledge and understanding of places soundly. They recall visits they have made to holiday destinations and are acutely aware of climate and weather. One pupil writes, 'When we went to Ireland, I was surprised because it was really, really hot'. They are beginning to understand that the world has different types of climates such as polar and tropical, but in conversation they have little understanding of what these terms really mean. They study rivers and use correct geographical terms such as 'estuary' and 'source'. Their drawings show they appreciate that rivers grow wider as they reach the sea. They have gained knowledge of the water cycle, and show an understanding of evaporation. Year 6 pupils compare contrasting localities such as Leicester and Cambridge by looking closely at aerial photographs and maps.

109. The organisation of the geography curriculum into blocks of five weeks is unsatisfactory. Pupils' learning is fragmented and it is difficult to build skills such as map-reading sufficiently continuously for them to be securely mastered. The school makes satisfactory use of its immediate locality. It is planning to rearrange its residential study trip to Crich in Derbyshire so that pupils can study contrasting geographical features first-hand. The co-ordinator has recently taken up her responsibilities again and is aware that the policy and scheme of work requires updating and review. This is included in the School Development Plan.

HISTORY

110. Pupils attain nationally expected standards at both 7 and 11 years and make satisfactory progress. This is similar to that reported in the last inspection. History is taught in five-week blocks and rotated with other foundation subjects so that at the time of the inspection only a few lessons were being taught. Organising the curriculum in blocks of time means that pupils do not have the opportunity to build on past knowledge and understanding systematically.
111. The teaching of history is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Pupils are given reasonable chances to record work, particularly in the juniors. Some good links are made with literacy when pupils write at length and undertake research projects, often at home. Occasionally the worksheets pupils complete do not challenge pupils sufficiently, as they require only one-word answers to questions and pupils merely colour in the pictures. The good use of resources, such as artefacts and videos, and the consistent teaching of enquiry skills ensure that pupils develop a good understanding of how history is based on looking at evidence from the past. Teachers make good use of drama to bring history alive and to encourage empathy from the pupils. Teachers make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support work in history. Pupils have reasonable access to history computer programs. They have sound opportunities to research for historical information from the Internet, for example, when studying the Ancient Greeks.
112. In a Year 2 lesson, tracing the methods of fire fighting at the time Samuel Pepys was alive, the teacher asked probing questions, such as 'How could people put out fires?' Pupils quickly realised that pumps and pipes are more efficient in putting out fires than a bucket. The teacher made good use of drama to bring past events alive. As a consequence pupils had a good recall of the story of the Great Fire of London and were acutely aware of the necessity of having modern fire engines. In another infant lesson, the teacher did not follow up the good oral work with a challenging enough activity. In this lesson pupils had to sequence four pictures, stick them in their book and colour in the picture. The teacher did not give enough explanation to help pupils place events on a timeline and as a consequence pupils were somewhat confused.
113. Pupils in a good Year 4 lesson recalled a previously watched video because the teacher asked questions to draw out their memories of materials and clothes in Tudor times well. Pupils responded positively and eagerly using a good range of specific historical vocabulary. They explained that the bailiff wore breeches and a doublet of velvet and compared his costume with a farmer boy's ragged and coarse outfit. The teacher built on pupils' answers to questions and had good strategies to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding. The teacher made effective use of drama and pupils greatly enjoyed preparing and performing a short playlet they had devised on their own.
114. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a sound understanding of the topics they study and understand the chronology of events. They recall past work about the Ancient Greeks and the Victorian period enthusiastically and are keen to talk about the visits and visitors that have made history come alive for them. The good range of visits to historical houses and

museums together with visiting performers, such as the 'Roman soldiers', adds enormously to pupils' interest in history and helps pupils to recall events more clearly.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. Pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally at the end of Year 2. They have been maintained at the level reported in the last inspection. Year 6 pupils attain standards that are below expected levels. Although this is below the standards reported previously, it does not mean that standards have fallen significantly because the level of work expected of Year 6 pupils has risen considerably since the last inspection. The school has recently improved its resources for information and communication technology. These improvements include establishing a computer suite to enable pupils to have more opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills and using laptops, particularly for Year 3 and 4 pupils in the mobile classrooms. The main factors for Year 6 pupils not achieving expected levels are:
- they have not yet had enough opportunities to benefit from the new resources in order to extend their skills and achieve the higher levels expected nationally for their age;
 - the computer suite is situated in a small and narrow room. It can only accommodate half-classes, particularly of older pupils, if all of them are going to have sufficient time to apply their skills;
 - teachers do not consistently challenge pupils to extend their information and communication skills in a wide range of subjects;
 - the school's bid for staff training has only just been accepted and teachers have only received one training session so far. This has yet to impact on teachers' competence and confidence, especially in teaching some of the more advanced skills, such as multi-media aspects, expected of older junior pupils;
 - teaching is not always sufficiently challenging to enable Year 6 pupils to extend their skills and knowledge.
116. After overcoming some initial difficulties with the reliability of the new resources, staff are beginning to use them efficiently to raise standards, especially for infant and lower junior pupils. All infant and junior classes have two timetabled sessions each week in the suite, with one usually taken by the class teacher and the other by a class support assistant. Pupils are very enthusiastic about working on computers and eagerly talk about what they have learnt. Teachers are using these lessons, supported by national subject guidance, to teach basic skills soundly in most of the required aspects. Resources in some aspects of control and multi-media work are not enough to enable pupils to develop their skills fully in all areas. Sound, and occasionally good, teaching is helping pupils to make satisfactory and often good progress in lessons, for example, in developing their word processing and graphics skills. There was some evidence of pupils using research skills in history, for example, to access the Internet to gain historical information about the Ancient Greeks and to apply their word processing skills in literacy. However, pupils, particularly those who do not have access to a computer at home, do not have enough opportunities to apply and extend these skills to support work in a broad range of subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in developing their basic skills. They improve their language and literacy skills well when working with the special educational needs co-ordinator, for example, to increase the range of words that they know and use in their writing. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language make sound progress overall. It is good when teaching and support staff ensure that they understand the instructions given, both verbally and on screen. They make slower progress when the support is not quickly available and they have to wait before they are clear about what they need to do.
117. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in some years are attaining expected standards. For example, Year 1 pupils used sound mouse control skills to select the correct number and colour of teddy bears to create their own pictogram. Year 2 pupils are using their

improving keyboard and word processing skills, for example, to present their different styles of writing neatly such as poems, letters and listing instructions. They use a 'paint' program effectively to create an on-screen 'fireworks' painting, selecting the different tools accurately to change colour and to use the 'spray' facility. Those with the benefit of a home-computer extend their skills well, for example, to insert graphics and pictures into their word processed text. Year 3 and 4 pupils build soundly on these skills when they 'paint' a fish tank design. Most select different shapes and colours successfully. They apply the 'flip' and 'rotate' tools to create different effects well and know how to save, retrieve and edit their work. Year 5 pupils are beginning to understand how to use spreadsheets accurately to list the costs of different shopping items and then use the 'total' tool to quickly get the full cost. Many use an Internet search-engine confidently to locate information about the Olympics in Ancient Greece. Work in pupils' books, on display around the school and curriculum plans show that they develop their skills in all required aspects, for example, controlling the movements of a programmable robot. There was some evidence of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils using their word processing skills to support work in literacy. They described storybook characters in literature such as Oliver Twist, using a sound range of different font sizes and styles. Pupils varied the colour of the font effectively to highlight the titles of their 'Tongue Twister' poems. Some more able Year 6 pupils used their skills well to prepare their own display program at home to illustrate and promote their School Book Club.

118. Teaching of the basic skills is sound overall and occasionally good. It is less effective, although still satisfactory, when support staff take large groups and do not always ensure that pupils stay focused on their work. Where it is good, teachers have a good knowledge of the program and use it well to extend pupils' skills, for example, to demonstrate the different tools in a painting program. Teachers control and manage their classes very well. This ensures that pupils stay focused on their learning and complete what is required of them. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, the teacher controlled the class very effectively. She used good strategies to gain their attention immediately. She explained clearly how pupils should then develop their work. She then challenged them to extend their skills, for example, by creating and inserting 'air bubbles' and 'plants' into their painting. Pupils responded enthusiastically, worked hard and most completed what they had been set to do by the end of the lesson. Teachers use questions well to check on and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, in a Year 1 activity, the teacher questioned the group of pupils about why the 'screen-saver' had suddenly appeared. She then challenged the group to show how they could get back to their original program. This reinforced their understanding and also increased their confidence in using the computer. In some lessons, when support assistants take the half-class groups, the control and organisation of the group are less effective. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, the support assistant tried to demonstrate a particular technique on one computer. The narrow room did not allow all the pupils to see the display screen. This led to uncertainties and misunderstandings that prevented several pupils from getting on with their work. The pace of the lesson slowed and few pupils achieved the lesson objective.
119. The subject co-ordinator manages the subject well. She monitors plans to check adequate coverage of the different aspects. She has implemented national guidance successfully to support sound progress in pupils' skills and knowledge. The co-ordinator is currently working with other co-ordinators from local schools to develop procedures for assessing pupils' skills. She has started to collect samples of pupils' work which are planned to be used to extend staff's knowledge of attainment levels. The school is planning to use the staff expertise from a local Beacon School to work with class support assistants on developing their teaching skills. A detailed action plan for information and communication technology provides a clear direction for developing the subject. New resources are planned to build on the recent improvements. These improved resources, together with the current training to improve staff confidence and competence, mean that the school is well-placed to raise standards.

MUSIC

120. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils achieve average standards in music, although standards in singing are above those expected nationally. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The weaknesses in performing, composing and knowledge of musical vocabulary and the variable quality of teaching reported at the time of the last inspection remain.
121. Pupils throughout the school sing songs with great enthusiasm, confidence and appropriate control in assemblies and singing lessons. They sing in tune and with a well-rounded tone. They vary dynamics and tempo effectively to reflect the mood of the music. Junior pupils sing complex two and three part songs well and maintain a good balance between the parts.
122. Pupils in Year 1 achieve above average standards. They sing simple melodies in tune and repeat short, but complex rhythmic patterns accurately, using a range of percussion instruments. Pupils do not build steadily on these skills as they move through the school, except in singing, where high standards are maintained. By the start of Year 6 pupils sing confidently and expressively with attention to dynamics and phrasing. They hold their part in complex two and three part melodies and put new words to known songs. More able pupils sing solos with confidence and modulate their voice well to reflect the words. They listen attentively to different kinds of music, but have limited skills in analysing how pitch, tempo and dynamics are used to create different effects. They have limited skills in composing.
123. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but with significant variation. In the good lessons, teachers explain learning objectives clearly to pupils. They have high expectations, explain and model activities clearly and introduce pupils to appropriate musical vocabulary. Pupils have good opportunities to work together, to use musical instruments and to experiment, practise and perform. This practice is not consistent. In some lessons the level of challenge is too low and pupils have little opportunity to build on prior understanding. For example, Year 6 pupils were not required to extend their music appreciation skills enough when listening carefully to an extract of Mongolian music. Procedures to assess pupils' skills are in the early stages of development.
124. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and is beginning to address them. She has introduced a commercial scheme, which is successful in supporting teachers who have less expertise and confidence when teaching music. She has plans to provide individual support for teachers through demonstration lessons and help with planning. In addition, she has updated resources, including computer software for music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Pupils attain standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 that are in line with those expected nationally in most areas of activity. Standards have been maintained at the level reported in the last inspection, although the school does not provide opportunities for pupils to improve their swimming skills. The school is not meeting the National Curriculum requirement for this area of activity, which must be included in the activity programme for junior pupils if it is not covered in the infant programme. During the inspection, inspectors only observed three junior lessons. The focus was on improving pupils' athletic skills, particularly their jumping skills. Further evidence was gained from observing extra-curricular sporting activities, for example, football coaching, analysing teaching plans and talking to staff and pupils. Although the site has limited outdoor facilities, for example, for extending pupils' games skills, the school makes good use of a local playing field during

the autumn and summer terms. This ensures that pupils have a sound range of opportunities to apply their skills in competitive group and team activities.

126. Infant pupils know that exercise makes the heart go faster and helps the body to keep fit. Many know that they need to warm-up their muscles before starting more vigorous activity. They talk enthusiastically about their physical education lessons and clearly enjoy the lessons in the hall using the large gymnastic apparatus. Some Year 2 pupils showed sound skills when controlling a ball with their feet. They showed good balance when dribbling. Most used the correct part of the foot to change the direction of the ball when dribbling between marker cones. Older junior pupils have sound balance and co-ordination when practising different jumping techniques, for example, hopping and jumping from one foot and landing on two feet. Many apply their skills effectively, for example, to hurdle over low cane barriers. Few were able to extend their jumping skills by co-ordinating balance and rhythm to complete a hop, step and jump combination successfully. Year 5 and 6 pupils co-operate well in pairs and small group activities. They encourage each other to try to improve their performance. Some teachers provide opportunities for the whole class to watch and comment upon individual pupils' performance. However, too few pupils evaluate their own performance or that of others and identify ways to improve the standard. This is similar to that reported previously.
127. Pupils clearly enjoy physical activities. They work hard in lessons and are keen to succeed. Many talk enthusiastically about the range of activities in which they have developed their skills, for example, when working with players from the city's basketball club. The school enables pupils to extend their games skills well in competitive games, for example, by competing in a local Tag-Rugby tournament. The subject co-ordinator enhances the range of activities by arranging to use some local community facilities, such as the local tennis club and by using the school site to provide some outdoor and adventurous activities.
128. Teaching in the small number of lessons observed was never less than sound and often good. Teachers control and manage their classes very well. They encourage pupils to work hard and sustain their interest and efforts. They use their good control skills to maintain a good lesson pace, for example, by requiring pupils to 'freeze' immediately in order to receive further instructions. Many have high expectations of pupils, for example, the teacher expected Year 5 and 6 pupils to organise themselves and their equipment quickly to ensure that the time was used efficiently to practise their skills. In some lessons, teachers do not always ensure that pupils are consistently involved in activities. This limits progress in developing pupils' skills and knowledge. For example, teachers did not require pupils to focus on, and try to evaluate, the performance of others as they waited their turn to practise their jumping skills. Teachers make good use of national subject guidance activity coaching cards to plan lessons and provide sound support to promoting pupils' skills. They reinforce and refine skills effectively but do not always ensure that more able pupils are required to apply these skills in more challenging ways. Teachers are supported well by the subject co-ordinator. She is keen to develop physical education further, for example, by extending the range of teaching methods and dance activities. She has not had opportunities to monitor teaching and evaluate its impact on pupils' skills and knowledge. This does not enable her to focus closely on raising standards.