

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Harrison Road, Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 120223

Headteacher: Mr Miroslaw Olszewski

Reporting inspector: David Penney
23039

Dates of inspection: 25th - 28th November 2002

Inspection number: 248115

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Harrison Road Leicester
Postcode:	LE4 6QN
Telephone number:	(0116) 2661149
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Shoubridge
Date of previous inspection:	November 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23039	David Penney	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education	How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
8986	Philip Andrew	Lay inspector	Educational Inclusion	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22113	Aileen King	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well does the school care for its pupils?
28200	Paul Stevens	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School is situated in an area of terraced housing to the north of Leicester City centre. A few pupils live locally but most are drawn from the wider community covering the two Roman Catholic parishes of St Patrick's and Our Lady of Good Counsel. It is an average-sized infant and junior school with 196 boys and girls on roll aged from 4 to 11 years and a further 26 attending the nursery class part-time, some of whom are three years old. Overall, there are more boys than girls, especially in the nursery and in Year 6. The proportion of pupils joining the school during the course of the last school year was much larger than average. The school has a rich ethnic mix: most pupils are from a white background but there are about two dozen pupils from each of mixed race and Asian heritage, with further smaller numbers of Black and other heritage. Twenty-one pupils are from refugee families, predominantly from Sri Lanka, and seven pupils are from travelling families. Thirty-seven pupils have English as an additional language, which is well above the national average, with four being at an early stage of acquiring the language. The main languages spoken are Tamil, Gujarati, Sinhalese and Polish. Twenty-five pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs; three of these have Statements of Special Educational Needs, which is above the national average. Fifty-four pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is above average. On entry to the nursery class, children's attainment, overall, is low, especially in English, mathematics and social skills. On entry to compulsory education in Year 1, attainment in these areas is still below average. During the period when the school was subject to Special Measures, there was a great deal of staff turbulence, including three headteachers; since the school's removal from Special Measures in November 2000, this situation has largely been resolved. The school has received a school achievement award and has made a commitment to gaining the Investors in People status during the last year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some very good features. Although standards in the national tests in Years 2 and 6 vary from year to year, pupils achieve good results in relation to their prior attainment, overall, although more needs to be done to ensure that this happens consistently in the nursery and reception years. All pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school, irrespective of ethnicity, religion or ability, making the school a safe and caring environment. The quality of teaching is good, especially in Years 1 to 6. The headteacher leads and manages the work of the school very well and is fully supported by a conscientious team of staff and governors who are fully committed to further improvement. The school lives its Catholic ethos to the full and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides a very clear vision for the future development of the school and is supported well by members of staff who are fully committed to further improvements.
- The school looks after and develops pupils very well academically, personally and socially through a wide range of measures so that they become mature and responsible citizens who behave well and have good attitudes to work.
- The school lives its Catholic ethos fully and is successfully committed to including all pupils in all it has to offer.
- All pupils achieve good results in relation to their prior attainment because of the very good relationships that permeate the work of the school and the generally good quality of teaching.
- The systems for judging how effective the school is are very good.

What could be improved

- The planning of the curriculum, aspects of accommodation and resources, and the roles of teachers and assistants in the nursery and reception classes.
- The opportunities given to pupils to develop their skills of speaking, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology in other subjects.
- Checking on pupils' levels of skills and knowledge in subjects other than English and mathematics, and using this information to change lesson planning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 2000, since when it has improved at a good rate. Standards in the national tests for Year 6 pupils have risen sharply in the last three years. All the key issues of the previous inspection have been addressed successfully, with the result that pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, the quality of teaching and subject management has improved, staff are deployed more effectively and the level of resources has improved. Important improvements have been made to provision and resources in information and communication technology, although more remains to be done, as recognised in the subject development plan. Attendance levels have improved and there are now effective schemes of work for all subjects. The partnership with parents has continued to improve. The school evaluates the effectiveness of its work with increasing rigour and effectiveness. For these reasons, it is very well placed to continue to improve.

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	E	D	B	A
mathematics	E	C	A	A*
science	E	D	B	A

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C D
below average	
well below average	E
very low	E*

The table shows that, in the national tests in 2002, pupils in Year 6 attained results in English and science that were above the national average and well above those for schools where similar proportions of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. In mathematics, results were well above the national average and very high (in the top five per cent of the country) when compared to similar schools. The school was close to its targets for English and exceeded them in mathematics. Trends over time show a significant improvement in all subjects over the last three years, and a general improvement over the last five years that equals the national trend. The findings of the current inspection are that when children enter the nursery class, they do so with a wide range of abilities; overall, their standards are well below those expected nationally, with particular weaknesses in their personal, social and emotional development and their communication, language and literacy skills. They make satisfactory progress through the nursery and reception classes, overall, although they develop their personal, social and emotional skills well. On entry to Year 1, standards remain below those expected in all areas of learning¹, except personal, social and emotional development and physical development, where standards are in line with those expected. All pupils achieve well, overall, especially in Years 3 to 6. This includes the significant proportions with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. Standards in information and communication technology are below expected levels in Years 2 and 6 as a result of previous weaknesses now in the process of being rectified. In Year 2, standards currently are below average in English and mathematics and below those expected nationally in science, art and design, design and technology and history; in other subjects they meet expectations. In Year 6, standards are below average in mathematics, above average in science and in line with the average in English and all other subjects. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs adversely affects standards in this year group. The school is likely to meet its challenging targets this year in both English and mathematics.

¹ The six areas of learning are personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have a positive attitude to school and to work. They are fully involved in all activities, including activities out of lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite and friendly. They interact very well, regardless of gender, race or religion.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are very tolerant of each other's opinions and beliefs. Relationships are very good throughout the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are in line with the national average. There is too much lateness at the beginning of the day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. It is sound in the nursery and reception classes and good in Years 1 to 6, although examples of very good teaching and learning were seen in every key stage. Very nearly every lesson was at least satisfactory. Nearly three out of every four lessons were taught at least well, with one lesson in every five being very good or excellent. The teaching and learning of English and mathematics are good. The teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy are good in English and mathematics lessons but there is room to provide more opportunities to practise and extend these skills, together with those of speaking and information and communication technology, more systematically in other lessons. The school meets the needs of all pupils well, including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language, those from travelling backgrounds and refugees and asylum seekers. In those lessons where teaching is less effective, it is because teachers' subject knowledge is insecure, the time and resources available are not used efficiently or the roles and responsibilities of adults within the class are not sufficiently clear. Where learning is swift and teaching at its most effective, it is because teachers have a very good grasp of their subject, enabling them to pose challenging questions and tasks and to answer problems promptly, relationships are very good so pupils are willing and confident learners, the lesson is organised very logically with clear explanations and time to review what has been learned, and the lesson takes place at an unremittingly high pace, involving all pupils for a high proportion of the time. The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is not consistently high enough.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. National guidance for literacy and numeracy has been adopted effectively. The amount and range of extra-curricular activities are very good. Good links with the community and other schools enhance pupils' education. There are some weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum in the nursery and reception classes.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Effective support from teaching assistants, together with the good use of all available resources and very appropriate targets for individual improvement enable pupils to make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Very good individual teaching when withdrawn from class, effective support in class and the totally inclusive ethos that permeates the work of the school result in pupils making good progress and quickly becoming fully integrated into school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for personal, social and health education is outstanding. The systems for supporting and developing pupils' personal qualities successfully underpin all that the school does.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good, overall. Procedures for assessing pupils' standards and what they need to do next are good in English and mathematics but need development in other subjects and in the nursery and reception classes. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and behaviour are very good. The school is a safe and caring environment for learning.

The partnership between parents and the school is good, overall. Parents are very appreciative of what the school does for their children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher leads and manages the work of the school with a caring determination. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other key staff, who are developing their roles well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors fulfil their statutory duties fully and have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are fully and appropriately involved in influencing the academic and pastoral direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school improvement plan addresses all the major areas of the school's work and is a good tool for further development. Monitoring of teaching and learning is regular and evaluations are insightful. Assessment information is analysed closely in English and mathematics. Systems for assessing the performance of teachers are good. Best value principles are followed well.
The strategic use of resources	Good. All resources are used effectively for the purpose intended. Financial management systems are good. Teachers and support staff are deployed effectively and meet the demands of the curriculum well. Resources are satisfactory, overall, although the use of computers in classrooms is not frequent enough. The accommodation is adequate,

	although there is a need to develop some aspects of the Foundation Stage.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• Their children make good progress.• Teaching is good.• The school has high expectations of their children.• Leadership and management are good.• The school helps their children become mature and responsible.• Behaviour is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework.• The amount of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments expressed above but judges that the level and amount of homework are satisfactory and that the provision for activities outside lessons is very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results in the 2002 national tests for the pupils in Year 2 showed standards to have been well below average in reading and writing, and very low (in the bottom five per cent of the country) in mathematics. When compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, the standards were average in reading, but well below average in writing and mathematics. In these tests, there were too few higher-achieving pupils, especially in writing and mathematics. The girls tend to outperform boys in all subjects over time, but especially in reading and writing, although this has been addressed to some extent with the improvement of resources for reading. The teachers' assessments of the pupils' potential attainment are generally accurate. The trends over time in national tests indicate that results vary greatly depending on the different abilities of pupils in each year, for example, in 1999 results were lower than in other years.
2. The results of last year's national tests for the pupils in Year 6 show that standards were above the average nationally in English and science and well above the average in mathematics. Based on the pupils' prior attainment, there is a similar picture of results. In relation to similar schools, standards were well above average in English and science and were very high and in the top five per cent of the country in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was well above the national average in all subjects. In comparison with similar schools, results were very high in English and mathematics, and well above average in science. The school met its targets for English in broad terms and exceeded them in mathematics. The girls did especially well in 2002 in all tests in comparison with their performance in previous years. The trends in national tests over time indicate a significant improvement since 2000 in all subjects, and a general improvement over the last five years that equals the national trend. The boys generally have fared better over time than the girls have in English and mathematics, but there is no significant difference in results in science.
3. Factors of mobility and a high turnover of pupils, either leaving or transferring to the school, have a significant impact on results in Year 2 and Year 6. For example, in the current Year 2 class, only three-quarters of pupils started in the reception class in the school, which adversely affects the time they have to benefit from a continuous education. The school admits a significant proportion of pupils at times other than the normal time of admission. Many of these pupils have previously experienced interruptions in their education because of family, economic or political disruption. In addition, the proportion of pupils at the early stage of acquiring English as an additional language, particularly in the younger classes, adversely affects standards in these classes and is reflected in the national tests in Year 2.
4. The judgements of this inspection are that the children come into the nursery class with attainment that is well below national expectations, although there is a wide spectrum of abilities within this, and that their skills in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and some aspects of mathematical development are weak. They progress at an appropriate rate through the nursery and reception classes, with good development in their personal, social and emotional skills, including those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs. By the time they leave the reception year, standards are still below the expected level in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In personal, social and emotional development and physical development, they attain at the expected level for their age.
5. As the pupils progress through the school they achieve well, overall. However, there are differences between subjects and year groups. Pupils achieve good results in relation to their prior attainment in the number aspect of mathematics throughout the school. Achievement is also good in Years 1 and 2 in geography, and in Years 3 to 6 in English, science, design and technology and history. It is satisfactory in all other subjects and year groups, except design and technology in Years 1 and 2, where pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Throughout the

school, pupils' achievement in information and communication technology is now satisfactory in those areas of the subject they have met but the very recent nature of the improvements made means that pupils have many gaps in their prior knowledge, skills and competences that have yet to be addressed. Pupils' achievements are adversely affected because there is insufficient exploitation of pupils' speaking, writing, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in other subjects.

6. The school has continued to focus on improving pupils' standards in writing by concentrating on their comprehension, spelling and skills of extended writing. This is having a beneficial effect throughout the school, although improvements are most immediately evident in Years 1 and 2.
7. Through Years 1 to 6, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good gains in their learning in relation to the targets on their individual education plans, overall and particularly in Years 3 to 6 as the result of good teaching and support from assistants. Any under-performance of pupils with special educational needs has been identified as directly linked to late arrival at school. The effects of the under-exploitation of pupils' oral skills, mentioned above in paragraph 5, have an additional impact on these pupils.
8. The table below shows the overall standards currently attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6.

Subject	Y2	Y6
English	Below average	Average
Mathematics	Below average	Below average
Science	Below average	Above average
Art and design	Below expectations	Meeting expectations
Design and technology	Below expectations	Meeting expectations
Geography	Meeting expectations	Meeting expectations
History	Below expectations	Meeting expectations
Information and communication technology	Below expectations	Below expectations
Music	Meeting expectations	Meeting expectations
Physical education	Meeting expectations	Meeting expectations

9. Standards are above average in Year 6 because teachers in Years 3 to 6 have a good understanding of how to impart scientific facts clearly and of how to match the tasks to the different abilities within the class in order to challenge higher attaining pupils. Additionally, good emphasis is placed on the development of scientific skills, such as those of investigation. The cumulative effects of this good practice are reflected in the good standards attained by Year 6 pupils.
10. Because of the turbulence in staffing in the time since the school was subject to Special Measures a subject co-ordinator has only recently been appointed for design and technology. In addition, the subject has not been a focus for development. These factors have had an impact on teachers' expertise and, consequently, pupils' standards and achievement, which have been felt more acutely in Years 1 and 2.
11. In the current Year 6 class there is a high proportion of pupils, all of whom are boys, who have learning difficulties. This adversely affects the standards attained in this year group overall, and also the balance of attainment between boys and girls. Nevertheless, based on their secure knowledge of all the pupils in this class, the school has set challenging targets for English and mathematics in the national tests in 2003, and is likely to meet them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The positive attitudes of the pupils, their very good relationships and good behaviour are a strength of the school. These attributes combined with the very good personal development of the pupils provide a firm basis for their improving attainment and progress.

13. Children's standards of personal, social and emotional development are below those expected, on average, when they come into the nursery class. They make good progress through the nursery and reception classes in this area of learning as a result of the caring and consistent attention given to improving their behaviour. The adults are good role models and show children how to show respect for each other, to share and to be fair. As a result, the children concentrate, sit quietly and pay attention for increasing lengths of time, and achieve standards by the end of the reception class that match those expected nationally. This sets the fundamental groundwork for the good attitudes to learning evident throughout the school.
14. Pupils have good attitudes to their work, to each other and to the school. They enjoy working in a safe and supportive atmosphere that caters well for their individuality and their needs. They speak with enthusiasm about, for example, their residential trip in Year 6, the visits they make to, for example, the Space Centre and the clubs they can attend, which are very well supported.
15. Pupils' behaviour is good in the classrooms, in the playgrounds and in the school buildings. An analysis of the 40 lessons observed showed that in 17, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were at least very good, in 12 they were good and in a further ten they were satisfactory. In the playgrounds, dining hall and around the school, behaviour observed was always good and no incidents of inappropriate behaviour were seen. In the answers to the parents' questionnaire, 96 per cent said behaviour is good and in the meeting with parents, behaviour was said to be good to very good. The behaviour reflects the school's Christian ethos and the manner in which all are welcome and live together in a secure, friendly community. There are no pupils excluded from the school.
16. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development and gives great encouragement to developing very good relationships. There is an active school council that makes a positive contribution to the life of the school, for example by championing a change in school uniform rules to allow girls to wear trousers when the weather is very cold. The school's view of the council is that, "They are the voice of the children at the school and, by voicing an opinion and through debate and common sense, can effect changes in the school". The pupils are actively exercising responsibility in many areas of the school community; for example, older pupils help the younger ones, particularly in the playgrounds, keep the physical education equipment tidy, act as 'road safety officers' in distributing information and leaflets, and look after the wet day boxes.
17. The pupils have a very clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others in the community. The pupils are aware of the less fortunate in the wider community and give generously and regularly to charity. There is great tolerance of each other's opinions and beliefs and these attitudes and values help them all live together in this inclusive and secure community, no matter what their gender, race or creed. These values are fully supported and encouraged by the headteacher, staff and governors of the school.
18. The inspection found that the school has maintained and built upon the standards found at the previous inspection.
19. Attendance at 94.4 per cent is satisfactory, comparing soundly with the national average of 94.1 per cent; there is no unauthorized absence. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection. The level of late arrival at 3.65 per cent is on the high side; however, the school draws pupils from a wide catchment area with many traffic problems. Nevertheless, any under-performance of pupils with special educational needs has been identified as directly linked to late arrival at school. Registrations at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions are carried out promptly and efficiently.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Teaching and learning are good, overall, and have improved since the last inspection. They are satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes and good in Years 1 to 6. Forty lessons were observed. Of these, one was unsatisfactory and ten were satisfactory. In 22 lessons, teaching and learning were good. Five lessons were very well taught and two lessons were excellent.

Examples of very good teaching were seen in all key stages in the school. The teaching of pupils in Year 6 was particularly and consistently at least good.

21. In the nursery and reception classes, the teaching of personal, social and emotional skills is good. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour, and adopt a friendly, relaxed and caring attitude. This establishes the good work habits and high-quality relationships that characterise the work of the school and is a crucial factor in the success of the pupils and the school. The teaching of other areas of learning is satisfactory. Staff have a secure understanding of the required curriculum and plan an appropriate range of activities for the children to develop their skills. However, the school has rightly acknowledged that the respective roles of adults need to be clarified. There is also scope to improve the way that questions are posed so that they extend children's speaking skills more fully.
22. In Years 1 to 6, the quality of teaching by subject is shown below:

Subject	Years 1 and 2	Years 3 to 6
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Satisfactory	Good
Art and design	Satisfactory	Good
Design and technology	Insufficient evidence	Good
Geography	Good	Good
History	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information and communication technology	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Music	Satisfactory	Good
Physical education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

23. The key issues of the last inspection report that have to do with improving teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics have been addressed well. Teachers' confidence in nearly all subjects has risen, although more remains to be done to secure this confidence for all teachers in all subjects.
24. Pupils' literacy skills are taught well in English lessons. Numeracy skills are taught soundly; some teachers do not exploit the first part of lessons, designed to promote swift recall of known facts, fully enough. There is evidence of the increasing use of writing and, to a lesser extent, mathematics in other subjects, but this relies too much on teachers' individual grasp of how each subject can help the other. Provision is not systematically planned throughout the school with the extension of pupils' literacy or numeracy skills in mind. Pupils' skills of speaking are not exploited or developed enough in other subjects, including mathematics. There has not been time to develop the teaching of information and communication technology skills in other subjects fully enough; the school is well aware of this weakness and has good plans to address it.
25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the results these pupils achieve in relation to the targets on their individual education plans and their prior attainment. All members of staff successfully establish the very good relationships with these pupils that encourage them to work hard in a fully supportive environment.
26. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good. When they are withdrawn to work with a specialist teacher, teaching and learning are very good because there are high levels of oral interaction. This ensures that the pupils understand the meanings of the words they are to meet in class and understand some of the underlying concepts. The small numbers of pupils involved in each group also ensures that each gets many more opportunities to talk with the teacher than they might in a whole-class context.
27. The school organises some teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 so that teachers other than the class teacher teach, for example, some art and design, design and technology, music and physical

education lessons. This organisation works well because it allows pupils to benefit from the individual expertise of the members of staff involved. Teaching and learning in these lessons are nearly always good and are sometimes excellent. It is more effective than most other teaching in those subjects.

28. Supply teachers make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The school has recently built up a small core of regular supply teachers whom they have trained in literacy and numeracy. This has been a good investment of time and finance because these teachers understand the requirements of national strategies, which has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. In addition, the regularity of their employment means that they are familiar with the school's routines and expectations and have a reasonable knowledge of individual pupils' needs.
29. Newly qualified teachers make valuable contributions to pupils' learning, between them conducting a good proportion of well-taught lessons and some even more effective than that, in a similar proportion to their more experienced colleagues.
30. Throughout the school, teachers plan and prepare their lessons thoroughly. They have clear learning objectives, which are frequently shared with pupils to give them an idea of what is expected by the end of the lesson. Relationships are at least good in all classes, which ensures that pupils are confident and willing learners. Teachers manage pupils well and this generates a warm working atmosphere in which pupils concentrate well and try hard to produce good work; parents appreciate this aspect of teaching greatly. Pupils' questions and queries are dealt with well because teaching assistants liaise well with teachers. They are an integral and effective part of the teaching team, and this helps all pupils to achieve as well as they are able, especially those targeted pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The key issue of the last inspection report, requiring the school to review the deployment and use of classroom assistants, has been addressed to very good effect. However, teachers' questions generally tend to anticipate a single correct answer and not to probe pupils' understanding sufficiently or to promote their speaking skills as fully as they could.
31. The quality of marking is variable. It is generally regular, basic and encouraging, and identifies correctly those aspects of work that need to be corrected, although these are very seldom followed up. Sometimes, teachers' handwriting is hard to read and comments rarely set high expectations or suggest ways that pupils might improve their work. Homework is used satisfactorily to reinforce and extend pupils' learning.
32. Where teaching, although often satisfactory overall, is less effective, it is because subject knowledge is insecure, as in a Year 2 physical education lesson, where appropriate coaching opportunities were missed; the flow of a lesson is interrupted because resources are not readily to hand and pupils' concentration wavers, or the respective roles of teachers and support staff are unclear, as in an outdoor play session in the nursery, which resulted in less interaction with children than was needed to ensure that all made the progress they could have done. In addition, in too many pupils' books, the standards of presentation are not high enough. This has a detrimental effect on accuracy and precision, and adversely affects their achievements; teachers' expectations in this regard are not consistently high enough.
33. Where teaching is most effective and learning is swift, it is because:
 - The basic skills are taught clearly and logically, so that all pupils are given the opportunity to succeed because they understand what it is they have to do and how to do it. A good example of this was a Year 1 English lesson, taken by a regular supply teacher, in which the steady and very clear way in which spellings were taught enabled pupils to make very good progress in learning rhyming words.
 - Teachers manage learning and pupils astutely, establishing very good relationships, an enthusiastic approach to learning, high levels of motivation and very good behaviour. In a science lesson in Year 4, for example, this ensured that pupils were both busily working and paying good attention to the needs of others, and treated the creatures they were working with carefully, releasing them safely back into the wild at the end of the lesson.

- Teachers have a very good understanding of the subject, enabling them to explain matters clearly to pupils and to pose probing questions that challenge all pupils at their own level. In a communication, language and literacy session in the reception class, this resulted in children developing a far better grasp of words ending in '-ick' and '-ock' than they had at the beginning of the lesson.
- Lessons are conducted at a fast pace that strikes a good balance between enabling all pupils to consider their answers before volunteering to speak and taking too much time so that the faster thinkers lose concentration. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the pace was unremittingly fast throughout so pupils were actively involved in learning for a very large proportion of the time available and, consequently, achieved very well.
- Teachers' questions probe pupils' understanding and extend their speaking and reasoning skills, as in a Year 3 information and communication technology lesson where the constant repetition of questions checking pupils' grasp of the strategies being shown ensured that they could practise effectively later in the week.

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

34. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are good. They have a strong influence on pupils' personal and academic development. There is full implementation of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Furthermore, they are both enriched in a variety of ways. There have been good improvements since the last inspection.
35. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum are satisfactory. Teachers are committed to planning effective programmes for progressively developing skills, knowledge and understanding in all subjects. There is proper emphasis on teaching literacy and numeracy through the use of the national strategies, which are gradually and effectively raising standards of attainment. However, these strategies place too little emphasis on the use of both language and computer skills across the whole curriculum, so that pupils can reinforce and extend them through applying them in a variety of meaningful contexts. Where this has been carried out, there are benefits to pupils' learning. For example, in a lesson where pupils had watched a video in their geography work on rivers, pupils made notes prior to writing in their own way what they had learnt. This consolidated what they had learnt from the video.
36. The curriculum is designed to include the needs of all pupils so that they have equal opportunity to have interesting and worthwhile experiences, which will make the most of their abilities. It also maintains a satisfactory balance of academic learning and activities in which pupils are creative and increasingly independent. The school makes good use of teachers who have particularly expertise in a subject by exchanging classes in Years 4, 5 and 6. It also welcomes a large number of visitors to bring the curriculum to life. For example, pupils hear at first hand what it was like to be an evacuee, fire fighters explain their work and musicians come to play to the pupils.
37. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is very good support from the governor linked to this aspect of the school's work. The co-ordinator for this work provides very strong guidance and support for teachers and assistants. This ensures that detailed plans for pupils (IEPs) provide teachers with a basis for meeting these pupils' needs and for reviewing their progress with parents. Pupils benefit greatly by having target books based on the IEPs, in which pupils can see how they are progressing. Assistants liaise very well with teachers and provide strong support for the pupils. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own progress, and plans are in place to extend this practice. Discussions about personal and social development provide important opportunities for pupils to develop their self-esteem. The school only withdraws pupils from the classroom if teachers feel that they will benefit from a short session of developing linguistic skills. This ensures that the pupils are included in all classroom activities. However, there is too little emphasis in these group sessions on developing self-esteem. There is

also a great deal of scope for working on their speaking, partly to develop their language and partly to promote their self-confidence.

38. Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. The school assesses them on entry. Then, under the highly expert guidance of the co-ordinator, it systematically tracks their progress through the use of a detailed profile of their developing language. Consequently, there are no significant differences between these pupils' academic progress and that of monolingual pupils. Although there is only extra teaching for them once a week, the co-ordinator works very closely with teachers and assistants to provide continuous support for those pupils who need it. However, the school's lack of emphasis on developing oral skills is inhibiting these pupils' use of language. They, in particular, need to learn how to develop self-confidence in speaking in a variety of contexts.
39. The adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy has been helpful in giving a structure to planning, resulting in systematic progression in learning from year to year. However, some teachers do not make full use of the initial parts of lessons, which are intended to promote the swift recall of basic number facts. In addition, the use, reinforcement and extension of pupils' numeracy skills are not rigorously planned in other subjects.
40. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. There are very many opportunities for pupils to take part in such activities in order to enrich their curriculum experiences and promote their personal and social development. Clubs include sports, art, instrumental and sung music, dancing and enjoying books. The school's clear effort to be inclusive is reflected in the fact that a very high proportion of the pupils attend the clubs, which are run by teachers, support staff and parents. The school further enriches the statutory curriculum by taking pupils on a very wide variety of visits. These include places of historical interest, such as Belgrave Hall, where pupils live out past ways of life, places of religious interest such as Polesworth Abbey, and the Space Centre. All subjects benefit greatly from these visits, whereby the pupils gain a wider perspective on what they are studying.
41. The school makes strong efforts to ensure that pupils have equal opportunities, not least by a policy of inclusion in lessons. However, the strategy of targeting questions to reluctant pupils does not extend to all classrooms. The school is developing its work for the most able pupils, but has yet to identify gifted and talented pupils, so that teachers can plan to meet their needs. All pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities. Nonetheless, the provision for equality of access and opportunity in the school is excellent overall, because of the school's inclusive nature and the support the pupils receive, particularly in their personal development.
42. Provision for personal, social and health education is excellent, with a thorough programme of lessons, a large number of visits and visitors, and the whole aspect permeating daily life in school. The co-ordinator provides very strong leadership. She has secured in-service training for teachers, so that they implement the detailed policy. There is a good bank of resources, including videos on such subjects as racism. The school also welcomes visitors such as the School Nurse, the 'Life Education Bus', and the RSPCA, all of whom contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding. There is a school council, which encourages pupils to develop an understanding of citizenship. However, this activity is not yet fully developing pupils' self-confidence in speaking. In following up its excellent provision, the school's records of personal development are thorough, but are not yet leading to action in planning for pupils' individual personal needs. This is shown in individual plans for pupils with special educational needs where the emphasis is more on academic skills and less on building self-esteem and social skills.
43. The school's links with the community are good. The school not only taps the resources available to develop the pupils' education, but also makes a good contribution itself to the outside world, exploring their own citizenship in the process. The local council and a recycling firm are helping to establish the computer suite by paying the school for recyclable glass and printing cartridges respectively. A local steel band plays to the pupils, for example, and parents and others come to describe other cultures such as those in India. Local sports clubs help to train the pupils, and members of the emergency services explain their work. The school holds a large number of school events to raise money for charities, and the choir sings at a local festival of music.

44. The school has established good links with local schools and other educational institutions. There are beneficial arrangements for Year 6 when they move onto secondary school, linked to joint meetings on the schools' curricula. One of the specialist secondary teachers has given some exciting lessons on making rockets. Students from a training college have given pupils training in Gaelic football.
45. All aspects of the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. This is further improvement since the last inspection.
46. The school's approach to education is based on strong spiritual values. These permeate daily life, but are also brought to pupils' attention in assemblies and religious education in particular. Pupils learn to respect the values and beliefs of others and explore abstract concepts, including some gifts, such as love, being without price. Pupils flourish within this atmosphere and develop a good understanding of their own strengths and of the ways they could develop their own character. They also appreciate what is beautiful and want to explore what they find mysterious.
47. Pupils live in school according to a moral code to which they have contributed. The school council becomes involved in moral and social matters. Teachers enable pupils to understand the meaning of bullying and how to deal with it. Pupils' behaviour indicates that the school is very successful in establishing an understanding of right and wrong, so that pupils care for and respect one another.
48. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills. For example, pupils often plan investigations in groups, such as when studying woodlice in science. Pupils explain well how they deal with difficult social situations in group-work. There is scope for using class lessons for developing pupils' oral skills, which would further benefit their social interactions. However, the residential course at Kingswood provides excellent opportunities for pupils to work together to face challenges as well as to learn how to live together. Pupils undertake a number of responsibilities such as reading to younger pupils.
49. Teachers acquaint the pupils with a good range of culture in the arts, which enriches pupils' own work. The school employs a very good number of ways to develop pupils' understanding of other ethnic cultures. It draws pupils' attention to festivals in different religions. Pupils from a local secondary school introduce the school's pupils to drumming from another culture, and parents help them to be aware of how people live in other countries. Pupils hear stories from other religions, such as about Rama and Sita. The school has held an interesting 'Ancient Greek Day', and pupils learn songs from other countries like Israel. Pupils learn about Hindu 'Mehndi patterns' and experience the imagery and language from other cultures by listening to their stories and their lullabies. Pupils fully understand the implications of racism.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

50. The school ensures that pupils' emotional, personal and physical wellbeing is looked after very well. The care of the pupils is a major strength of the school. All the standard health and safety requirements are in place and fully met. There is very good cover from staff trained in first aid procedures. The many pupils spoken to during the inspection were fully aware of the correct fire drill procedures. An example of the practical manner in which the school looks after the pupils' welfare is the information pack for supply teachers which gives detailed information on behaviour policy, fire drill, notes on pupils' medical needs and a report sheet to cover what has been taught. The procedures for child protection are good. There are two named members of staff for co-ordinating the provision and the school works closely with the outside agencies when necessary.
51. The support and guidance the pupils receive in their educational and personal development are good. The pupils identified as having special educational needs are assessed effectively and the provision for their needs is good. Teaching assistants have been trained in assessment of the pupils' skills in reading and spelling, for example, using words that occur frequently in reading matter. Their individual education plans contain specific and attainable targets and inform provision and practice in class. Targets books are provided which indicate the purpose of what the pupils are to learn, and identify clearly what adults are to do to support the pupils' learning. These targets normally include literacy, numeracy and sometimes behaviour. The pupils are encouraged

to make contributions, and as the year progresses the number of targets reduces, which is a clear indication of the progress the pupils make. Good records are kept of progress, with comments and dates on samples of work. This is an effective means of tracking progress in specific areas. Pupils learning English as an additional language are also assessed regularly and offered appropriate support in the nursery and reception years; as a result, they make increasingly good progress the more time they spend in school and make good progress in Years 3 to 6.

52. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. The headteacher, making full use of the computerised registration system, analyses pupils' attendance and targets all those falling below the targeted rate. The school and the educational welfare officer contact the parents. All pupils arriving late have to register with the administrative staff and follow-up action is taken where necessary.
53. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. It is strength of the school that these policies are consistently implemented across the school and the success is clearly illustrated by the outcome of the good behaviour of the pupils.
54. There are satisfactory procedures, overall, for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and the information gained from them is used satisfactorily, overall, to inform future teaching and curriculum developments. However, there is room for improvement.
55. Procedures are good in English and mathematics, but they are not developed fully in science or securely in place for other subjects. Assessment procedures and the monitoring of the children's progress are already planned for review in the nursery and reception years, to reflect the 'stepping stones' and the Early Learning Goals. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress over time are satisfactory. Progress for pupils from Year 2 to 6 is now well documented, but there is not enough tracking of the progress the pupils make from the nursery to Year 2.
56. There has been some further improvement since the previous inspection and the teachers continue to use effective procedures in mathematics and English to assess what the pupils have learned and can do. The school uses optional tests in English and mathematics, national guidelines in numeracy, reading, spelling and writing each year, from Year 1 onwards. Writing and handwriting are assessed termly, data from national tests at the end of Year 2 and 6 are analysed thoroughly and the information is routinely passed on as the pupils transfer to their new classes each year. Recently, the school has adopted a computer-generated system to record assessment information from Year 2 test results, through the year groups to Year 6, and in so doing can now identify the progress the pupils have made in these years. This type of information is not available from the nursery to Year 2. There is good awareness of the need to continue to develop assessment in science and other subjects in a similar way to the assessment of English and mathematics, and to use the information gained to plan future provision and teaching.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57. The parents have a very positive view of the school and believe that the school has high expectations for their children. There is an easy and constructive relationship between the parents and the school staff, which enhances the development of the pupils. Discussions with parents during the inspection and at the parents' meeting clearly demonstrated and confirmed this relationship.
58. The school has good and effective links with the parents that are maintained through the informative newsletters, regular meeting and easy access to the headteacher and, for many families, through the ties with the two parishes. The answers to the parents' questionnaire showed over 92 per cent being comfortable with raising questions and problems with the school. There is a strong Friends of the School Association which raises between £2500 and £3000 for school improvements; this has been used recently to re-stock the library. Current fund-raising is intended to help with equipment for the computer suite due to be ready in the spring term. The support of the parents for the Friends association and the support given to the diocesan education fund by parents demonstrate the commitment to the school and their children's education.

59. The quality of information provided for parents on their children's progress at school is good. The annual reports to parents are well written and give clear information on progress and attainment, including, in English, mathematics and science, the National Curriculum levels of attainment. There are meetings in the autumn and lent terms for parents to come and discuss progress and these meetings are well attended.
60. Parents with children with special educational needs met during the inspection said that the level of information and support from the school was very good and led to a close working relationship to help their children's progress. However, the school has in draft an excellent and informative guide for parents, which will ease formal communications still further.
61. The school encourages parents to come into school to help but this help has been adversely affected this term by the some national screening delays. There is a satisfactory level of support by the parents to their children's learning at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are very good and have strengthened further since the last inspection. The headteacher provides a very clear direction for the work of the school and has been successful in building a strong team that supports him very well. He manages adults and pupils alike sensitively and with consistent determination, which has resulted in evident improvements, for example, in pupils' behaviour. Consequently, people like him and appreciate all that he does for them, including parents and pupils. As a result, the school is outstandingly successful in translating its Catholic mission statement into practice and providing a strong Christian and inclusive ethos. It is a truly safe learning environment for pupils and a welcoming place to work as an adult.
63. The backing of the deputy headteacher has been crucial to the very good improvements shown in the school's work generally since the last inspection; she provides a strong professional and teaching model for her colleagues. She is part of the senior management team, whose members discharge their key responsibilities effectively, giving the school a structure that is beginning to benefit subject co-ordinators as they develop their roles, and to influence the good strategies for evaluating the effectiveness of teachers' professional competence. Subject co-ordinators, many of whom are new to their roles, make a good contribution, overall, to standards and provision in their subjects. The school has addressed this key issue of the last inspection report well. The co-ordination of provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is excellent, which results in high standards of behaviour, good attitudes to work and very good relationships throughout the school.
64. The governing body supports the work of the school well. Governors have been particularly successful in helping to maintain teachers' morale and the school's ethos during the years when the school was in Special Measures and since. The committee structure is effective and meetings are timed to occur before the meetings of the full governing body so that time is used efficiently. The minutes of the full body meetings show that the governors are actively involved in considering the school's future needs and that strategic planning is good. For example, governors are fully and appropriately involved in devising the school improvement plan. Governors receive plentiful good-quality information from the headteacher, which they supplement through a sensitively regulated system of personal visits to the school to see how pupils react to teaching. All governors have an explicit link with a subject or an area of the school's work, such as special educational needs. These mechanisms give them a good understanding of the school's strengths and alert them to what is now needed. They fulfil their statutory duties well.
65. The systems used by the school to judge its performance are very effective. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive, good and ambitious agenda for continuing improvement that addresses all subjects and many whole-school aspects to be improved over a three-year period. There is a good emphasis on providing all necessary professional training. The identified ways of judging how successful actions have been are clear but too few relate explicitly to the raising of

pupils' standards. A calendar to provide an overview of what is scheduled in each term would be of benefit and would ensure that the pace of change is managed equitably.

66. The quality of teaching is evaluated regularly and with appropriate frequency. The headteacher's evaluations strike a good balance between praising what is working well and pointing out what needs to be improved. Increasingly, they make good links between the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning. Subject co-ordinators regularly monitor colleagues' plans to ensure that what is on offer complies with what is required and that work becomes harder over time for all pupils. The induction procedures for staff new to teaching or to the school are good. A very helpful 'welcome pack' for supply teachers gives all the information necessary to enable them to settle quickly into the core task of teaching pupils. Teachers and support staff have attended a very good amount of professional training, which has been closely linked to identified priorities. They have shown a very good commitment to continual improvement in their own practice and in what the school provides for pupils. They are very well placed to continue these improvements.
67. The school uses the resources at its disposal to good effect. Financial management systems are secure. All available finance and grants are used well to implement the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The bursar, headteacher and finance committee of the governors keep good control of expenditure and make prudent strategic decisions, for example, about how much money to keep in the contingency fund against future priorities. Office procedures are efficient and support the work of the school well, for example, in the ordering of stock and equipment. The principles of best value are well established. The use of new technology is adequate, overall. It is used well by the office staff to keep accounts and records, for example, but the use made of computers in the classrooms is inefficient.
68. The teachers and the support staff meet the demands of the curriculum well. All staff are now on contracts for at least this year, which has allowed the school to address identified developments with increasing momentum, and teaching assistants have been recruited. Thus the school now has a stable staff working together as a team. The school has built up a bank of supply teachers who know the school and are able to provide consistent support when required. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. The caretaker and his cleaning staff keep the school very tidy. Office staff are very efficient. They are a very welcoming first point of contact for parents and visitors, and support the work of the school very well.
69. The accommodation is adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. However, the outdoor area for the Foundation Stage pupils is bare and uninviting. The governors have approved spending on an ambitious computer suite, which is due to be operational by the end of the current school year. There is a very useful library in a pleasant first-floor room, although the non-fiction section is not fully enough stocked to develop pupils' research skills. The school makes good use of a local playing field and a swimming pool to ensure that the demands of the physical education curriculum are met.
70. The resources overall are satisfactory and have improved since the previous inspection. They are good in English and mathematics and unsatisfactory in geography. In the Foundation Stage, resources are adequate but the quality of some needs attention.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to improve standards, the headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- (1) Review provision and practice in the nursery and reception classes. *

(paragraphs 32, 73 – 75 and 77 – 82)

- (2) Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of speaking, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology in all subjects.

(paragraphs 5, 7, 21, 24, 30, 35, 37, 38, 42, 48, 67, 77, 84, 88 – 91, 98, 100, 108, 111, 112, 116, 117, 121, 124, 125, 127 and 131)

- (3) Devise manageable assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics and use the information gained to ensure that all pupils achieve the standards they could.

(paragraphs 55, 56, 82, 108, 111, 112, 116, 117, 121, 125, 131, 137 and 142)

In addition, the governors should consider:

- Ensuring that teachers insist on high standards of presentation in pupils' books and improving the usefulness of the marking of pupils' work. *
- Improving teachers' subject knowledge in those subjects where this is necessary. *

(References to these points are to be found in paragraphs 10, 31, 104, 116, 136 and 141)

*** N.B. The school has already identified these priorities and has included those marked with an asterisk in the current improvement plan.**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	2	5	22	10	1	0	0
Percentage	5	12.5	55	25	2.5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	13	196
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	54

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	25

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	37

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	15	13	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	11	15
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	24	22	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (74)	79 (83)	93 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	14
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	24	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (83)	82 (78)	89 (83)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	12	11	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	9
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	18	21	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (78)	91 (66)	87 (84)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	9	9	10
	Total	18	18	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (72)	78 (66)	83 (72)
	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
111	0	0
6	0	0
12	0	0
0	0	0
22	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
20	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
8	0	0
5	0	0
0	0	0
6	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)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	218

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.5

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 2002
	£
Total income	508, 528
Total expenditure	489, 726
Expenditure per pupil	2, 267
Balance brought forward from previous year	16, 075
Balance carried forward to next year	34, 877

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	12.2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contracts of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	208
Number of questionnaires returned	108

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	29	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	33	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	38	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	39	10	1	2
The teaching is good.	72	25	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	26	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	20	5	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	25	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	59	30	10	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	73	24	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	26	3	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	33	14	2	10

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

72. The children's attainment is well below average when they first come into the nursery, overall, and especially in personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy and mathematical development. The children progress at an appropriate rate through the nursery and reception years, but make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. When the children go into Year 1, attainment is still below average in most areas of learning, except personal, social and emotional development and physical development, in which the children attain appropriate levels.
73. The provision is sound. Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is good, as is the management of behaviour. There is good provision for children identified as having special educational needs in the reception and nursery years and they make sound progress. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall; they are good in personal, social and emotional development and, in the reception class, very good in aspects of communication, language and literacy. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the remaining areas. The staff have a secure understanding of the six areas of learning and plan an appropriate range of activities for the children to develop their skills. They have high expectations for behaviour, with a friendly, relaxed and caring attitude, and have the children's best interests at heart. However, there is not enough clarity in the roles and responsibilities of adults, and how children are grouped for activities, especially in the nursery class. The staff's skills are underdeveloped in 'open-ended' questioning and offering opportunities for children to choose their own activities, especially linked to the 'stepping stones'² and, where appropriate, the Early Learning Goals.
74. Areas for development, many of which have already been identified by the school as priorities, include:
- defining more closely the roles and deployment of all adults;
 - improving the balance between activities chosen by the children themselves and those led by adults,
 - developing children's communication, language and literacy skills more robustly, for example, through opportunities for role-play and developing language with direct support from an adult.
75. In addition, the outdoor area is underdeveloped, and the organisation of the indoor space does not ensure the maximum access to an increasing range of materials tools and equipment for the children to re-apply their previously taught and learned skills and techniques. Since the new admission procedures in the reception year, the children in the nursery attend part-time for sessions of different lengths of time. The morning session is for three hours and the afternoon two hours in length. The school is aware of this imbalance and intends to resolve the matter; in all other matters, all children are fully included in all that is on offer.

Personal, social and emotional development

76. The children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, as a result of the good support they receive in their learning. Consequently, standards meet expectations by the end of the reception year. This area of learning is a strength of the work of the nursery and reception classes, setting a firm tone for learning throughout the school. The children come into

² The 'stepping stones' are those progressive steps that children are expected to take through the nursery and reception classes, leading to the attainment of the Early Learning Goals, which are the standards expected nationally of average children as they enter Year 1.

the nursery with social skills which are generally well below expectations overall for their age and learn quickly because of the staff's diligent and consistent application of behaviour management strategies and positive reinforcement the children. The children pay attention for increasing periods of time, concentrate and sit quietly when appropriate. The youngest children are still learning to deal with their strong impulses and emotions; the staff are vigilant in reminding them to share and take turns and to be fair to each other. Since the introduction of a new local education authority admissions policy within the school, the age of the children in the nursery is younger than previously and the staff are to be commended on the way in which these very young children have settled happily in their learning environment. The children are set good examples on how to behave and show each other respect. Their efforts are rewarded; for instance, there is a 'merit tree' in the reception class. The children's birthdays and other traditions and celebrations from a variety of cultures and backgrounds are acknowledged and they have good opportunities to develop their understanding and tolerance. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted.

Communication, language and literacy

77. In communication, language and literacy, the children are achieving at a satisfactory rate, although the children's skills at the end of the reception year remain below average in speaking and language development. In the reception class, the very good support the children receive means they make very good progress in learning about the sounds that letters make in words. However, some children still find this type of work difficult, especially when required to discriminate between sounds, letters and rhymes in words. Some opportunities to reinforce literacy and to develop language are missed, in both year groups. Questions tend not to be put in such a way that encourages the children to volunteer information and practise the 'to and fro' of conversation. Opportunities to develop conversation through role-play, with the support of an adult are sometimes missed, because of the way activities are organised and staff deployed. The children are learning to handle books correctly; they hold books properly and are increasingly aware that print has meaning, and several re-tell a story from the pictures in books. They enjoy and listen attentively to stories, poems and rhymes; the children learning English as an additional language also pay good attention and make satisfactory progress. Children have regular opportunities to recognise words, for example, to identify their own name and to practise writing these. However, some activities emphasise the shapes of letters and do not reinforce correct letter formation.

Mathematical development

78. In their mathematical development the children make sound progress. By the time they leave the reception class, however, standards are below those expected. The children are learning about numbers, to recognise numerals and to count accurately to ten. There is a fairly structured delivery of numeracy in the reception class and teaching is satisfactory overall, although opportunities are sometimes missed to extend the children's thinking and learning. The older children are learning to put numerals in the correct order; a few manage this very well, but many are still at the developmental stage of handling equipment, for example, when making different shapes from salt dough. Some children need a lot of encouragement to match the shapes they have made to a number and to count accurately. Many children in this class have English as an additional language and although the staff interact well with them and offer good support, the number of children means they do not always have specific and targeted help from an adult, which would benefit their learning. The children identify different two-dimensional shapes correctly and are learning to solve simple problems, for example, pouring sand and water into different sized containers. However, opportunities to extend this type of work are not exploited fully.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79. The children come into nursery with limited understanding of the world in which they live, and their skills, although developing appropriately, are still below the expected level when they go into the Year 1. The programme of activities is generally linked to themes in both classes, including 'toys', 'the seasons' and 'ourselves'. These themes are used appropriately to develop the children's ideas about change, being observant, looking at similarities and differences and learning about the features and people within their environment. Activities also include using small magnifiers to

explore, look closely at objects, and different materials, such as transparent coloured paper. The children consider events in their lives and the passing of time, and, for example, when studying babies, how they grow and develop. The children, especially the older ones, are learning to find their way about the school building and to gain confidence in their sense of direction. The children are learning to use equipment to make designs and models, but these opportunities could be extended. They have good opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning and to learn about a range of cultures, backgrounds, traditions and beliefs.

Physical development

80. The children's physical development is progressing appropriately. However, because sessions for physical development outdoors lack structure and the area outside is underdeveloped, it is not sufficiently obvious what the intentions are for learning during these activities. The staff interact with the children outdoors, but opportunities are lost to exploit fully both physical pursuits and also the language and creative work associated with it. The children in the nursery use bikes properly to push and pedal themselves along, but a few are rather awkward in their movements and some tend to drag rather than push and pull prams and buggies. The children in the reception class have average skills in their physical development and are learning to improve these appropriately, although opportunities to coach directly or to emphasise, evaluate and improve performance are sometimes missed. There are few opportunities for the children to use equipment to balance, climb and jump, when they first start in school, as it is not possible to use the climbing frame outdoors, because of the inappropriate surface on the playground. However, the staff provide a good range of activities for the children to develop their hand control skills and encourage them to handle pencils, crayons and scissors to develop their manual dexterity and small muscles in their hands.

Creative development

81. The children make satisfactory progress in their creative development from a relatively low starting point. However, their standards are below those expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1. The children have experiences of exploring colour and texture using paint, malleable materials and construction equipment. These opportunities are provided reasonably frequently and the children are taught a satisfactory range of techniques such as printing, painting and drawing. They experience a range of tactile activities, for instance, using malleable materials, with seeds and glitter added for interest, three-dimensional construction equipment to make models, and materials to make collage, although the size of paper the children use tends to be rather small. The layout and organisation of resources for creative work in both classes do not provide enough free access for the children to select from an increasing range and variety of materials, tools and implements, or to re-apply their previously learned skills and techniques to create their own designs and models. For example an 'office area' with appropriate equipment would enable the children to select paper, card and implements independently to join, fix and decorate.
82. There are good procedures for settling the children in school and keeping parents and carers informed. For example, there is an informative and useful handbook, with a booklet to complete at home about each child's interests, and also useful information about the Early Learning Goals, sharing books at home and other aspects of reading and writing. Resources are adequate overall, but there are not enough suitable resources for the outdoor area, which is not developed fully or used to best effect. Resources are generally well looked after, but some, for example, the toys for role-play, are not inspiring enough to fire the imagination of young children. Assessment of the children's learning is satisfactory in the nursery and reception years, covering the six areas of learning, and records are regularly maintained. Initial assessments and an individual profile of the children's attainment on entry to the nursery are completed, with an appropriate emphasis on communication, language and literacy. Currently transfer records are completed to include the children's achievements and their targets for the end of the reception year. The staff also keep checklists of activities and of the objectives of what the children are doing, which form part of the information when reporting back to parents and carers. Samples of the children's work are kept, which are dated to show their progress and annotated with comments about how the children cope with the tasks. However, there are no specific links to the Early Learning Goals and the 'stepping

stones' as yet, although it is intended to adopt the local authority's profile when this becomes available.

ENGLISH

83. Although all pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment, standards in Year 2 are below average. The levels of language they bring from outside the school adversely affect pupils' progress in this part of the school. As they spend more time in school, the effects of good provision become increasingly effective. Consequently, pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve good results, overall, and standards in Year 6 generally broadly match the national average, although there is a high proportion of pupils in this year group with special educational needs. Overall, standards have improved since the last inspection, partly as a result of good leadership and management by the subject co-ordinator.
84. In the current Year 2, attainment in speaking and listening is below the levels expected nationally. Pupils listen well to teachers' instructions before carrying out classroom activities, especially in the Literacy Hour. However, they are reluctant to speak at length in most situations, and tend not to use sentences to answer questions or to initiate discussions. This is shown, for example, when they are asked to discuss the book they are currently reading. In one lesson, however, where they discussed a story, Year 1 pupils showed how good teaching encourages good speaking. Here, pupils were very keen to make their own appreciative comments.
85. In Year 2, attainment in reading is below the national average. The higher attainers are fluent and expressive when reading short stories aloud. However, they have no strategies for tackling unfamiliar words that do not conform to simple rules. They also find it very hard to talk about the plot or the characters, and are not familiar with non-fiction. Pupils attaining average or below-average standards are not fluent except with very simple text, and ask for help with simple words they cannot instantly read. Pupils' attainment in writing matches the national average; the continuing emphasis in the school on improving pupils' skills of spelling, comprehension and writing at length has had an especially beneficial effect for these younger pupils. The higher attainers are just beginning to use full stops and capital letters accurately, and are well aware of how to structure a story and make up interesting sentences. Although still a little inconsistent, their handwriting is clear and they spell accurately. Average- and lower-attaining pupils write short simple sentences in good handwriting and with accurate spelling. Pupils construct their sentences accurately when writing facts, such as instructions for a recipe.
86. In the current Year 6, attainment in speaking and listening is below the national average. Pupils listen hard but do not give detailed accounts of stories or events, and mostly answer questions without going on to initiate a discussion. Where teaching permits, pupils make good explanations, such as in an English lesson when talking about the meanings of words. Year 4 pupils show how focused teaching results in good speaking when they make a presentation in a class assembly.
87. In Year 6, attainment in reading is in line with the national average, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The higher attainers are very fluent and expressive. They talk in detail about the plot of a story and its characters, and assume their different viewpoints. They know a variety of genres and have favourite authors, and explain why they recommend them. For example, one pupil stated that while two authors wrote fantasies, only one of them wrote them in a way that was realistic. These pupils have well-developed library skills, and recognise bias in newspapers. Average-attaining pupils are also very fluent, but not yet expressive. They are not very enthusiastic about books, and discuss them in little detail. They have developed basic library skills, and are beginning to use terms such as 'font' and 'diagram' when discussing non-fiction. Lower-attaining pupils read simple texts fluently and expressively. However, they find it hard to discuss books, and have not developed a love of a particular author. They locate a non-fiction book in the library correctly.
88. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 in writing is in line with the national average, which is also an improvement brought about by the school's continuing emphasis on this area of work. Higher-attaining pupils write well-constructed stories using paragraphs after drafting and redrafting their ideas. They do not, however, write at sufficient length. They employ effective words and phrases to engage the reader's interest, although the vocabulary used is not extensive. Their handwriting

is fluent and well formed, and their spelling is very accurate. Pupils of average attainment still write in simple sentences and do not yet use a suitable variety of punctuation. Their stories have a reasonable structure, but there is little evidence of them checking their work. Handwriting is good and spelling is mostly accurate, although there are too many examples of carelessness. The lower attainers are still developing a sense of structure and find it difficult to be accurate with their punctuation. However, their stories are lively, and some of their sentences are complex and interesting.

89. The quality of teaching is good. In lessons for five to seven-year-olds it is at least good and sometimes very good. In lessons for seven to eleven-year-olds, a small minority of lessons is satisfactory, and the rest are good. Teachers use effective strategies for teaching literacy skills; this is gradually raising standards of attainment, although these strategies have yet to be fully effective in developing pupils' speaking skills. Where teaching is good, pupils give detailed explanations, such as of the meaning of words with the same beginning in literacy. Pupils also make detailed suggestions, for example, when carrying out a scientific investigation. Occasionally, teachers successfully ask pupils to refer to their own personal experiences, such as when they have been on holiday. This prompts prolonged spoken accounts because pupils enjoy telling their class what they have done. Pupils converse well, for example, when they are encouraged to prepare for a class discussion by first brainstorming in pairs. However, in many lessons the questions make it obvious what the teacher expects and pupils respond with short answers, which the teachers accept without challenge. In addition, teaching and learning strategies rarely include the use of drama, or making a presentation to the class after an investigation in subjects like history; this limits the development of pupils' speaking skills. Teachers present their lessons well, with a good pace and a manner that engages interest. Pupils listen hard to both stories and music, for example, and also to instructions.
90. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Consequently, pupils make good progress in English lessons, overall, particularly in Years 3 to 6. However, there is scope for a wider variety of ways to encourage pupils to write more interesting and prolonged stories and for developing pupils' poetry. Teachers work very closely with those who are responsible for pupils with special educational needs or where English is an additional language. Assistants give very good support to these pupils. Consequently they achieve well, particularly in classes for seven to eleven-year-olds. In most lessons, teachers ensure that pupils know what they are supposed to be learning. They follow this up by moving about the classroom and intervening where necessary, especially when pupils are developing a new skill such as making a flow chart of recipe instructions. Teachers treat pupils equally and include them all in discussions. This is particularly successful when they target questions at individuals. Homework is regular and used soundly to reinforce learning.
91. The subject leader co-ordinates the subject well. She carefully monitors the quality of teaching and ensures that the individual progress of pupils is tracked closely. This enables teachers to know how successfully pupils are learning so that they can make appropriate plans to meet individual needs. This proves most important with pupils with special educational needs and where English is an additional language. The school shows very strong commitment to English in its school improvement plan, although it has not yet concentrated on developing the spoken language in all subjects, which, in turn, would benefit the quality of pupils' writing. In addition, there are many missed opportunities to develop pupils' writing through its use in other subjects including the medium of word-processing. Resources are mostly good, although the non-fiction library is not broad enough to develop pupils' research skills.

MATHEMATICS

92. In the national tests in Years 2 and 6, results have been volatile from year to year. This has been brought about by the different proportions in each successive year group who have special educational needs and by weaknesses in past teaching, which have left many pupils with gaps in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy has been helpful and has given structure to planning, resulting in systematic progression in learning from year to year.

93. Nevertheless, standards currently are below average in both Year 2 and Year 6. However, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are making good progress in lessons and over time in developing a facility with numbers; this reflects the judgements made in the last inspection report. In other aspects of the subject, pupils achieve satisfactory results in relation to their prior attainment; for many, especially the younger pupils, achievement is hampered by a lack of understanding of the specific vocabulary needed. The school has recognised this weakness and, in every class, there are helpful lists of the vocabulary needed for that week's lessons and every teacher's plans contain the vocabulary needed for each individual lesson. This is good practice.
94. Year 2 pupils know a small range of multiplication facts reasonably securely, often using strategies to work them out that include counting on their fingers or reading a number line. Only about a quarter of pupils have the ability to recall basic number facts swiftly and accurately. The relatively large proportion of lower attaining pupils need help to understand multiplication and has difficulty in recording their workings out in a suitable way. Average-attaining pupils measure length in centimetres with reasonable accuracy and name simple two-dimensional shapes correctly. However, only higher-attainers name and classify three-dimensional shapes correctly. All pupils collate information successfully into tally charts but there is no evidence to show that any understand other forms of data representation. The presentation of work in their books is not neat or precise enough, which adversely affects the accuracy of their work and the rate at which they learn.
95. The range of ability in Year 6 is wide, with a greater proportion of lower attainers than higher attainers; all of the lower attainers are boys and so, in this class alone, girls tend to perform better than boys. Pupils use a reasonable range of strategies to recall number facts, although almost a third of pupils in this class have special educational needs and require a great deal of assistance to understand and to complete work swiftly. Lower attainers have a reasonable grasp of simple equivalent fractions; average attainers simplify fractions correctly, and higher attainers, who form about a quarter of the group, understand the equivalence of reasonably complex fractions. Lower attainers multiply three-digit numbers by a hundred successfully; average attainers multiply four-digit numbers by numbers less than ten accurately and higher attainers multiply and divide decimal numbers correctly by twos, tens and hundreds. About two-thirds of the class have a secure grasp of data handling, including understanding mode, median and range, and work out simple problems accurately; the remainder complete the task with help. Only about two-fifths of pupils deal confidently with these data when they involve, for example, kilogrammes or millilitres.
96. Because the quality of teaching is good and progression in learning is underpinned by the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy, pupils are making good progress in lessons and, increasingly over time, from what is, in many cases, a low base. Of the five lessons seen, four were taught well with a consequent beneficial effect on learning. In the other lesson, teaching was outstanding and pupils made excellent progress as a result. The standard of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection.
97. In this excellent lesson, which was in Year 6, the teacher's subject knowledge was high and she was able to give pupils very helpful tips about how to remember the difference between, for example, the modal value of a set of numbers and the median. The lesson was conducted at an unremittingly swift pace that both retained pupils' interest and attention and challenged them to use their prior knowledge in new situations. Throughout, relationships were very good, which meant that all pupils were confident to have a go at the tasks and benefited from the high level of focused support available. The contribution of teaching assistants was very influential in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and other lower attainers understood the tasks and were able to complete a suitable amount of work. The teacher's questions probed pupils' understanding very well and challenged them to contribute to the whole-class sessions even when they did not volunteer to do so! Consequently, they concentrated very well and worked hard to present good-quality and accurate work.
98. More generally, teachers' subject knowledge is good, lessons are well planned and prepared, and teachers work to a clear objective, which is often shared with the pupils, giving them an idea of what they have to do. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to their work and try hard to

complete the tasks. The structure of lessons is generally sound, although some teachers do not exploit the first part of lessons, designed to promote swift recall of known facts, fully enough and use them instead as teaching sessions. Teachers explain processes very clearly, as for example in a Year 2 lesson in which the clarity of the initial explanation of how to double numbers was a vital factor in the good progress made by pupils. Sometimes, however, this results in a loss of pace to the lesson and pupils become a little restless as a consequence. The teachers make sure that the work given to individuals matches their needs reasonably closely, using their knowledge of pupils' needs soundly. Teaching assistants give valuable, focused support for pupils with special educational needs; the targets on pupils' individual education plans are used effectively to identify what provision is required and how to meet individual needs. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and this engenders good levels of concentration and application to task. However, teachers' questioning generally does not probe pupils' understanding fully enough; too often, they are content to accept the first correct answer rather than challenging pupils to justify their calculations. Homework is used appropriately to reinforce and extend learning.

99. The marking of pupils' work is nearly always regular and accurate. However, it rarely tells pupils how they could improve their work and too often accepts work that is poorly presented and too imprecise. This has a negative effect on standards and achievement.
100. There are some examples of pupils' numeracy skills being used to help work in other subjects. For example, in Year 4 science, to help pupils time an investigation correctly, in Year 5, where ingredients were measured accurately in a food technology lesson, or in Year 6, where pupils draw helpful line graphs to show how quickly substances dissolve at varying temperatures. Such examples are not widespread and there is no rigorous approach in planning to ensure that pupils' mathematical skills are exploited in other lessons, including information and communication technology, or that other subjects contribute fully to the practice and extension of numeracy skills.
101. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well and is an excellent classroom practitioner herself. She has a clear idea of the subject's strengths and of what is needed to improve still further. The subject development plan has addressed appropriate priorities, resulting in a good level of sustained improvement in structures and practice since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved as a result of changes of staff, continuing training, improved planning and good assessment procedures; this, however, has yet to track through into results at a sustained high level. Resources have been built up steadily and are now good.

SCIENCE

102. The standards the pupils achieved in the national tests in 2002 in Year 6 were above average and high when compared to schools in similar circumstances. At the end of Year 2, however, teacher assessments of pupils' attainment indicated that it was below what might be expected for this age group and also below expectations when compared to similar schools. Nevertheless, progress in improving science in the school since the previous inspection is satisfactory.
103. Currently, the attainment of pupils in Year 2 is below expectations as a result of weaknesses in their prior knowledge and understanding of the world. However, all pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. The standards of Year 6 pupils, however, are above average for this age group, owing to the good progress and achievement of all pupils through Years 3 to 6. Science is used effectively to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, in Year 3 when the pupils devised menus, such as 'bean and chicken stew, served with cassava dumplings, creamed coconut and bananas'.
104. In Year 2, the pupils classify natural objects correctly, and identify different types of leaves and seeds and name these correctly. However, work is not always complete and sometimes there is overuse of worksheets, which limits the development of pupils' writing skills. Although the coverage of the required curriculum is complete, pupils' standards of presentation are weak, the teachers' marking is, itself, untidy and does not give enough pointers to enable pupils to improve, and pupils' work is below average for this year group. Similar criticisms are also applicable to Year 1.

105. In Years 3 and 4, the younger pupils conduct careful experiments, for instance, to test their theory that plants need leaves to grow healthily, leading to older pupils beginning to understand the idea of a 'fair test' and how to set up experiments. Pupils record their findings increasingly independently. In samples of the pupils' work there is ample evidence of a good use of diagrams, good links to numeracy, for example, to enable pupils to draw graphs or to measure the passing of time, and the good use of the correct scientific terms, for instance 'incisors', 'canines' and 'molars'. Sometimes, however, scientific vocabulary is not reinforced effectively and pupils, for example, use the word 'bendable', when 'flexible' would be more accurate and scientific. In these classes, marking is good and helps pupils to improve their standards, although there are sometimes too many worksheets.
106. In Year 6, the pupils use the correct scientific vocabulary to describe food chains and also accurately interpret 'webs' of interlocking food chains. They use terms such as 'omnivore', 'carnivore' and 'herbivore' correctly and explain these accurately. They use appropriate relevant language throughout their work, such as 'perspire', 'excrete' and 'reproduce'. There is good recording of investigative work, with good links to literacy and the teacher's marking of work is careful and evaluative, which helps pupils to improve their standards. Pupils have a good grasp of the differences between vertebrates and invertebrates and extend this knowledge to include more specific work on insects, arachnids and molluscs.
107. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In a Year 3 lesson, good use was made of information and communication technology to support learning in science. In lessons that are more effective, teachers emphasise the skills of investigation well and plan effectively, teaching methods are good and the pupils are managed very well. Practical work is used successfully and pupils record their investigations and findings independently. Good teaching also offers a good match of tasks to the different abilities in the class to extend the higher-achieving pupils. The staff have a good understanding of scientific facts and how to impart these clearly. The lessons are well paced, with a good level of support for both class teachers and teaching assistants. In satisfactory teaching there is a range of activities, but these are not sufficiently matched to ability. In these lessons, staff have a reasonable level of understanding of the subject, plan appropriately and make good use of practical activities. Assessment is used appropriately in lessons to guide questioning and to judge how well pupils are learning. Pupils behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to their learning.
108. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject development plan is sound and correctly identifies the areas for development, include devising assessment procedures, improving standards in Years 1 and 2 and continuing the monitoring of teaching throughout the school. Resources are adequate overall and are used appropriately in lessons. The use of information and communication technology is sometimes identified in planning but this tends to be underdeveloped across the school. There are good levels of inclusion in science and all the pupils are active participants in lessons.

ART AND DESIGN

109. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. Currently, the standards in art and design in Year 6 match those expected for this age group but attainment for the pupils in Year 2 is below expectations. Pupils, including those learning English as an additional language and those identified as having special educational needs, achieve satisfactory results in relation to their prior attainment throughout the school. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted and all pupils are included in art and design work.
110. In Year 2, pupils create the effects of light and shade using charcoal and chalk, and a range of techniques such as 'hatching', 'cross hatching', dots and shading curved and straight lines. Attainment is adversely affected for this age group because they tend to have immature hand control skills and their drawing lacks maturity and detail. They study the work of a suitable range of artists, such as L S Lowry, and use a reasonable range of media, such as charcoal, chalk and wax crayons. In Year 5, pupils use their observational skills well to sketch accurately, are developing good skills in portrait work, and use pencils effectively to shade and create effects.

Year 6 pupils display good skills in close observational work, for example, when sketching shells and domestic appliances. They use paint reasonably well to create landscapes, and although progress here is sometimes erratic, they show appropriate standards in sketching portraits and mixing colours. They make colourful designs using pastels and study the work of Van Gogh.

111. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and it is good in Years 3 to 6. The use of teachers' specialist knowledge is effective. The staff introduce lessons well, with clear explanations of techniques, with secure objectives for what the pupils are to learn, use appropriate methods and plan clearly. In the more effective lessons, the pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs, are offered good levels of individual support. Opportunities to assess pupils' standards are not identified in planning, although the staff make appropriate observations of what the pupils are learning, and offer help to evaluate and improve work. There are some opportunities to use information and communication technology, but these tend to be underdeveloped across the school. The pupils behave well in art lessons and are well motivated with positive attitudes to their artwork.
112. The leadership and management of art and design are satisfactory. Resources are sufficient, there is an appropriate scheme of work and sketchbooks are being introduced to record the pupils' artwork. The school currently follows national guidelines for art and design, but intends to develop a scheme of work more appropriate to the needs of the school. Although art skills are sometimes assessed to judge observational techniques, dexterity and skill handling pencils, and clear guidance is given about the detail of drawing human figures, there are limited procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and standards with any rigour. Other areas for development include providing more opportunities for three-dimensional work, including using tactile materials and the kiln, and the use of information and communication technology across the school to support art work. There is an art club, which is held regularly and is well attended by the pupils; this makes a good contribution to pupils' enjoyment of art and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. The level of attainment by the end of Year 2 is below that expected and pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. This includes the pupils learning English as an additional language and those identified as having special educational needs. The standards the pupils achieve at the end of Year 6 are in line with expectations. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is good for all pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6. Design and technology is used effectively to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and all pupils have equal access to the range of activities offered. Progress since the previous inspection report has been satisfactory.
114. In Year 1, pupils make sandwiches in food technology as part of their work on different food groups and in Year 2 they design and make simple puppets. In Year 4, the pupils' attainment is in line with expectations for this age group, for example when they use different methods to join pieces of materials together, such as 'tacking' or 'back stitch' to create either temporary or more permanent fixings. They test their theories on the strength of stitching and use this information to make sound decisions about which to use when making purses and money containers. They also use their skills satisfactorily to design and make their own 'pop-up' books, with levers and flaps, and use fabric paints in their designs. In Year 6, the pupils have made quite complex models to illustrate different means of soundproofing. They design working water wheels, with good links to science, and have a satisfactory grasp of structures, such as when they study geodesics, the construction of domes using triangular frameworks. They have a reasonable understanding of pneumatic systems. There are good cross-curricular links to mathematics through this type of work.
115. It was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2 and therefore a reliable and valid judgement on the quality of teaching cannot be made. In the other classes of older pupils in the school, the teaching is good overall and the individual expertise of some teachers is used effectively to teach other classes. In Year 5, the lesson was well planned and organised, with good objectives for what the pupils were to achieve, linked to the programmes of study for teaching design and technology in the National Curriculum. There was a good level of activity with good links to literacy, for example working from notes taken during the previous week's lesson. There

were good opportunities for independent writing and the class teacher was vigilant and offered good support and guidance. There were very secure and relaxed relationships, with very good mutual respect. The pupils behaved very well as a result, and were attentive and well motivated. There were also good links in the lesson to mathematics and science, when devising recipes looking at changes in substances and quantities. There was a good choice of follow-up work to the practical tasks set, although not very much difference in the types of activities for the higher-attaining pupils. The good classroom practice combined with good subject knowledge and a well-organised use of resources meant the pupils learned at a good pace and used the correct terms in their work on food technology such as 'kneading' when making the bread dough. Pupils behave well in design and technology lessons and have positive attitudes to their work.

116. Pupils' standards and achievements have been adversely affected, particularly in Years 1 and 2, because the school has not been able to develop teachers' expertise or the curriculum with the necessary rigour during and after the time the school was subject to Special Measures. In addition, because of the turbulence in staffing during that time, a subject co-ordinator has only recently been appointed for the subject. Nevertheless, the leadership and management of design and technology are now satisfactory. There is a suitable subject policy, resources are adequate and materials are replenished as appropriate. There are limited assessment procedures and assessments of the pupils' progress are not linked to the National Curriculum levels at present. Information and communication technology is an area to be developed in design and technology work.

GEOGRAPHY

117. Standards of attainment in both Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. This maintains the standards reached at the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment in Years 3 to 6. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because they gain a good knowledge of the appropriate vocabulary. In addition, the curriculum covers the expected range of work, which extends the knowledge and understanding they have of the world well. However, there is scope for more use of English and mathematics throughout the school in order to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills further. The subject leader co-ordinates geography skilfully, but resources are limited and a system for assessing pupils' progress is not yet fully in operation.
118. Pupils in the current Year 2 have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of geography. They know that there is a variety of buildings in their local environment and explain their purpose. They are not as clear about how the remainder of the land is used. Pupils are keen to explain why they like living in Leicester, but find it hard to explain their reasons in any detail. They know the differences between a town and a village, but have similar difficulties in explaining them. They are well aware of the effects of different types of weather on people's lives. The higher-attainers have a good knowledge of maps and understand the purpose of a key. Most pupils explain correctly the difference between a map and a picture. Pupils speak in restricted terms about the differences between the landscape and buildings in Leicester and those in a place where they have been on holiday.
119. Pupils in the current Year 6 similarly have suitable geographic knowledge and understanding. They distinguish a county from a country and name some continents. Pupils describe many of the features of the human and natural environment in Leicester, but have a very limited understanding of their impact on people's lives or how they have developed because of changing needs. The higher attaining pupils understand that people have different opinions about the advantages and disadvantages of constructions such as supermarkets at the perimeter of towns, and know the effects of pollution.
120. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers present their lessons in an interesting way so that pupils enjoy the subject. Teachers include all pupils in discussions by targeting those who are reticent in answering questions. They extend pupils' knowledge by slipping in facts about, for example, health when they are investigating the effects of sunshine on people's lives on holiday. One of the more successful methods of teaching uses pupils' personal experiences, such as

describing the clothes they took on their holiday. This encourages pupils to speak in detail, because they enjoy telling the class about the decisions they made. Teachers use well-prepared resources, such as maps and an accompanying bank of questions which make pupils think hard before committing themselves to paper. Teachers' expectations are such that pupils write neatly and present their work well.

121. The subject leader monitors both teaching and pupils' progress closely, although there is room to develop a system to assess pupils' attainment. The targets for the subject are very relevant to pupils' needs and are built into the school improvement plan and acted upon. The school does not have adequate resources to extend pupils' learning and teachers make too little use of computers both as a way of storing information and as a way of using appropriate skills for communication.

HISTORY

122. Only one lesson was observed. Nevertheless, pupils' work was scrutinised and a discussion held with a representative group of pupils. Standards of attainment for the current Year 2 are below those expected nationally, but Year 6 standards match those expected. Therefore pupils achieve satisfactory results in relation to their prior attainment in Years 1 and 2 and make good progress from the age of seven to eleven. Overall, standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
123. Pupils in Year 2 recall interesting facts about such people as Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale. However, they do not use historical words and find it hard to compare modern life with that in the past. They answer simple questions about the past, but are not aware of some of the different ways the past can be explored.
124. Pupils' historical knowledge and understanding are in line with expectations in Year 6. They know that there have been different eras associated with monarchs and sequence those they have studied in the correct order. Pupils distinguish primary from secondary sources and name most of them. Their knowledge of people's lives in any particular era is adequately detailed, although they do not speak in detail about comparisons with modern times. Higher-attaining pupils understand the meaning of bias, and its relevance to reading history books.
125. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the details of the teaching in history. Nevertheless, pupils' work suggests that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator, currently absent on maternity leave, has led and managed the subject soundly. Resources are satisfactory. There are two main points for development in history. First, the school does not develop pupils' literacy skills sufficiently through the subject and does not utilise the potential of computers effectively. Secondly, there is scope for developing a means of assessing pupils' attainment and achievement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

126. Many improvements have taken place in this subject since the last inspection. An enthusiastic co-ordinator has been appointed. A good development plan has been written; this has been a vital factor in moving the subject on from the state it was in during the last inspection and establishing a firm direction for the future. Members of staff have received appropriate training to raise their confidence and competence. Resources are now adequate; new hardware and software have been bought, including a digital camera and a projector. All classrooms have at least one PC, with the majority having more, many of which are networked for access to the Internet. A policy for safe access to the Internet has been written and parents and carers have had the opportunity to agree to, or disagree with, their child using the Internet in lessons. A scheme of work has been established to assure progression in learning over time and the full requirements of the National Curriculum can now be met over time. Year 6 pupils have had the chance to use a music program while on their residential visit earlier this term.
127. Pupils have, however, many gaps in their skills and competences that adversely affect their learning, such as slow keyboard speeds or knowledge of how to access programs. In addition, while the siting of PCs in school has been improved, it is still difficult for pupils to gain enough access to machines to ensure that their skills are practised with sufficient frequency. Too little use of computers was seen in any subject during the inspection. This adversely affects the development of pupils' skills and competencies in ICT, especially for the potentially higher attainers and those who are unable to practise skills at home. It also fails to capitalise on the potential of ICT to support learning in other subjects.
128. Because of the legacy of past weaknesses, standards in Years 2 and 6 have yet to reach the levels expected nationally for pupils aged seven or eleven. Nevertheless, pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language or from travelling families as well as refugees and asylum seekers, are now making satisfactory progress in those aspects of the ICT curriculum they are meeting. For example, there are examples of work at a broadly

appropriate level, emailing messages of sympathy to a school in the USA on the anniversary of the 11th of September terrorist attack in New York.

129. From discussions with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, together with a scrutiny of teachers' records and plans, it is evident that Year 2 pupils use the computer to write up stories that they have already written but do not edit their text. Year 6 pupils access the Internet to get information about rivers in connection with their geography topic and use search engines appropriately. They use a database program effectively to collate and present information about the lengths of rivers, displaying their work satisfactorily in different types of graph.
130. Because of the timing of the inspection, only one ICT lesson was observed and it is not possible to make valid judgements about teaching generally in the school. Although teaching in the lesson observed was good, learning was only satisfactory as pupils were unable to access the classroom PC until later in the week to practise what had been taught. The teacher's good subject knowledge enabled her to explain what to do clearly and logically. She used a projector to good effect to illustrate to the whole class the processes involved, which gained their attention and ensured that they concentrated well. The teacher asked individual pupils to operate the mouse to add records to a class database, which kept them involved as well as was possible. As a result, they were eager to participate and behaved well, with the teaching assistant making a valuable contribution to keeping those pupils with shorter concentration spans fully focused on the lesson.
131. The school has well-developed plans to improve provision and practice in the subject further with the imminent establishment of a 30-station ICT suite and further training for staff. Further appropriate development is planned to devise a system of assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress, and to identify opportunities to make meaningful links between ICT and other subjects.

MUSIC

132. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language, achieve results that are satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment throughout the school and, by the ages of seven and eleven, attain standards that match those expected nationally. No judgements were made about this subject in the previous inspection report.
133. Year 2 pupils compose and perform music to match the effect of the text they have written about weather conditions. They choose the correct instruments to achieve the desired effects and play them carefully, generally on cue. They evaluate in simple terms the work of other groups but tend to concentrate too much on what could be improved at the expense of appreciating that which worked well. They clap appropriate rhythms from a graphic score produced by the teacher and appreciate the value of rests in music. Year 4 pupils extend this rhythmic ability to the extent that they successfully strike the first beat of the bar in common time when playing in a pentatonic scale, achieving a pleasant sound. In Year 6, pupils sing an Israeli song tunefully and with due regard to others, sustaining an ostinato accompaniment. This makes a valuable contribution to their cultural development. Nearly all pupils have a secure sense of rhythm and clap accurately in time to music.
134. Some two dozen pupils attend the school choir regularly. They sing tunefully in two parts with a good sense of tempo and rhythm. They sustain the pitch of a song generally well but 'slide off' some notes to mimic what they hear more generally in their lives outside school. They sometimes lead the singing in hymn practice for Years 3 to 6. This is a successful use of expertise and results in a whole-hearted approach to singing for all pupils, although the rest of the pupils mimic the choir's idiosyncrasies! A number of pupils attend recorder clubs, held each week in school; this makes a good contribution to their musical ability and enjoyment. In addition, the school makes it possible for pupils to attend instrumental teaching out of school hours, acting as a link with private providers to enhance pupils' learning. These clubs are an improvement in provision since the last inspection. At a residential camp, Year 6 pupils used computers to compose and play music, which is a satisfactory strategy for overcoming the former deficiencies in provision.

135. The quality of teaching is broadly satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and is good in Years 3 to 6. While the school was subject to Special Measures, nearly all its focus was taken up with improving standards and provision in English and mathematics; this had an adverse effect on provision in music. Since the last inspection, improvements have been good but the staff training in music, intended for last school year, was unavoidably interrupted because of the illness of the co-ordinator. This has delayed improvements in subject knowledge and confidence for some teachers and is the reason for the difference in teaching standards within the school.
136. Where the teaching, while broadly satisfactory, is less effective it is because the teacher's subject knowledge is not robust and parts of the lessons lose their focus. In these sessions, the teacher does not seize the opportunity successfully enough to improve the level of pupils' performance, for example, in the Year 2 lesson on imitating the sounds of various kinds of weather. As a result, pupils' attention wavers, they are not musically active for a high enough proportion of the time and their learning is not as swift as it could be. In the more effective lessons, teachers are confident musically, which enables them to make good teaching points at appropriate points in the lesson, for example, to improve their understanding of the pulse of a piece of music in Year 4 or to show, through the appropriate use of standard notation, how to sustain an ostinato in Year 6. In these lessons, the pace is good and pupils' interest is retained effectively. Pupils concentrate well because the lesson is structured and purposeful and they are kept active for good proportions of the time, learning well as a result and enjoying what they are doing.
137. The co-ordinator leads the subject satisfactorily. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable, with a good level of personal expertise. The subject development plan is good and addresses appropriate priorities, including the need to develop a manageable system of assessing pupils' attainment and achievement. A new scheme of work has recently been introduced; the co-ordinator is well aware of the need to provide suitable training for colleagues to increase their confidence and competence. The monitoring and evaluation of standards of teaching and learning are in their infancy; the school has already identified the need to develop this aspect of its work in the current school improvement plan. Resources have been improved and are now satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. Because the school was in Special Measures until the last inspection, little developmental work has been possible until the last two years. This work was further delayed as the result of the illness of the co-ordinator. However, a new subject policy has been written and a scheme of work very recently introduced. Old equipment has been replaced, playground markings have been improved and a portfolio of evidence assembled to show the breadth of what pupils experience. The range and frequency of activities out of lessons, including matches against other schools, have improved with the establishment of clubs for soccer, netball and dancing each week, which are well attended. Improvements since the last inspection have been satisfactory, overall, although no judgements were made about this subject in the previous inspection report.
139. Standards at the ages of seven and eleven are in line with those expected nationally. All pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
140. In Year 2, pupils pass and receive balls and quoits with reasonable facility, although few catch or throw accurately one-handed. They control a ball with a hockey stick satisfactorily but fewer than a quarter hold the stick correctly, which makes control between and through obstacles much harder to accomplish. Year 3 pupils bounce, catch and throw a ball accurately and safely with two hands. They use space effectively in static activities but not so well when moving. In dance lessons, very nearly all Year 6 pupils follow the beat of the music accurately. They devise, perform and refine sequences of movements with enjoyment and increasing accuracy and control, although only a quarter maintain the required eight-beat pattern throughout the dance. From discussions with a sample of Year 6 pupils, it is clear that they experience the full range of the required curriculum over time. This includes swimming; they report that, while a number of pupils are good swimmers, some swimming 600 metres or more, many fail to swim the 25 metres that is the distance expected nationally for pupils of this age.

141. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Where teaching is less effective and learning is slow, it is because the teacher does not coach the basic skills well enough because her subject knowledge is insecure. Consequently, pupils do not make the progress in the lesson that they should. This was the case in the Year 2 hockey lesson, where the position of the hands was not corrected for the three-quarters of the pupils who had got it wrong. Where teaching is most effective and pupils learn at a good rate, for example, in the Year 6 dance lesson, it is because the teacher has secure subject knowledge, enabling her to coach basic skills correctly before the main activity and to correct faults or praise good work during the lesson. She chooses the music wisely to grab pupils' attention and to lay down a strong rhythm. She communicates enthusiasm to the pupils, who respond very well, showing high levels of application, concentration, enjoyment and effort. Relationships are very good, which ensures that no pupil is embarrassed to dance and that arbitrary groupings form and disband naturally, irrespective of gender or background. This makes a very positive contribution to their social and personal development.
142. The co-ordinator, who is knowledgeable and enthusiastic, leads and manages the subject satisfactorily. She is well aware of what is now needed to improve standards and provision in the subject, including the rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of the new scheme, linked to the development of a manageable system of assessing pupils' attainment and achievements. The school makes good use of a local grassed area at suitable times of the year to cover those areas of the curriculum that require such resources, as there is no grass on site. In all other ways, the accommodation and resources are satisfactory.