

# INSPECTION REPORT

## STUDFALL JUNIOR SCHOOL

Corby

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121809

Headteacher: Mr Paul Rangecroft

Reporting inspector: David G Collard  
OFSTED Inspector Number: 11122

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> February 2003

Inspection number: 248285

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Rowlett Road Corby Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN17 2BT
Telephone number:	01536 202621
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Nancy Galloway
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11122	David Collard	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Geography English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9327	Stuart Vincent	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed?
2746	Roy Lund	Team inspector	Special educational needs	
30745	Patricia Thorpe	Team inspector	Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
11976	Heather Toynbee	Team Inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology History	
11419	Jeannie Underwood	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education	
29995	Maureen Walker	Team inspector	English	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Studfall Junior School is situated on the outskirts of Corby, Northamptonshire. It is an urban school with pupils coming from mixed social backgrounds but with a significant number of families who are disadvantaged. There are 457 pupils on roll aged from 7 to 11 years. The school also has designated special provision (DSP) for 33 pupils with significant or greater learning difficulties and hearing impaired pupils. There are currently 23 pupils who are nominally in the DSP but they are integrated within the main school as far as possible and at the same time, resources are made available to all other pupils. Thirteen pupils come from a minority ethnic background although none are at an early stage of learning English. Sixty-five pupils are on the special needs register and there are 35 pupils that have statements. This is well above the national average. Pupils' attainment when they enter in Year 3 is below average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very effective school that ensures all pupils, whatever their physical or academic ability, are given the best chance of success. All pupils take part in national tests including those with high levels of special educational needs. As a result, overall standards when measured against all schools are average. However, they are above average when compared to schools of a similar type. Pupils make very good progress in lessons and achieve well in their time at the school. Teaching is very good across all years and in the majority of subjects. Personal development is a high priority and relationships within the school community are excellent. The quality of leadership and management is very good, as is the governance of the school. There is a continuing capacity to improve and as a consequence the school provides very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The inclusion of all pupils that provide the best opportunities for them to succeed
- The good achievement levels of pupils through each year
- The consistent and often very good and excellent teaching that ensures pupils learn very well
- The outstanding provision for pupils with special educational needs
- The very wide and varied curriculum and the procedures for assessing attainment
- The very good quality of leadership and management

#### **What could be improved**

There are no significant areas of improvement that need to be addressed.

*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 October 1997 and very good improvement has been made since that time. The standards in information and communication technology have been raised from below average to above average and in design and technology to average. The planning for the curriculum now provides a good basis for all work in the school and schemes of work are securely in place for all subjects. The use of assessment has improved and, because of this, lessons are more challenging. The school development plan is used as a working document and sets the ways forward, both in the short and long term. The annual report to parents now complies with statutory requirements. In addition, teaching, the leadership and management of the school and attendance have all improved. No areas of work have deteriorated.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	D	B
mathematics	D	C	E	B
science	E	D	D	B

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

National tests at the end of Year 6 have shown generally lower standards when compared to all schools over the last three years. This is because the very high number of pupils with lower ability and particularly those with statements of special educational need fluctuate from year to year. Comparing this school with others of a similar type is a more reliable indicator and shows that standards are above those expected.

Pupils come into the school in Year 3 with standards that are below average although all are well prepared for their next stage of education. Through the four years they achieve well and make good progress. The overall standards of pupils in the present Year 6 are at average levels except in mathematics where they are below average. In English, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and the higher focus on reading and writing has meant that there are significant improvements in these areas. In mathematics, pupils enter the school with standards that are well below average and improve to below average. While this shows progress, it is recognised that more still needs to be done to improve pupil's understanding of the use of mathematics in real-life situations so some pupils can attain higher levels. In information and communication technology, history and geography, standards are above the nationally expected level. This is because good use is made of a wide variety of stimulating experiences that interest and excite pupil's learning. The processes to define different styles of learning, and understood by the pupils have had an impact on the way that children have responded to their own knowledge about themselves. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because the teaching they are given is very good and often excellent. The setting arrangements are having a positive effect on continually improving achievement and enables pupils from all levels of ability to be challenged. Pupils with hearing impairment are given a very good range of support that enables them to perform at good academic levels.

The school has set realistic and challenging targets that take good account of those pupils within the designated special provision. Assessments show that all pupils are expected to achieve at least in line with their own ability and in some cases well above this.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are highly interested, motivated and enthusiastic learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. There are consistently high expectations about behaviour and good systems to manage them.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are encouraged to make a contribution both to the school and to society and relationships are excellent.
Attendance	In line with the national average



The personal development of pupils is very high on the agenda. Pupils are expected to respect and support those with disabilities and there are many instances where this happens. In assemblies, a large proportion of the school are able to sign during hymns. They accept that some pupils find difficulty adapting to school routines and are able to respond to adults in an increasingly mature way.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
Quality of teaching	Very good

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

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and there are now no unsatisfactory elements. Teachers plan well within common formats, they set clear learning objectives for the lesson and follow these through to a conclusion. Pupils are given group and individual targets they understand and have a say in what these will be. A wide range of different methods is used within the class organisation to interest, motivate and stimulate learning. As a result, pupils show good levels of concentration and independence. Lessons move at a rapid pace and pupils work hard.

The teaching of English and mathematics has improved since the introduction of the national guidelines for these subjects. There has been a particular emphasis on writing and there has been improvement because of it. Literacy skills are used well in other subjects such as report writing in science and numeracy skills to provide and analyse data such as in local studies. The teaching of information and communication technology has been improved through a national training programme and is now very good in the computer suite. Teachers make good use of visits and visitors to provide first hand learning in subjects such as history and geography, which particularly interest the pupils.

The teaching of pupils with designated special provision and special educational needs is outstanding. The thorough assessment and identification of individual need ensures that the learning of these pupils and with those of others is seamless. It is a model of good practice. The small number of pupils who have higher ability are equally challenged such as through the use of good setting procedures for English and mathematics. In these lessons, they are able to work at substantially higher levels and to gain better independence.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The wide, exciting and interesting curriculum enables pupils to receive a broad, relevant and balanced range of subject teaching as well as other opportunities outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs and through the designated special provision	Excellent. All pupils are fully challenged. The support they receive is carefully considered and the individualised education plans are thoroughly formulated and assessed for their success. Good use is made of outside agencies as well as a high calibre of expertise within the school. The Inclusion Manager ensures that all staff are kept aware of new developments.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils develop an increasing sense of awareness about the wonders of the world around them and are taught about tolerance and respect for others. Social and moral development is dealt with sensitively through a programme of discussions and other experiences.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Extreme care is taken to ensure any pupils at risk are carefully monitored. Assessment procedures are very thorough and take good account of past performance when striving to improve achievement.

Parents are very supportive of the school and see the school at the centre of the community. They have empathy with the overall aims of including all pupils and feel that this provides a higher quality of education than might be the case in other schools. The school works hard to ensure that they are fully involved. The curriculum provided has been carefully considered in light of the many, and varied needs of the pupils. Innovative ways are used to ensure that the level of challenge is kept high such as through setting, group and individualised teaching and small withdrawal rooms. Extra-curricular activities are equally varied as well as other activities such as visits and residential weeks. The school fully meets the statutory requirements for the curriculum and works hard to enhance this provision.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides outstanding qualities of leadership and is very ably supported by the leadership team. All staff are made aware of the vision and aims and the part they will play in improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors have a clear view about the strengths and areas for development. Their committee structure allows them to gain an insight into improvements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school is realistic about what can be achieved and has high expectations. Assessment of performance is used as an integral means of achieving this and supports the very clear school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Staff are used very well, funding is well managed to help improve opportunities for pupils and resources are carefully analysed. The use of national grants and funding is a prime source for improving the provision within the school.

The particularly clear vision of the headteacher is shared with the whole school community. The members of the leadership team are enthusiastic supporters of these ideals. Subject managers have a consistent view about developments and the procedures for involvement ensure that there are opportunities to have a real influence on the whole school development plan. Governors provide an informed challenge to the workings of the school and bring expertise in areas such as finance and buildings. They ensure that the principles of best value are applied to spending decisions. The accommodation is adequate for the needs of the pupils. The recently started, new building project will provide a much-enhanced provision. Resources are generally satisfactory and are being improved as part of a planned programme. The number of teaching staff is good and the very high level of support staff ensures that the needs of all pupils are matched well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school and enjoy their lessons.</li> <li>• The school is at the centre of the community.</li> <li>• The good leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The good quality of teaching.</li> <li>• The clear aims of the school and how these are shared with them.</li> </ul>	There are no significant areas of concern.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

*The local education authority (LEA) has identified the school as one with a Designated Special Provision (DSP) for up to 33 pupils with significant or greater learning difficulties and for hearing impaired pupils. There are currently 23 pupils who are nominally in the DSP but it has decided to integrate them, through its inclusion policy, as far as possible. At the same time, resources of the DSP are made available to all other pupils in the school. The school places a very high emphasis on including these pupils in the mainstream classes and this it achieves very successfully. As a result, it is difficult to report separately on the DSP or the special resourcing for hearing impaired pupils. The general report includes information about them as and when it is appropriate and there is a section at the end of Part B that outlines the provision.*

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. On entry to the school the in Year 3, pupils have standards that are below those nationally. This has been the case for a number of years and is confirmed by the results from National tests that were taken at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards in line with those nationally and have achieved well through their time at the school. The National tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2002 were not as good as the standards being achieved by pupils in the present Year 6. In English and science, pupils achieved below average results and in mathematics well below average standards. However, the very high numbers of pupils with special educational needs has depressed the overall figures as the school enters all children, whatever their ability, for national tests. A better comparison is that made with schools of a similar type when the standards are seen to be above average in all three core subjects. Over the last four years, standards in tests had steadily risen but then fell slightly in 2002. Analysis of the ability of these pupils indicates that the number of lower attaining pupils and those with statements of special educational need were particularly high.
2. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the school and it is not possible to distinguish in lessons between pupils nominally attached to the DSP and other pupils with special educational needs. Careful setting and withdrawal ensures that all pupils receive individually focused support and teaching. This inclusion aspect of the school's work is a major strength and a model of good practice for special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make very good progress, have the ability to mix well socially and are academically challenged to a high level.
3. In English, pupils achieve at satisfactory levels. On entry to the school, there are a significant number whose speaking and listening is still developing. Many opportunities are given to expand pupil's vocabulary and for them to share ideas and listen in discussions and as result they make very good progress. Pupils in Year 6 talk maturely, and are showing increasing levels of reason in their arguments. Standards in reading are satisfactory. The most able pupils read fluently and with expression. Very good use is made of the customised 'James Sanders' library both during and outside lessons. Pupils are able to research or browse through an attractive array of books. Writing standards are also average. Through good teaching the basic elements of vocabulary, spelling and grammar are taught systematically and the below average skills in Year 3 are enhanced by Year 6. Good use is made of literacy within other subjects such as history, science and geography. A wide range of activities ensures that skills learnt are continually

practised and reinforced. The National Literacy Strategy has been embedded well and through a regular system of monitoring, strengths in teaching are transferred into the quality of learning.

4. Standards in mathematics are below those nationally but the higher level of good teaching, combined with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, has meant that pupils, entering the school with well below average attainment, still make good progress. There are few pupils who attain above the nationally expected level 4 and a significant minority achieve below this. However, since the last inspection there is now a higher proportion of pupils attaining standards appropriate for their age. In aspects of number there is more confidence such as when using multiplication and division. Pupils are given opportunities to use these skills in investigating and experimenting, both in mathematics lessons and in subjects such as data handling in science.
5. Science standards are at average levels. In the National tests in 2002 Year 6 pupils were close to, but just below, the average standard level. There are particular strengths in the way that teachers encourage pupils to use scientific language and to learn new facts. More work is still needed to develop pupil's independence through choosing their own equipment and devising their own experiments. This would enable a higher number of pupils to understand the relevance of their learning.
6. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above that expected nationally. This is because the opportunities to use computers have been increased since the computer suite has been in operation. Pupils make good progress through a good range of tasks that are set. Pupils spend more than the recommended time on using information and communication technology and work is linked very well to other subjects. Standards in religious education are at the expected level and again pupils make good progress. They have an understanding of their own religious communities, about places of worship and ceremonies.
7. In all other subjects, standards are at least at the nationally expected level and in geography and history they are above average. This is because in these subjects good connections are made to work that is of interest to the pupils. It often links well to the local area and combines a good mix of practical work through visits and visitors. In art and design the extra-curricular work is a particular strength and in music there is a good range of clubs that enhances the musical experiences from lessons.
8. The targets set for pupils at the end of Year 6 are challenging. Great care is taken on ensuring these are realistic although the high number of pupils with special educational needs means that it is difficult to compare them with those of other junior schools. This facet of the school's work causes concern amongst staff because of the difficulties in comparing figures. In some years the percentage of pupils with special educational needs combined with those who have designated special provision means that the school appears to do less well than others. The assessment procedures have been refined to provide thorough data enabling senior managers to calculate the added value in learning each year. These figures indicate good progress across the range of subjects and in national test results.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Since the last inspection this aspect of the school's work continues as a real strength, reflecting the shared commitment to every child and the highest value placed on their personal achievements in their learning and as they develop as individuals. Throughout the school, pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and are eager to take an active part in school life.

They are well-motivated and enthusiastic learners, confidently answering and asking questions, listening intently to others often sharing humour in their lessons. Teachers' very clear explanations and well-organised and stimulating tasks ensure pupils settle quickly and participate fully in their work. This adds a very significant contribution to their achievements in lessons. Offering to share their learning, pupils are very polite and respectful and discuss their work with obvious pleasure.

10. Overall pupils' behaviour is very good and sometimes it is exemplary. They respond very positively to the school's highest expectations of their behaviour and self-discipline, not only in lessons, assemblies and at playtimes but also when moving around the school. The high standards of behaviour seen in lessons, together with pupils' real interest and involvement in their work strengthen the progress they make. At play they socialise very well and enjoy their games, knowing exactly what is expected of them, respecting the rules set by fellow pupils. Where their behaviour has the potential to be particularly challenging, pupils are exceptionally well supported. Exclusions are very few. Building each child's confidence, self-esteem and acceptance of the consequences of their actions is central to the ethos of the school. Responding to the needs of individual children or parents, the school counsellor plays a vital role in this aspect of the school's care and support.
11. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and are the key to creating an outstanding learning atmosphere in which all pupils are truly valued and can be successful. In lessons all children, whatever their ability or learning difficulty, and the adults, with whom they learn, relate assuredly to each other. Adults are first-rate role models. Pupils work together very well, encouraging and helping each other and collaborating keenly in their tasks. Many adults and pupils learn signing to encourage those with hearing impairment.
12. Children's personal development is very good. Many opportunities are well established for children to take responsibility for the everyday routine tasks within the school day. Ranging from willingly accepting classroom and school tasks, to being very conscientious and supportive Playground Pals or hard working members of the School Council, pupils are very aware not only of the needs of the school community but of others through their many fund raising activities. A full Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education programme of learning is now in place providing for example times to share views and feelings with each other. Personal achievements are celebrated during the regular Merit Assembly and when acknowledging success such as becoming the set "Writer of the Week."
13. Attendance is satisfactory and has shown steady improvement over recent years. Absences are thoroughly monitored and those without explanation are routinely followed up. Through initiatives such as rewarding full attendance and the newly introduced Breakfast Club further improvements are sought. The school is very aware of the few families where the children's attendance causes concern and is doing all it can to support these families. Pupils with special educational needs are not over-represented amongst those whose attendance causes concern, or those who are excluded from school and, in common with other pupils, they are not bullied.
14. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes towards their lessons, whether they are in whole classes or withdrawn for individual help or help in small groups. During the inspection, their behaviour was always good and sometimes very good. The other pupils show great sensitivity towards those with special educational needs and as a result, they are fully included in lessons and teaching assistants and special needs teachers are able to support unobtrusively and without embarrassment to the pupils involved. Several inspectors noted how pupils helped each other in lessons and the "buddy" system, where pupils take it in turn to help a

pupil with special educational needs when requested is very effective. All pupils respond sensitively and enthusiastically.

15. As a special resource for signing hearing-impaired pupils, the communication support workers and the visiting advisory teacher for hearing impairment have enabled many of the adults and pupils to learn some basic signing. Many pupils within the school impressively take part in signing the words of the hymns in assemblies and many pupils sign to communicate with their hearing impaired friends.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

16. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. During the inspection all the lessons seen were at least satisfactory, nearly nine in ten were good or better and well over three in ten lessons were at least very good. One in ten of the lessons seen were excellent. In addition, all teachers seen taught at least one lesson that was good or better. This demonstrates the depth of good teaching across the school and in all subjects. This is a much more positive picture than at the last inspection as there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. This is the reason why pupils make very good progress in their lessons.
17. Teachers have very good knowledge about the majority of subjects that they are teaching. Good training for literacy and to a lesser extent numeracy have meant that pupils learn well. Lessons in these subjects focus on acquiring new pieces of knowledge but then using these in unfamiliar situations. These methods are not used as well in science where particularly older pupils do not have enough say about how experiments are put together or about deciding on an idea and then trying to find out ways of proving it.
18. Planning formats are similar across the school. The use of computers has meant that these are beginning to be stored centrally and teachers are able to access them more efficiently. It is also helping to improve teacher's skills in information and communication technology. This common planning is enabling pupils to be given highly appropriate work that continuously builds upon what has gone before. So, in each year, pupils do not generally repeat work unless it is for the purposes of reinforcing a skill or understanding.
19. In all subjects, except design and technology and art and design, teachers have good expectations about what can be achieved and pupils are challenged well by the work that is set. In design and technology progress is being made but, as yet, there is not enough attention paid to designing and evaluating finished projects. In art and design, the use of a scheme to help decide on different aspects is useful but not always followed through with such rigour in lessons.
20. Teachers use a very wide and successful range of different methods to organise lessons. In a Year 4 religious education lesson, for example, the teacher used pertinent questions when discussing how people are motivated by their Christian belief. By posing ideas that had been learnt previously the class were challenged to think about what they knew and to gather their thoughts coherently. The work by Year 5 on the local area has focused strongly on using first hand evidence. Local people have been interviewed, video diaries have been scrutinised and the history and geography of the area have been looked at in detail. Pupils have showed very high levels of enthusiasm when studying and this has also been reflected in the work that has been completed.

21. During the inspection there were no significant instances of poor behaviour, despite the number of pupils who are capable of challenging the authority of the teacher. This is because there are excellent relationships within the school community and because the wide range of strategies to deal with unacceptable behaviour is very well established. Teaching assistants are used to give pupils 'time-out' should it be needed and are quick to intervene. These staff are well aware of the individual education plans and how disruptions should be dealt with. Teachers are expert at deflecting potential incidents without confrontation. Time in all lessons is used well. The school has made determined efforts to increase the time of the school day to enable more work to be done on social skill building. This has been an effective use of time. Resources are ready to hand when needed and no time is lost between different activities. The system of setting means that the sixteen classes move into nineteen sets at various parts of the day and this is completed efficiently and effectively.
22. Marking is of good quality. It provides teachers with assessment information as well as giving pupils praise for what has been achieved. Targets for improvement are used by a number of teachers although the consistency of this is slightly variable. Homework is used regularly and, in discussion, pupils explained the systems clearly. The work done is valued and appropriate to other work that is going on in class.
23. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes, special groups for literacy and numeracy and withdrawal groups is very good overall and sometimes excellent. Teachers, teaching assistants and communication support workers know the pupils with special educational needs extremely well and co-operate very effectively in order to plan lessons. They make very good use of individual education plans (IEP's) in order to set appropriate objectives and plan appropriate activities. There is excellent co-operation between the teachers, teaching assistants and communication support workers and as a result of this, potential difficulties posed by lesson content and materials are anticipated and taken into account.
24. Most teachers are good at asking different kinds of questions, which enable pupils with special educational needs to join in class discussions. They make very good use of praise and encouragement and so the pupils feel confident and are keen to take part. Pupils know that they are valued and cared for and work very hard and concentrate very well. As a result of this, the pupils are confident and assured when talking to other adults and they demonstrate politeness and consideration to everyone. The adults form excellent role models that the pupils are happy to emulate.
25. The teachers and teaching assistants provide very appropriate materials and activities for pupils with special educational needs which not only help them to meet their individual targets but also help them work more independently. They also co-operate well such as in one literacy lesson where three pupils were observed to be helping each other with their reading. Whilst information and communications technology is used well to enhance learning, further use could be developed. An example of this would be to help pupils who find difficulty in completing worksheets write up a science experiment.
26. There is a real and dynamic partnership between teachers, teaching assistants and communication support workers and the quality of the support and teamwork is outstanding. They tend to work with the pupils who have the special educational needs for which they have received extra training, but consideration is given to those pupils for whom they feel empathy. As a result of this, the pupils receive focused, effective and unobtrusive support at all times. The visiting advisory teacher for hearing impairment gives very good withdrawal support to

signing with hearing impaired pupils. Teaching assistants and communication support workers are involved in good teaching with pupils, directly in withdrawal groups. There is effective monitoring of the pupils' progress against their targets and they are provided with very good feedback. However, the class teacher's marking, whilst good overall, gives less consistent feedback.

27. All pupils make very good progress through their lessons and achieve well. They concentrate hard on what they are doing and work hard to complete tasks. Work is presented well in their books and they take a pride in doing their best. In many cases, they have a good understanding about what they have learnt through the targets that they are set and know what they need to do to improve.

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

28. The quality of the curriculum has improved for all pupils since the last inspection and is now very good. The school has developed a well-structured curriculum embracing all subjects of the National Curriculum and provides a daily act of collective worship. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Although the school rightly places emphasis on the key areas of literacy, numeracy, science and ICT, sufficient time is given to all subjects. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and there is no difference in the teaching of boys and girls. The wide range of stimulating learning opportunities meets the interests and aptitudes of all the pupils and provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent.
29. Every subject has a policy and scheme of work in place. For most subjects and age groups very good use is made of nationally recognised curriculum guidance. Effective links are made between subjects and pupils' new learning in one subject will often reinforce and practise what they have recently learnt in another. Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are used well to support and extend learning in other areas of the curriculum.
30. The school's provision for literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers make sure that pupils acquire basic skills in an efficient and progressive way. Planning at all levels is of good quality and thorough, breaking down new learning into small steps.
31. The school's curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. In many schools, pupils with special educational needs are slotted into the range of provision that the school has. In this school, each pupil effectively has an individual curriculum tailored to his or her needs and targets.
32. Pupils with statements for special educational needs follow the same routines during the school day as the other pupils and some are attached to special smaller sets for numeracy and literacy with extra support from teaching assistants and communication support workers. For all other curriculum activities, they work alongside the other pupils in their classes, receiving extra support where appropriate. In addition to this, individual and small groups of pupils are withdrawn for focused support in speech and language, key and social skills, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Good use is made of the expertise of special educational needs teachers, teaching assistants and communication support workers as well as outside specialists, including an advisory teacher for the hearing impaired, physiotherapists and occupational therapists.



33. The times of these withdrawal sessions move from week to week so that the pupils do not miss too much of their main school class work. These withdrawal sessions increase the pupils' access to main school lessons in the longer term, because of their increased literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills. There are vibrant lunchtime and after school activities, which enable the pupils with special educational needs to visit the DSP resource centre for extra help. As yet, the planning for the use of information and communication technology in order to enable pupils with special educational needs to access the different subjects is not fully established.
34. The school works hard to enrich the curriculum in many areas and provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. It supports physical education with after school football, netball, gymnastics and other sports. Pupils have an opportunity to enhance their musical education by joining the music or folk club or choosing to learn to play a musical instrument. A computer club, chess club and French and Spanish lessons are also available. There is a good programme of school visits and visitors for all classes and pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have the opportunity to take part in a variety of outdoor activities when they go on residential visits.
35. The school fosters good links with the local community. Visits and visitors are used effectively to broaden pupils' experiences and parents and friends raise funds to enable the school to buy extra items to enhance the curriculum for all pupils. Pupils visit senior citizens in the local residential home and welcome them when they attend events at school. Relationships with local schools and the University College Northampton are very positive. The school benefits from being in an Education Action Zone and also has links with Sports England. Links to support the curriculum are also in place with local businesses such as Rockingham Speedway, Oxford University Press and Asda.
36. The school reflects its aims extremely well in its provision for pupils' personal development. This excellent provision contributes to the very positive ethos of the school, values all members of the school community and provides equal opportunities for all pupils. Through its strong emphasis on teaching children to live and work together, the school is helping them to become responsible thoughtful members of society. Policies for sex and drugs awareness education are in place. Drugs awareness is taught as part of the science and health curriculum and sex education is taught to pupils in Year 6.
37. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good.
38. The school's provision for spiritual development is very good. The calm, reflective atmosphere present in assemblies is carried into other areas of school life. Most pupils show respect and courtesy to teachers and other adults by their demeanour and willingness to listen. The school fosters an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding and all pupils are fully included in every aspect of school life. Religious education lessons in particular, provide opportunities for pupils to think about the courage and dedication of famous people in the past such as Florence Nightingale and Mother Teresa. As part of their work on local history, pupils in Year 5 talk to senior citizens living in a residential home nearby and reflect on what life used to be like in Corby and how life is easier for most people now. Pupils show care and concern for people within their own community who need help, support and friendship. Pupils are able to develop their own values and beliefs in assemblies and through prayers and thoughts at other times of the day. They are encouraged to recognise and celebrate effort and achievement both by themselves and others.

39. There is very good provision for pupils' moral development. This is closely linked to the school's caring ethos and the emphasis the school puts on preparing pupils to be good citizens of the future. Teachers and other adults expect high standards of behaviour and consideration for others. Where disputes arise pupils respond well when they are given a chance to ponder on the situation and are encouraged to see it from other points of view. A 'playground buddy' system, which pupils in need of a friend can use, works well. Most pupils are polite, respectful and helpful. Class and school rules are developed through discussion with pupils. Staff are very good role models. The school council meets regularly and has representatives from each year group. The various merit systems in place are highly valued by the pupils and consistently reinforce the values and beliefs of the school.
40. The school develops pupils' social awareness in a variety of ways and this provision is very good. Pupils are treated in a warm and friendly manner by all staff and this has a positive effect on their relationships with others. Pupils take on small jobs round the classroom and older pupils have responsibilities around the school. Pupils are encouraged to co-operate and learn together at appropriate times to help and support each other and to recognise the achievement of others. During playtimes and the lunch period pupils have ample opportunities to talk and play together. After school clubs and visits provide a more relaxing learning and social climate. Taking part in residential trips and regular contact with the local community contribute greatly to the personal and social development of pupils. Pupils raise money for local, national and international charities such as Children with Leukaemia and Water Aid. Through the charity Action Aid the school supports a child in Malawi.
41. The school's provision for cultural development is good. Visits to the immediate area around school as part of their work in geography or the development of independence skills helps pupils to be aware of their surroundings and the groups of people who live in the community. The families of many of the children originally came from Scotland and moved into the area to work in the steel industry and Scottish traditions such as Burn's night are celebrated. Families also moved into the area from Eastern Europe to find work. Visitors to the school often reflect this cultural mix. For example, Scottish and Irish dancers and a Yugoslavian singer have entertained the children in the past. In their art and design lessons pupils sometimes work in the same way as famous artists. For instance, pupils in Year 3 paint pictures in the style of L.S. Lowry and pupils in Year 5 design wallpaper in the style of William Morris. Music plays a part in the cultural development of all pupils as they sing traditional songs and hymns alongside more modern ones, play a musical instrument and listen to the music of famous composers as well as music around the world. Pupils in Year 6 took inspiration from listening to music from Africa for their paintings. Pupils learn the words of traditional prayers such as the Lord's Prayer and continue the practice of giving thanks before eating a meal.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

42. The school has very good procedures to take care of pupils and ensure their welfare. This stems from the excellent relationships which exist at all levels. The arrangements for child protection, led by the headteacher are very thorough. Staff are properly trained and staff meetings are used to maintain awareness and discuss concerns of any kind. The role of the school counsellor is central and underpins this support. Children who have concerns of any kind can approach her at any time, secure in the knowledge that their discussions will be entirely confidential. There is an outstanding curriculum for personal and social education by which children are taught about personal relationships, safety, drugs awareness, social skills and healthy living. Circle Time gives them opportunities to think and discuss their feelings. This

contributes to their confidence and independence as they grow older. There is a Breakfast Club for those pupils who need to leave home early each day. Teams of 'Playground Pals' have been created to foster relationships and encourage friendships during break times.

43. Pupils within the Designated Special Provision are fully integrated into the mainstream life of the school. To do this they are very well supported by staff with specialist skills. This inclusion not only benefits these children, but also those in the rest of the school. From this, pupils see clearly that some children have to overcome great difficulties in their lives and by working alongside them also understand that they are all equally valued. They know that the school is a safe and secure environment in which to learn.
44. The health and safety procedures are carried out very well. Individual responsibilities within the school are properly defined and all the routines of classroom safety, fire drills, first aid, medicines and general welfare are dealt with diligently. There are a number of children with medical conditions who need constant support and this is done very well. The governors and the site manager play an important part in ensuring the buildings and grounds are kept safe and secure. Arrangements are already well established to ensure that during the next six months, as work is carried out on the new buildings, pupils are aware of the dangers and stay safe.
45. The systems for monitoring and improving behaviour are very effective. Pupils know what adults expect of them. The rules are clear and straightforward. Teachers and all staff have high expectations and have great skill in managing difficult situations. The overwhelming majority of pupils respond very well. They enjoy success and respond to the rewards that are given for effort and success. Those pupils who have behavioural difficulties are given additional support and helped to manage themselves. Support includes, for example, individual behaviour plans, support by the school counsellor, close monitoring of individual pupils and the involvement of parents to seek ways of improvement. Outside specialist support is used wherever needed. Parents are very pleased with the standards of behaviour achieved.
46. The procedures for monitoring attendance are very good. Registers are properly completed, absence is accurately analysed and there is regular contact with the educational welfare officer. Those children whose attendance or punctuality is a problem are clearly identified. The school counsellor is also available to offer support. Much recent effort has gone into the follow up of unexplained absence and lateness and this is shown in the improved attendance figures. Pupils with special educational needs are not over-represented amongst those whose attendance causes concerns.
47. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' academic progress have improved and continue to improve since the last inspection and are now good. Pupils in Year 3 are initially placed into sets for English and mathematics according to their Year 2 national test results and after consultation with staff at the previous school. All other subjects are taught in mixed ability classes. Teachers continually assess pupils' progress by observations and the marking of work, although this is inconsistent in some subjects. The level of achievement for each pupil is recorded three times each half term in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, with other subject levels assessed at the end of each term. Pupils are moved between English and mathematics sets according to their needs. Commercial assessment tests such are used for each age group and pupils take the optional national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. Assessment information is recorded and correlated on disc by the newly appointed clerk in the school office. Targets are set in the core subjects for each pupil and fixed in the back of their exercise books. After discussion with the teacher they record any targets on the computer themselves. All pupils have an ongoing record of progress

so that any child not improving their level of achievement can be identified and action taken to rectify this. There are appropriate statutory reviews of pupils who have statements of special educational needs. Much of the information is collected and analysed by the assessment manager assisted by another member of staff who will soon take on the role herself. Analyses are shared with staff and governors. This helps the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in its provision.

48. The inclusion manager has introduced a very good system for writing and monitoring the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Prior to being admitted, the inclusion manager visits the Year 2 classes in the feeder infants schools on several occasions and the pupils visit their new school seven or eight times. From these visits, national test results and infant school assessments, an individual education plan (IEP) is drawn up for each pupil, containing initial targets for literacy, numeracy and for personal and social development. Targets are monitored continually by all staff and are reviewed every twelve weeks. They are then modified or replaced in consultation with the pupils and their parents or carers. The targets are based on each pupil's attainment level, using the national system of "P" scales and the National Curriculum levels. Pupils are continually made aware of their targets and their progress towards meeting them through checklists in their exercise books and cards on their desks. The ongoing reviews clearly demonstrate that the pupils are making very good progress over time. Day-to-day feedback is provided very effectively through each pupil's home/school book and fed back to parents and carers weekly. A further refinement to an already very effective system would be to introduce a more formal baseline assessment in literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. Outside professionals are brought in to help with assessment and to provide advice, where appropriate.
49. The personal, social, health and citizenship curriculum (PSHEC) is an integral part of the very effective monitoring and support for pupils' social development. In addition, the school maintains detailed records of each child, their family background, attendance, behaviour, awards. Pupils are known well as individuals.
50. All of these procedures ensure that pupils receive very good support both academically and personally. They allow the pupils to be placed in groups within their class, or sets, so that work can be more readily designed to suit the differing rates at which they learn. Academic, behavioural and social targets can be set for groups or individuals. The school's commitment to ensuring all children achieve their best, is a fundamental feature of all the work.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

51. Those parents who responded by completing the questionnaires, or attended the meeting before the inspection, are extremely pleased with what the school does for their children and the quality of education provided. The questionnaires show very high levels of satisfaction with most aspects of the school's work, including the standards of behaviour, the progress pupils make, the expectations and values taught. It is also evident that their children enjoy what the school has to offer. A number of parents wrote complimentary letters in praise of how the school has helped their children to achieve their best. Parents like the way the school is led and managed. The school is meeting the needs of its community very successfully.
52. The quality of information for parents about the work of the school and their child's progress is very good. This begins with the induction meetings for parents when their children start at the school. They continue to be kept informed of day-to-day matters by individual letters, with more

general newsletters from the headteacher giving a wider view of current events. These cover the successes of the school in the local community, important future dates, new initiatives, social events and the work of the 'Friends of Studfall'. There is good information about forthcoming lesson topics and visits. There are occasional seminars and workshops about how parents can help with writing, reading and other aspects of the curriculum. Pupils' 'Home-School' books are particularly valued by parents. They contain much useful information, as well as the homework and behaviour expectations. The books are checked regularly by teachers and form an effective route for messages to and from home. Many parents come into school at the start or end of the day and staff make themselves readily available to talk informally at these times.

53. The school is very open and parents are very appreciative of the approachability of staff. There are formal consultations with parents every term, as well as open-days when parents can come into school to look at their child's work. At the end of the school year, parents receive a very thorough report of their child's academic and personal progress. The reports show clearly what has been learned, what progress has been made, as well as targets for the future. The sections describing the development of personal and social skills are particularly well written. The involvement of parents and carers in the teaching and learning of their children with special educational needs is very effective and parents and carers are highly appreciative of this aspect of the school's work.
54. Parents and carers are fully involved in the transfer of their pupils with special educational needs from the feeder infant schools. They and their children are fully consulted about IEP targets; receiving well produced reports every term. The school also makes very good use of the pupils' home-school diaries to keep parents and carers informed and to obtain their support. Parents and carers are also fully involved in the annual reviews of statements of special educational needs and the school's contribution to these is of a very high quality.
55. The school's links with parents, led efficiently by the Community Manager, are very effective. As their children join the school, they receive a prospectus, key information about the aims and objectives of the school, behaviour expectations and the home-school agreement. At the end of each academic year parents are sent a questionnaire, in which they are asked for their views of the school. There is a good response and the headteacher and staff try hard to use this information to improve the quality of education even further. Parents have also been consulted on key decisions about the behaviour policy, the length of the school day and, more recently, about the major building developments. These will provide a focal point to the local community and provide a wide range of facilities for public use. The annual report to parents by the governing body is thorough.
56. These links between the school and home ensure that parents make a good contribution to the life of the school and what it achieves. The work of the Friends of Studfall is noteworthy. As well as raising substantial amounts of money, which is spent directly for the benefit of pupils, its activities provide a social dimension for the pupils, parents and many members of the local community. Parents give good support and enjoy the regular class assemblies, concerts and other events. A number of parents provide valued help in class, help with sports clubs and go with staff to support visits out of school.
57. Parents make a good contribution to their children's successes at school. They ensure their children come to school regularly and consequently attendance is now in line with the national average. Homework is generally well supported by parents. Almost all parents are keen to attend and discuss progress at consultation evenings, particularly where their children have special needs.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The school benefits from the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, who has a very clear vision of a school at the centre of its community, providing for the needs of pupils with all abilities and backgrounds. This forms the basis of the school's objective "*...to provide for its pupils on an individual basis to help them to achieve their full potential.*" The headteacher has the ability to communicate this vision very well and the necessary skills to create and motivate his colleagues, organise resources and manage their work as a team. The management structure works very well, where the complementary skills of the deputy headteacher and the three members of the leadership team, combine to ensure that the school functions very smoothly. As a result, the school's aims are promoted at all times and the school is very successfully achieving them through the work it does every day. Very good improvement has been made since the last inspection, including the particular issues arising from it. Standards have been broadly maintained and pupils are making good progress; the school cares for its pupils very well and relationships are excellent. There is a strong sense of community; the inclusion of all pupils in the life of the school and their access to a rich curriculum is exemplary.
59. Senior staff monitor the teaching, particularly in the core subjects of English, science and mathematics. This monitoring, in conjunction with the expertise of the Learning and Teaching Manager, has been very effective in improving the quality of teaching. Considerable efforts have also been made to understand how every individual pupil learns best, so that teaching can be structured accordingly. At the last inspection one in eleven (9%) of lessons were judged to be very good or excellent. In this inspection this figure has risen to one in three of the lessons seen (36%) and no unsatisfactory teaching observed. This sustained improvement in teaching and learning is a further factor in the success of the school and a tribute to the appointment of a learning and teaching manager. Teachers with responsibility for subject management have clearly defined roles and carry out their duties well. They have some time to monitor lessons in their subjects. However, it is not yet sufficient to ensure that the subject is taught as consistently well as it might be across all classes in a year group and that this would influence whole school development.
60. The inclusion manager's lead in the support and inclusion for all pupils with special educational needs and her colleagues, is outstanding. This is a truly inclusive school where all pupils are valued and cared for whatever their needs and difficulties. The excellent quality of the provision is a result of the vision and leadership of the headteacher, managers and staff.
61. The inclusion manager is well qualified and experienced and has made remarkable progress since she was appointed to the post two years ago. Her overall vision has produced a very good development plan, which is incorporated well into the school development plan. She is very well supported by two teacher colleagues, 17 teaching assistants and two communication support workers. The whole team is committed to a range of ongoing professional development that is of direct benefit to the inclusion and support of pupils with a wide range of special educational needs.
62. As with all other policies, the special educational needs policy is very comprehensive and very useful to new members of staff and to temporary staff. Induction and ongoing training, is well focused and clearly very effective, when judged with the high quality teaching and support provided by all the teachers and teaching assistants and observed during the inspection. The

school also receives very good support from the local education authority's link inspector, specialist advisors for special educational needs and the school's partnership with University College Northampton led by the school's professional tutor.

63. The school buildings are sufficient for the needs of all pupils and a recent building programme that has started will provide better opportunities for classrooms and specialist areas. The Site Manager and his team successfully ensure that they are well maintained, safe and attractive. The outside area provides for practical games and the playgrounds are well used. The accommodation for pupils with special educational needs is good overall, with separate rooms for small groups, equipped with computers. These rooms are bright and cheerful, with colourful and stimulating displays. The pupils' targets and progress are displayed prominently and are valued by the pupils who were keen to share them with any adults. The school is aware of the needs of pupils with physical disabilities, but some areas of the site are quite difficult to access.
64. There is an adequate range of learning resources for all subjects. The new computer suite has been a useful addition and has helped raise standards. The James Sanders library is a particularly effective resource and is used well throughout the day for personal and group study. The learning resources for special educational needs are good overall. There is a good range of books and related materials for supporting numeracy and literacy but computer software for reinforcing learning and enabling pupils to access the curriculum could be augmented.
65. There is a sufficient number of staff across the whole school to support the learning of all pupils. Procedures for induction are very well established and those who are newly qualified value the high level of support they are given. Professional performance is carefully addressed and all statutory procedures are in place for the development of teaching.
66. The governing body carries out its statutory duties very well through an effective committee structure and by the appointment of individual governors to oversee key aspects of the school, such as literacy and numeracy. Governors regularly visit the school and have particular links to individual classes – 'Buddy governors' – which helps them understand subjects and the pupils' work and progress. They are well informed by the headteacher and by the key committees. This, together with the support which every committee gets from a 'link' member of the leadership team, ensures governors have a very good understanding of how the school works, what the school does well and what it needs to improve. Consequently, the governing body makes an effective contribution to the leadership and direction of the school and the priorities, which the school has set, are appropriate. There is a shared and very strong commitment to move the school forward and the ability of the management and governors to succeed is very evident.
67. The school improvement plan sets out the targets for development of curriculum subjects and aspects of the school's work. It provides good detail of actions for the coming year, responsibilities, costs and resources. It is based on an evaluation, involving all staff and across the whole school, of what needs to be improved. Whilst working well, the plan would be improved if priorities were more concentrated and the outcomes were described with more precision and in terms of educational impact. The management team and the governing body regularly monitor the success of the plan.
68. The administration manager leads her team very ably. Daily routines are very well organised and this helps teachers and managers to do their jobs successfully. The finance manager ensures that all aspects of budgetary control are carried out to a high standard. Financial planning supports the school's priorities well and expenditure is monitored regularly. Computers

and other information technology are used very well to support administration, management, teaching and learning.

69. The school has become fully involved in the 'Challenge for Corby', an education action zone. As a result the school has received grants for laptop and other computers to help teachers with planning, recording and work in class. The school has links to arts and sports development programmes. Environment Agency and 'Friends of Studfall' funds have been used to create a millennium garden. The school is working with the local authority and other partners to develop the site and erect new buildings for the school and community use. Funds for special educational needs, including those for the Designated Special Provision, are used to extremely good effect for the purposes for which they are provided, and ensure that these pupils make very good progress in their learning. The governing body and the management team are very determined to make sure that every financial resource is used for the benefit of the school's pupils. More widely, there is also a good understanding of the need to ensure 'best value' in all its work. The school compares its results with others in the authority and nationally; it evaluates the consequences of its plans; it seeks ways to spend more effectively; it consults with parents and wider community interests.
70. Taking account of the attainment of pupils at the time they enter the school and the results they achieve by the time they leave, the inclusiveness and the overall quality of education provided, the school provides very good value for money.



## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

71. There are no significant key issues that the school needs to address. However, the governing body may wish to consider the following minor issues when developing their action plan.
- Continue to work towards improving the standards in mathematics;
  - Improve the independence of pupils in science lessons;
  - Raise the level of teacher's expectations in art and design and design and technology;
  - Continue to develop the integration of information and communication technology through all subjects.

## **DESIGNATED SPECIAL PROVISION (DSP)**

72. At the time of the inspection there were 96 pupils on the Special Needs Register (21%). Forty-nine were registered for School Action and 15 for School Action Plus. Thirty-two pupils had statements of special educational needs. The numbers of pupils on the Special Needs Register at 21 per cent is in line with the national average. The numbers of pupils with statements of special educational needs at 7 per cent is well above the national average and this reflects the pupils nominally attached to the DSP and to the special provision for hearing impaired pupils. The relative numbers of boys and girls on the special needs register are in line with the national average. The pupils with statements of special educational needs are receiving provision that is often better than that outlined in their statements of special educational needs.
73. The pupils attached to the DSP and the special resourcing for signing hearing impaired pupils follow the same routines during the school day as the other pupils but they are attached to special smaller sets for numeracy and literacy with extra support from teaching assistants and communication support workers. For all other curriculum activities, they work alongside the other pupils in their classes, receiving extra support from the teaching assistants and communication support workers and through modified teaching, where appropriate. In addition to this, individual and small groups of pupils are withdrawn for focused support in speech and language, key and social skills, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Many outside and internal personnel are used. These include special educational needs teachers, teaching assistants and communication support workers as well as outside specialists, including an advisory teacher for the hearing impaired, physiotherapists and occupational therapists.
74. The school's inclusion policy has been managed for the last two years by the inclusion manager, whose role incorporates that of special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO,) DSP manager and learning and teaching manager. Prior to pupils with special educational needs being admitted, the inclusion manager visits the Year 2 classes. From these visits, national test results and infant school assessments, an individual education plan (IEP) is drawn up for each pupil with special educational needs, containing initial targets for literacy, numeracy and for personal and social development. The targets are monitored continually by the teachers and the teaching assistants and are reviewed every 12 weeks and modified or replaced in consultation with the pupils and their parents or carers. The targets are based on each pupil's attainment level, which are calculated using the national system of "P" scales and National Curriculum levels. Pupils are continually made aware of their targets and the progress they are making towards meeting them, through checklists in their exercise books and cards on their desks. These reviews clearly demonstrate that the pupils are making very good progress over time and this is fed back to parents and carers termly. Day-to-day feedback is provided very effectively through each pupil's home/school book.
75. Outside professionals, including the school's educational psychologist, school medical officer, hearing-impaired advisory teacher, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and speech and language therapists, are brought in to help with assessment and to provide advice, where appropriate. Ongoing assessment and reviews of targets are used to provide the evidence for the annual reviews of statements of special educational needs and annual reports to parents, where appropriate. Annual review reports also demonstrate that most pupils are making very good progress over time towards meeting their targets.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	78
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	21	40	10	0	0	0
Percentage	9	27	51	13			

*The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	457
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	96

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	35
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	100

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	76	64	140
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	54	47	62	
	Girls	48	43	58	
	Total	102	90	120	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (68)	64 (66)	86 (88)	
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	45	47	62	
	Girls	49	40	55	
	Total	94	87	117	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (65)	62 (67)	84 (84)	
	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

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
444	2	1
0	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0

No ethnic group recorded
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0
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0
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0
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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: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	29

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	21
Total aggregate hours worked per week	525

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	1172373
Total expenditure	1179075
Expenditure per pupil	2326
Balance brought forward from previous year	7260
Balance carried forward to next year	558

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	457
Number of questionnaires returned	150

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	30	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	43	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	45	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	44	13	3	0
The teaching is good.	63	35	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	41	5	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	25	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	27	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	35	3	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	75	23	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	35	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	35	5	1	2

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

### **ENGLISH**

76. Overall standards in English are satisfactory. At the age of eleven in the National Curriculum tests of 2002 Year 6 pupils attain a slightly higher percentage of the average Level 4 than those achieved nationally but fewer pupils reach the higher Level 5. After several years of steady improvement, the results dipped last year. All children take part in the national testing and this cohort had a higher number of pupils with statements of special educational need than previously. Pupils make good progress in their learning by the end of their time in the school and those with learning difficulties do very well. Inspection findings show there are many strengths within English.
77. Standards in speaking and listening are generally satisfactory and pupils achieve well. Many opportunities are planned, in all subjects and particularly through the programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education, for pupils to talk with each other, discuss their ideas and exchange views very successfully improving speaking skills from the last inspection. Encouraged to speak clearly, they now confidently share their thoughts and opinions in class or group discussions or when collaborating to quickly identify the main points of their work. Listening skills remain strong. Pupils listen intently to their teachers and to their classmates, they are eager to answer and to contribute to the lessons. Enjoying rehearsing their task, Year 6 groups concentrate hard to successfully report exactly what has been said at the beginning of their conversations. Improving standards in this aspect of the English curriculum continues to be a focus of the school's work.
78. Standards overall in reading are satisfactory, pupils progress well improving the skill and understanding of their reading appropriately for their abilities as they move through the school. Most know which books they prefer to read and can confidently say why. By Year 6 the most able pupils read their class text about BMX bikes very fluently and accurately. Expressing their preferences for the work of different authors or types of novels, they understand how the feelings of the characters are portrayed or humour used by the writers. Reading has many strengths - not only the increasing range and variety of texts that are shared in lessons but the developing pupils' interest in, and enjoyment of, books. Central to this, the James Sanders Library is an extremely valuable, well-organised and much used resource creating a superbly attractive environment *'to stimulate interest in books.'* Through regular use of the library system, children become very skilled when finding the information they need quickly from books and older pupils can compare this research to that using the Internet.
79. In writing standards overall are sound. As they enter the school, many children find communicating through writing more difficult than reading. The skills of writing, such as spelling, grammar and punctuation, continue to be well taught. As a result of changes to the English curriculum, teachers' planning and the current high quality teaching, pupils are being well supported to more confidently transfer these skills into their own independent writing. In Year 3, when writing an opening to a legend to "grab the attention of the reader" the children eagerly follow the teacher's own example to inspire their successful attempts. Encouraging a less confident group in Year 4 to visualise the smell, appearance and movement of the *"Invisible Beast"* through drama activities, inspires the descriptions used in their own poems. Having explored metaphors and similes a Year 4 pupil writes, *"Happiness is a birthday celebrated, and a playground full of cheerful voices!"* Linking a thorough understanding of different types of texts, such as exploring instructions in Year 5, to children's own writing is a school

focus to further raise standards. Year 6 pupils use their knowledge of reports well as they plan, draft and edit their own writing about Studfall School. Visiting the theatre to watch a production of *Midsummer Night's Dream* or sharing the poetry and stories of visiting writers during Book Week enhance children's literacy experiences. Literacy skills are now being effectively extended into teaching and learning in other subjects such as art and history. As a tool for teaching, ICT has yet to be fully explored. Handwriting is an area recognised as one that needs attention. By Year 6, many pupils are able to present their work well using a neat, fluent and legible joined style of writing. Although this style is regularly taught, the successful change from printing is not translated into pupils' own written work and standards vary considerably.

80. Teaching is very good or excellent in almost half of the lessons and this has a very significant and direct impact on pupils' achievements in their learning. A key strength of the teaching is the very good relationships that exist between the children and all of the adults working with them. Expectations of work and behaviour are high, opinions and answers are truly valued and humour shared - all combining to create a positive and friendly atmosphere for learning. Thoroughly planned activities, questioning that challenges and extends understanding, with basic skills well taught exemplify most of the lessons. Tasks are explained very clearly so pupils settle quickly and become involved in their work, as lessons move on at a good pace their interest and motivation is maintained. When teaching is not as successful, it is because the task proves too challenging for some children or the routines of class management are not as securely established as in other lessons. Homework is well used to extend or reinforce learning, such as when Year 5 pupils share the words they have discovered with the suffix "tion" to form a spelling activity at the beginning of their lesson.
81. Very good improvements have been made within the English curriculum since the last inspection. The subject planning was then incomplete and is now of a high standard. Fully considering the objectives of the National Literacy Strategy, and recently strengthening them from the national exemplar materials, planning is a strength of teaching. Where units of work selected from literacy initiatives are considered beneficial, they are used effectively, such as in a set of Year 5 pupils to develop understanding of the words and structure of persuasive writing, who successfully use their computer skills to add pictures to their advertising posters. Procedures for regularly checking and tracking children's achievements and progress in their learning are very good. Teachers now use this information very well to group their pupils, decide what to teach next, to set future goals for improvement and identify additional support. Encouraging pupils to consider their learning as each lesson ends enables them to check and begin to understand their own progress. Involved in identifying their own learning targets, pupils in Year 5 appreciate what they must do to improve their understanding of the purpose, organisation and language of instructional writing. Marking is not of a consistent quality in some previous written work and although praise and encouragement for pupils' efforts is given it is not always made clear how to improve aspects of their work.
82. All children are totally included in their lessons. Tasks are suitable for the needs of all children and provide appropriate challenge whatever their ability. Those with learning difficulties or statements of special educational needs are exceptionally well helped and encouraged by their teachers together with the thoroughly prepared and very knowledgeable teaching assistants who work alongside them so impressively.
83. The management of English is of a high standard. Although the curriculum manager is new to his role his enthusiasm for his subject is unmistakable. Working very closely with two colleagues, the needs of the subject have been very well assessed. The key areas to continue to improve pupils' achievements have been identified and plans put into place to support staff.



Developing the monitoring role of the manager can focus on the impact of these developments, for example, on the improved standards in writing throughout the year groups.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. The standards in mathematics have fallen since the last inspection when they were in line with the national average: they have fallen to below the national average. However there have been improvements in many other areas. For example, the quality of teaching is good or better: last time it was satisfactory. Children's progress is good rather than satisfactory. The coverage was criticised in the previous inspection but the introduction of the numeracy strategy and new scheme has ensured all areas are fully covered.
85. When the present Year 6 entered the school in 1999 their results in the national tests for seven year olds were well below the national average. Inspection evidence suggests that the pupils are on course to achieve below the national average, which is still an improvement over their time at the school. Sufficient children are achieving the national average at Level 4 but few are able to achieve Level 5 and a significant minority achieve below Level 4, which keeps the overall attainment below national average. In comparison to similar schools the results are in line with national average.
86. The higher attaining children in Year 3 can tell the time using both digital and analogue conventions. They know the three, four and five times tables and recognise which multiples can be found. They understand how to use diagrams to display the information. The lower attaining children struggle to make 100 by adding together a pair of two digit numbers and to count in 5s or 10s. Children in Year 4 understand that subtraction is the inverse of addition and division is the inverse of multiplication. They are confident adding three-digit numbers and can multiply a two-digit number by a single digit such as  $57 \times 8$ . During one lesson the higher attaining children were set the problem of using the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 to make a total of 6. As a result children found a variety of ways of achieving the answer. The lower attaining children in this year group can sequence numbers to 10 or 20 and count on in twos, fours, fives and tens. Year 5 children enjoyed the challenge of a practical weighing activity, despite the fact there were too few accurate scales for them to use. Most confidently converted grams to kilograms often using the decimal point in expressing the weigh i.e.  $1,250\text{g} = 1.25\text{k}$ .
87. The lower attaining pupils can select a number up to 99 and add or subtract a number up to 6 from a dice throw. Others sort numbers by odd or even up to 30. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they have covered a wide range of topics. The higher attaining children are very confident using their knowledge of multiplication tables to solve quick fire mental problems with accuracy. They know that in order to find a fraction of a number they divide by the denominator and multiply the answer by the numerator. For example " $\frac{4}{5}$ th of 6m is 4.8m." children know the properties of three-dimensional shapes and how different types of triangle rotate or translate. The lower attaining children do not have such understanding they are more secure using simple fractions like halves and quarters. Work scrutiny shows appropriate coverage for all abilities, with work that is clearly well matched to the children's needs. Across the school all children, including those with special needs make good progress as attainment on entry for mathematics is well below average and now more children are attaining at the appropriate standards for their age.
88. Children enjoy their mathematics lessons and are particularly enthusiastic during the quick-fire mental activities. Because of good relationships between teachers and children they are confident to explain how they reached their answers and to say when they do not understand something. Children listen carefully and are keen to respond to questions. They are well

motivated to succeed especially where work is carefully matched to their needs. This helps them to focus on the task set. When asked, children work well together, sharing resources and ideas. For example working together on a practical weighing problem. Children like using a computer and rise to the different challenges. These experiences are helping them to develop numerical understanding.

89. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good or better. Where the teaching is good, teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. This motivates the children to achieve well and to focus on the tasks set. Relationships between adults and children are very good. This gives children the confidence to respond to questions and to explain how they found their answers even if they are not sure they are correct. There is a calm working atmosphere during lessons. Detailed planning ensures that children build on prior learning. Work set is very well matched to the needs of the children and setting by ability has helped to ensure an even closer match to their needs. Learning support staff are used very effectively and children benefit from working in small groups within their sets. In most lessons the plenary is used effectively to recap areas that have caused a problem or to extend children's learning. Occasionally these sessions are rushed because of limited time, particularly where the pace is slower and children have spent too long on the initial input. This decreases from the effectiveness of the lesson. Day-to day assessment is good and teachers are helped by the children's own evaluation of their work. Children draw faces with different expressions to show how they felt about the task set: the older children often write a few words as well: this is effectively used to inform planning for the next lesson.
90. The enthusiastic subject manager, newly in post, has already audited resources and is aware of shortcomings, particularly for resources for practical maths. This aspect is a weakness in maths that needs further development. A new method of highlighting coverage to record children's successes or difficulties has been introduced. By colouring the short term planning red teachers can instantly see where children struggled to understand topics and what needs to be revisited: green means most children understood. A published scheme has recently been implemented and will need to be checked to ensure it is relevant and meets the needs of both staff and pupils. Although much of the marking is effective and provides children with ways of improving it is not consistently effective throughout school. This is an area for further development.
91. Mathematics is used in a variety of ways across the curriculum. For example, measuring and recording temperature in science, drawing of plans in design and technology, using co-ordinates in geography and data collection in a range of other subjects. All these experiences help to enhance the children's understanding of the use of mathematics in every day life.

## **SCIENCE**

92. As at the last inspection, Year 6 pupils are achieving standards that are average. In the 2002 tests, results were just below the national average, but average in comparison with similar schools. Over the three years from 1999 to 2001 there was a steady upward trend in tests results, levelling off in 2002. Bearing in mind the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs who take the national tests at the end of Year 6, these results are commendable. The school has taken effective steps with regard to revision and to building up pupils' confidence in test procedures. In 2003 the target is to further increase the number of pupils reaching the average Level 4, as well as helping a significant minority to attain beyond this. As at the last inspection, teachers' and pupils' use of a subject specific vocabulary is a strength. Since that time pupils' involvement in practical work has much improved and, in

carrying this out, they now co-operate very well in partnerships or in groups. Throughout the year groups, pupils are encouraged to predict results and are made aware of what constitutes a fair test. However, they are not often asked to put forward their own ideas about how to find out an answer to a question or to choose their own equipment and methods of recording results. This prevents some, particularly the older more able children, from achieving at a higher level than the average.

93. Throughout the school pupils make very good progress in gaining scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs are given excellent support in lessons from teaching assistants, teachers and other children in the class, and are given methods of recording which well match their needs. In these ways, all pupils are fully included in all science lessons and make very good progress in relation to their ability.
94. Overall, the teaching in science is very good and this is reflected in the improvements that have been made in the subject over the last few years. Teaching assistants working in the classrooms are very well informed about what pupils need to do and learn and, because of this, make a highly effective contribution within lessons. The subject encompasses aspects of sex and health education and makes a strong contribution to the pupils' personal development. There are good links with other areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 4 pupils use their mathematical knowledge to read off temperatures shown on thermometers and, in Year 6, the number of Newtons on forcemeters. Throughout the school there is evidence of pupils displaying their results in table and graphic form. Computers are too seldom used in lessons either for research purposes or to display collected data, and the school recognises this as a priority for development. Teachers employ a wide range of scientific words in their lessons and this helps pupils build up a good vocabulary to use when talking or writing about their work. Pupils' science fact books, in which they write new scientific words they encounter, are used inconsistently throughout the school and do not fully reflect children's learning over time. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and this is reflected in their planning and confident classroom practice. For example, in one excellent lesson in Year 5 the teacher was able to explain the difference between the molecular structure of solids and liquids, using children to bring to life this rather sophisticated concept. Lesson objectives are clearly explained to pupils so that they know what they are going to learn. Teachers introduce a wide range of resources and these are well prepared and organised beforehand so that no time is lost in science lessons. The use of these resources greatly interests the pupils and enhances their learning. For example, in the Year 4 classes the quantity and diversity of solids and liquids provided gave the pupils ample materials to ponder over before putting them into different categories.
95. Pupils throughout the school enjoy their work in science, especially if it includes practical activities and tasks. They use equipment very sensibly and work together well, helping each other when necessary. Their behaviour in most lessons is very good and this allows the teachers to focus on teaching with a minimum of interruption. It reflects the very good teaching observed which stimulates pupils' interest and makes them want to learn.
96. An experienced subject manager is working to an Action Plan which shows a secure understanding of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. She has not yet carried out any formal monitoring in colleague's classrooms although she plans to do so in the near future. A training session for all the staff on the teaching of investigative and experimental work has been of benefit to this aspect of the curriculum. The national scheme of work for this subject is used to underpin planning and other published materials are slotted in where deemed necessary. Very good, ongoing assessment of pupils' progress is in place and, in Year 6 this is used to

ensure that all children do their best in the national tests. Marking both within and across year groups is inconsistent. At its best it is helpful, asking questions or making comments which lead pupils on to further thought and research. At other times marking does little more than give words of praise, or remarks about literacy or presentation skills, which in themselves do not help pupils to improve the scientific content of their work.

97. In order to promote science and enhance pupils' learning experiences further, the subject manager has established and maintained good links with appropriate local organisations. These include the nearby secondary schools, services and businesses. During the successful Science Week activities involved many parents and visitors to the school, including a much appreciated theatre group. A good range of visits to environmental study centres and the extensive use of nature areas in the school grounds further enrich this area of the curriculum.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

98. Only two class lessons were observed, but the scrutiny of pupils' previous work in sketchbooks, teachers' planning and displays of work throughout the school, indicates that pupils reach the level of work expected for their age by time they leave the school. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in the subject. A small group of pupils with an artistic bent attend an Art Club held within school time and taught by the subject manager. During these sessions the work produced is of good, and sometimes very good, quality and pupils make at least good progress in learning artistic skills and techniques. Sketchbooks are used in every class and these are often used well to practise skills or refine detail. There has been an improvement in their use since the last inspection. This reflects the teachers' good response to the in-service training organised by the subject manager.
99. Overall, teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. The school's own scheme of work for the subject is in the process of revision, but currently all aspects of the national curriculum requirements are suitably covered. The scheme ensures parity in planning across classes in year groups, but there are some differences in the way this planning is implemented. There is an appropriate emphasis on work with textiles, starting with simple sewing techniques in Year 3 and extending to interesting wall hangings produced during an Activity Week. Throughout the school there is evidence that pupils are introduced to a suitable range of skills and materials. In both Year 5 and 6 the pupils work with clay, but it is not possible to fire the models made because the kiln is out of order. Pupils use a wide range of different media, including pastels, paint, collage materials, printing and photographs, in support of their work. There are good links with other subjects, particularly ICT. In one good lesson on research skills, Year 6 pupils efficiently gathered and printed off pictures of masks. Pupils with special educational needs were fully integrated into this activity and ably supported by their fellow pupils.
100. Artwork is used well to illustrate and support work in other subjects, notably history. During their project work on the Tudors, Year 4 pupils study portrait work of that period and, in Year 6, produce brightly coloured animal and bird masks as part of their topic on rainforests. Teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of artists and their style of working. These include Van Gogh and Holbein and, from more modern times, Signac, Seurat and Picasso. Some torn black paper pictures by Year 3 pupils depict Lowry-like figures. This work shows good movement and interpretation of his style. There is less emphasis on the work of non-western artists and limited activities of a multi-cultural nature.
101. An enthusiastic subject manager has made good links with the Arts Council and through these the school benefits from the support of professional artists working in the school. The subject

manager is particularly interested in using digital photography, linking this to developments in the information technology curriculum. The school has received an Arts Mark Gold Award from the Arts Council for its work not only in art but also in music. Photographic work produced by pupils has been displayed both locally and nationally. Assessment in the subject has barely started. The subject manager looks at work on display but does not monitor teaching and learning in classrooms. Displays of pupils' work enhance the school environment and help to raise pupils' esteem. A particularly exuberant and leafy display outside one Year 6 class brings pupils' work on rainforests to life.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

102. Due to this subject being taught in blocks of time, only lessons in Year 4 were observed during the inspection. However, the scrutiny of past work undertaken by pupils across the school, teachers' planning and discussions with the subject manager indicate that there has been good improvement in this subject since the last inspection when standards were found to be below the national expectation. Much of this improvement is due to a better quality of teaching and the introduction of a new scheme of work, based on national guidelines, which enables the school to plan the development of knowledge and skills in a more systematic way. Pupils now reach the level of work expected for their age by the time they leave the school and make at least satisfactory progress in the subject. There is evidence that the design element of the subject is now firmly embedded in subject planning although not yet so securely implemented in all lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their ability due to the high level of support they receive in lessons from teaching assistants. These pupils are included totally in all classroom activities.
103. From the scrutiny of pupils' work, there is evidence that the quality of teaching throughout the school is variable but overall satisfactory. However, good teaching observed in Year 4 ensures that pupils first learn how adults make published "pop up" books before modelling their own work on the mechanisms they have begun to understand. There is real excitement when teachers provide a very wide range of such books for the children to handle. Pupils do this very carefully with great wonder when, for example, a castle slowly unfolds from between two pages. In the early stages of a project the teachers introduce simple skills, giving clear and precise instructions about how to carry out a task. In this way the children build up a range of techniques which they can use independently at a later date.
104. The subject is taught in appropriate blocks of time, alternating with other subjects, and coverage fully meets the requirements of the national curriculum. Food Technology has a suitable place in its planning. For example, in Year 3 the pupils design and make an attractive sandwich snack paying due regard to aspects of hygiene and safety. Photographic evidence shows pupils in Year 6 designing and sewing waistcoats, with some using sewing machines, and the good use of construction kits to make fairground rides. In one Year 6 classroom, a particularly clear wall display traces the steps that the pupils should take when designing and making their wheeled buggies. Through this the children are constantly reminded about what constitutes good practice. There are many beneficial links with other subjects. For example, some art activities such as sewing and the construction of simple electrical circuits in science, support the development of pupils' skills and knowledge in design and technology. In Year 6 the use of ICT is developing with the planned introduction of different simulation and design packages. A trip by forty Year 6 pupils to the "Making It" centre in Mansfield much enhanced their enjoyment in, and knowledge and understanding of, this subject.

105. This is the first year in which the enthusiastic manager has been in role. She is well qualified to drive this subject forward, but so far she has only been able to devote one day to monitoring the implementation of planning in colleagues' classrooms. Her knowledge of what is happening across the school is limited to looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work. Due to her hard work the subject policy has been re-written, schemes of work are now in place and resources audited. She recognises the need to develop the use of control technology and training for its use across the school. The portfolios kept for each year group are not sufficiently useful tools for future reference. Some of the work they contain is now out-dated and there is insufficient detail to show the context in which other pieces were completed. Good practice is to be seen in the use of photographic evidence in Year 6 but this has not been extended to other year groups.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. Standards are above the nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6 and there is above average progress through each year in the school. Although only a few lessons were seen during the inspection it is clear from an analysis of work and from discussions with pupils and teachers that a suitably high profile is given to the subject. Generally standards have been maintained since the last inspection although improvement has been continued through better planning using the nationally agreed guidelines. Particularly effective is the way that teachers plan for both the development of geographical skills while putting the work in context and combining it with work such as in history.
107. Pupils are learning specific geographical vocabulary and are able to look at topics in terms of human development. For instance, in a Year 5 lesson the teacher was discussing how the town of Corby had developed. This followed some first hand interviews with people who had lived in the area. Pupils discussed the links between the growth of the steel industry and how this affected housing. The teacher also made reference to different photographs showing housing and talked about the land use. In this way the class were able to see the connections between the geographical and historical context. Good progress was made from enthusiastic learners because the children were inspired by the use of first hand experiences.
108. In all classes planning is conducted thoroughly. It links well to work in other subjects and there is often mention of specific vocabulary that form the key elements. Teachers manage pupils well and provide stimulating work for all levels of ability. As a result pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and challenged as well as those with higher ability. Computers are used to look up information or to show video clips. This was used to great effect in the discussions about the pupils' home town. Pupils acquire knowledge well. They use this to build up better understanding such as when learning about mapping. Younger pupils work on simple directions around their own area and by Year 6 pupils are able to use Ordnance Survey maps to help them with their studies. During all parts of lessons they listen well and make valuable contributions. Assessment of work is more variable and needs to develop more consistently to ensure that teachers can plan work more effectively.
109. The co-ordinator is experienced and has a good view about the relative strengths of the subject. She has put together a suitable action plan from an audit of the planning and the scheme of work. There has been some additional training of teachers but the subject has not been of high priority this year. The budget for the subject has been raised this year and this will enable the resources to improve. These will include more programs for the computers, posters and to help organise trips.

## HISTORY

110. The following judgements are based on six lessons seen, a scrutiny of previous work, teachers' planning and talking to the subject manager and pupils. The standards seen in the last inspection have been improved and attainment by the end of Year 6 is above the national expectation. By then pupils have made good progress and built up a wide-ranging bank of historical knowledge and skills. As in the last report, the overall quality of teaching is good. It is very good in Year 5 during lessons in which pupils are carrying out a local study on Corby. Children with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their ability due to the high level of support they receive from teaching assistants, teachers and members of their peer group.
111. The previous report found that pupils' understanding of chronology was good. Due to the display of historical timelines in many classrooms, this is still the case. Scrutiny of previous work shows that pupils are given many opportunities to explore evidence about the past. For example, in a lesson on Queen Elizabeth I, Year 4 pupils are encouraged to read contemporary accounts about this monarch and to draw their own conclusions about the writers and how they might be influenced by particular circumstances. This skilfully leads pupils to consider differences between fact and opinion and how evidence about the past must be carefully considered. In Year 3, the use of sand trays containing buried treasure introduces pupils to the art of being real archaeologists. It arouses pupils' interest and enthusiasm and by drawing conclusions from what they had found, say a coin or a brooch, they learn to work as real historians. Teachers have a very good subject knowledge and use an extensive range of artefacts, videos, library books and the overhead projector, to bring each topic alive.
112. In the Year 5 project on the development of Corby, and in the Year 6 topic on 1930 onwards, local residents are invited into school to add to the already extensive evidence that has been gathered to support pupils' studies. The valuable input of these people adds to pupils' knowledge that history is not always about an era a very long time ago, but can be of a time within the memory of people still alive. Through these interviews, the pupils' literacy skills such as writing a questionnaire and note taking are well promoted. In both the Year 5 lessons on Corby and the Year 4 lessons about Drake's voyage around the world, there are close links with geography through related map work.
113. Visiting groups, who bring in an extensive collection of costumes and artefacts and work alongside the children for a day, further enhances pupils' learning. There are visits to places of historical interest both in the locality, such as Boughton House, and to the Black Country Museum. All these activities have helped to make the subject "real" for many pupils, who talk animatedly about how they enjoy "finding out about history". The use of information technology for research purposes is improving, helped by the fact that many pupils have access to the Internet at home. The web site for the history of Corby is particularly useful and the subject manager plans to set up the school's own web page. There are good cross-curricular links with art. These include a study of Tudor portraits and the use of illustrative skills to make written work more interesting.
114. The manager, new to the role at the beginning of the year, is well qualified to lead the subject. She has already redrafted the policy and reviewed all the schemes of work so that they have an enquiry emphasis. At present she monitors their use by looking at planning and pupils' work. As yet she has not evaluated teaching and learning in classrooms. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Sometimes it consists of words of praise, or remarks about literacy or presentation, which in themselves do not help pupils to better the historical content. Where the

marking is good, teachers make comments about how work can be improved or ask questions which lead pupils on to further research. At the moment the use of assessment is limited, but it is planned to introduce this at a later date. Meanwhile there are opportunities for individual pupils to evaluate their work at the end of each project.



## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

115. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above those expected nationally and pupils make good progress through their time at the school. Particularly good progress is made in the use of computers and other communication equipment as part of work in other subjects such as English, mathematics, history and geography. Pupils with special educational needs are given high levels of support that enable them to access the tasks they are set by teachers during lessons. They make very good progress, and although often identified as having low language and literacy ability, sometimes achieve the nationally expected Level 4 in information and communication technology. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good when standards were below that nationally. This is because the quality of teaching has improved considerably and as a consequence pupil's learning has moved forward rapidly.
116. Teaching and learning are both good and there are some high levels of individual learning in individual lessons. In a Year 4 numeracy class, for instance the teacher used a program to reinforce the teaching about counting. This helped children to learn about counting in two's and showed how teachers plan for computer work in other subjects. Planning has improved with the use of the new computer suite and from a comprehensive national training programme provided by funding from the National Lottery. This has helped all teachers understand the relevance of the subject within other areas of the curriculum. In two lessons good use was made of an interactive Smartboard as a way of teaching the whole class. Pupils were able to be shown how to use a programme and it also helped improve the levels of concentration. The work set in individual lessons is often associated with learning a new skill as identified in the scheme of work and also in developing this skill to enhance other learning. Pupils are able to analyse information, research for interesting facts about the topic they are studying and also undertake data analysis through the use of spreadsheets. A new form of assessment is being trialled as a means of ensuring that progress can be tracked more easily. This is also aimed at improving the challenge for individuals through more challenging tasks.
117. The experienced co-ordinator is ably supported by a teaching assistant who provides technical expertise. Both are involved in scrutinising schemes of work and ensuring that all necessary peripherals are in place. They are trained in first line support and so any software problems are effectively solved. The Internet Safety policy is in draft form and has not yet been signed by parents. However, all pupils are fully aware of what to do when they are searching for information. To aid the development of teacher expertise all plans are kept on laptops. This is enabling common formats to be agreed. All statutory requirements of the subject curriculum are in place and by the end of Year 6 all pupils will have had access to each strand. As yet, there is no final level of assessment given when Year 6 leave the school. The co-ordinators have a good view of priorities and have developed a thorough development plan. This does not, however, link as well to the whole school development. The shared levels of responsibilities provide good levels of expertise.
118. The use of a computer suite is acknowledged as a very positive move forward in raising standards although the use of computers in the classroom is not at the same high level. This is a major priority for development in the near future.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

119. As part of an on-going programme the school provides the opportunity for groups of pupils to undertake lessons each week in French conversation. In conjunction with a member of staff, a

specialist teacher is developing the basic understanding of numbers, colours, days of the week and months. She uses songs to help this process and has developed a good relationship with the class.

120. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and are keen and eager to join in. They respond to questions and some are beginning to show understanding and answer questions set to them in French.

## MUSIC

121. Since the last inspection standards in music have not been maintained and are now in line with the national expectation rather than being above. This can be explained by the fact that music is no longer taught by a specialist teacher but by each class teacher. However, the quality of teaching is good overall.
122. Children are developing the appropriate musical knowledge and vocabulary. They can keep the beat and sustain a simple ostinato. They know the names of tuned and untuned percussion and how to play them. Year 3 children clap and click in time to the music playing and then successfully combine two rhythm patterns. In groups they produce a “lullaby” with untuned percussion. After the first group’s composition is recorded and appraised children realise that for an effective piece, rhythm patterns must be together. Others groups’ efforts are more effective as they keep in time and the individual rhythm patterns are clearer. Year 4 pupils sing a round enthusiastically but not well pitched. They use the rhythm patterns of a familiar rhyme to produce an ostinato and discover the faster they clap the louder the sound. The rhythms are transferred to untuned percussion and a melody using the pentatonic scale is added. The children find this challenging. Year 5 pupils also explore rhythms and base their work on ‘London’s Burning’. Children sing this well as a four part round. In Year 6 the theme of rhythm and ostinato is developed further using the pentatonic scale and untuned percussion. The outcome is effective and children explain what was good about their music.
123. Singing within the classroom and heard during assembly is tuneful and pleasant although high notes are not always correctly pitched. When children really know and enjoy singing the hymn words are clear and sung with enthusiasm. Where the hymn is not so well known or popular singing is weaker. During a folk club practise children sang well and sustained two parts. Those playing the violin produced a good sound and in tune: above the standard normally expected in a junior school. Progress for these children is very good. However generally progress is good across the school as children learn to sing two part rounds and to accompany their singing with a variety of rhythms. They are taught relevant skills and appropriate vocabulary that help them understand and enjoy music.
124. Children enjoy their music lessons particularly where the class teacher is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They listen carefully to the teacher and are keen to respond to the questions. All children, including those with special needs or DSP, work well together in groups, sharing their ideas. They develop their own rhythms and are confident to play them for their peers. They respect the efforts of others and offer positive criticism. They concentrate and remain focused on the task, even when the lesson is interrupted!
125. Since the last inspection class teachers have taken on the responsibility of teaching music. With detailed planning provided by the subject manager they are gaining in confidence and knowledge. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good teaching. When

teachers are secure in their knowledge and enthusiastic they motivate the children to achieve. Questioning is used effectively to extend or reinforce children's knowledge. All staff have good relationships with their classes and this gives children the confidence to perform their rhythms for the class. Many opportunities are provided for children to work together and share their ideas. Teachers encourage them to criticise the efforts of their peers in a positive and constructive manner. Appropriate vocabulary is taught. Most lessons move at a good pace to keep children focused and on task. They usually start with a warm up of singing or clapping before exploring the main objectives. Occasionally opportunities are missed to give children appropriate explanations or reinforce techniques and to use music technology.

126. The subject manager has been in post for just over a year. A specialist initially taught music but now class teachers are responsible for the subject. As many felt insecure about teaching music the subject manager devised a detailed scheme and plans to give support and guidance to those teachers. The plans are easy to follow and have been readily accepted by the staff. Inset has taken place to boost confidence and understanding. Assessment sheets provide a simple check on how children are progressing: one for children to complete will be a new innovation. This is helping to ensure continuity and progression in music. There is a good range of extra curricular activities: recorders, orchestra, music makers and folk club. Instrumental tuition is also available for strings, brass, guitar and keyboard. Musicians visit the school and recently a string quartet entertained the pupils: this they really enjoyed, as their "thank you" letters show. Music is played daily as children enter and leave the Hall for assembly but little non-western music is heard: an area for development already highlighted by the subject manager. All these activities enhance the children's music curriculum and help them appreciate a range of styles.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

127. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and they remain in line with expectations by the age of 11. The quality of teaching has improved because no unsatisfactory lessons were observed and is now good overall. During lessons, children are encouraged to plan and evaluate their work: a criticism from the last inspection when there were no opportunities for children to do this. A problem highlighted during the last inspection with regard to swimming has yet to be resolved. There is no guarantee that the requirement to swim 25 metres at the age of 11 can be met. Dance and outdoor sessions were the only aspects of physical education observed during the inspection period.
128. The younger children are developing relevant ball skills for playing volleyball, throwing and catching with accuracy. The skills are then used as children practise throwing balls over an elevated net. They dodge an opposing pair to win the ball and score points. Older pupils are learning country dancing and find the steps challenging: some pupils struggle to remember the sequence. The oldest pupils choreograph a dance routine to a well-known "pop" song. Both boys and girls use a range of movements, which display good body control and ability to interpret the music. Year 6 children are learning to sprint and are confident to run and improve their speed. Children with special educational needs are well integrated and work alongside their peers.
129. All pupils make good progress developing their skills especially those who represent the school in competitions. There are many occasions when there is a successful result in football, netball and cross-country.

130. Pupils enjoy physical activities and all, including those with special educational needs and DSP pupils, participate with enthusiasm. Where teachers provide a good stimulus for movement children are inspired and well motivated, giving of their best. They listen carefully to their teachers and respond to questions. All children, including those with special needs or DSP children, work very well together, sharing ideas and devising a sequence of movements. When given the opportunity they watch their peers perform their dances with interest and offer positive criticism. All are well behaved.
131. The quality of teaching has improved considerably and there is no unsatisfactory teaching: lessons are either good or better. In all lessons skills are well-taught and good teaching points made. For example in a Year 6 athletics lesson the teacher showed the pupils appropriate techniques to start a sprint. Lessons are well planned and offer pupils a range of activities that encourage the development of skills, building on those learnt previously. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Because of this children are confident to demonstrate their work, when opportunities are provided. All teachers reinforce the need for warming up before taking part in vigorous exercise. Where teachers are very enthusiastic and knowledgeable they inspire and motivate pupils to give of their best. This was observed in two Year 6 dance lessons where children were excited and keen to use all the time available to devise their sequences. In another lesson the teacher encouraged the children to warm up using an aerobic sequence of movements and the response was very good. Learning in all lessons is good or better as children are focused and concentrate throughout.
132. The enthusiastic and dedicated subject manager has recently implemented a new scheme, which provides teachers with a good basis from which to prepare their lessons and ensures appropriate activities are taught. However it will be necessary to evaluate the scheme to make sure it is providing appropriate coverage of all aspects of the subject. Pupils, especially those in Year 6 have jotters to record activities in PE and use sheets to record progress as they improve their times for running.
133. A good range of extra curricular sporting activities is provided, including football, netball, cricket, athletics, cross-country and gymnastics. Often outside coaches from the local football and rugby clubs and others are involved in running these activities. Many children enthusiastically participate in these sports and make a commitment to attend practises. Competitions and matches are played regularly and the children enjoy successes.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

134. By the end of Year 6 pupils achieve standards which match the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. These standards are similar to those found during the last inspection. A survey of pupils' previous work shows that pupils cover the concepts and themes set out in the syllabus and make good progress.
135. Pupils develop a good appreciation of the key features of different religious communities, their special places of worship, their ceremonies and distinctive clothing. For example, pupils in Year 3 know how and why people who follow the Muslim faith use honey during the ceremony to name their babies. Pupils in Year 4 have a good understanding of how members of the Salvation Army put their 'Christianity into Action' after listening to a Lieutenant from the local branch of the Salvation Army as she outlined the work they do. The depth of her religious commitment gave a spiritual dimension to the lesson. Year 5 pupils identify and record the similarities and differences between the Hindu and Christian faiths and pupils in Year 6

appreciate that symbolism, both in everyday life and in worship, is important. Pupils celebrate the major Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter and are familiar with the important festivals in other world faiths.

136. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and they plan in sufficient detail to meet the needs of all the pupils. Their expectations are high and pupils are managed well. Teachers' question pupils carefully so that they develop their understanding and broaden their knowledge. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included by directing appropriate questions to them and planning suitable work for them. Teachers make use of relevant resources including visitors. Artefacts are used to introduce pupils to the special places, dress, celebrations and religious practices of Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. These objects are very interesting to pupils and seeing and touching them helps pupils to learn at a fast rate. Themes and issues explored in the daily act of worship reinforce what pupils learn in religious education lessons and at the same time contribute to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
137. Religious education is co-ordinated well by the subject manager. In consultation with colleagues she has developed a scheme of work based on the locally Agreed Syllabus. She makes sure there are adequate resources to teach the subject. Assessment of pupils' level of attainment has just been introduced and follows a similar format used with other curriculum subjects. The manager does not monitor teachers' plans or teaching on a regular basis.