

INSPECTION REPORT

ECTON BROOK LOWER SCHOOL

Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121944

Head teacher: Mr G Noakes

Reporting inspector: Mr D Speakman
20086

Dates of inspection: 30th June – 3rd July 2003

Inspection number: 248304

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ecton Brook Road Ecton Brook Northampton
Postcode:	NN3 5EN
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Line
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20086	David Speakman	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art & design	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1305	Brian Rance	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18498	Denise Morris	Team inspector	History Music Foundation Stage Educational inclusion Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32237	Liane Billingsley	Team inspector	English Geography Physical education English as an additional language	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its previous inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ecton Brook Lower School is about the same size as other primary schools and educates boys and girls between the ages of four and nine. The number of pupils is about the same as at the time of the previous inspection. There are 216 pupils on roll, which includes 40 children in Reception. Pupils come from homes within the surrounding area and the overall socio-economic profile of the pupils is below average and the percentage of pupils entitled to claim free school meals is above the national average. The school experiences a high level of pupil mobility, particularly with a well above average number of pupils joining the school. The children's attainment on entry to the school is well below average. The majority of pupils are of a white UK origin and there are pupils from other backgrounds including Indian, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and other White non-UK backgrounds. There are three refugee pupils. Eleven pupils do not speak English as a mother tongue. This is a higher than average proportion. Very few are at an early stage of English acquisition. There are seven pupils from a Traveller background. Fifty-five pupils (25 per cent) have special educational needs and five pupils (two per cent) have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The proportion of pupils with special needs is well above the national average and the proportion with statements is average. Special needs include specific and moderate learning difficulties and speech and communication disabilities. A community centre is attached to the school and provides close links between the school and the community. The school is subject to a phased reorganisation over the next two years into a Primary school for pupils aged four to eleven and there are plans to move into larger premises in 2004.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. It provides a good quality of education, with good overall teaching, which enables all pupils to achieve well. The quality of leadership and management of the head teacher, deputy head teacher and the governing body is satisfactory overall with some strong features. Pupils develop good attitudes to their learning and their behaviour and personal development are good. Relationships are good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in art and design are well above average and above average in information and communication technology by the end of Year 4.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and, linked with the school's strong approach to educational inclusion, enables all pupils to learn effectively.
- Provision for children in Reception is good and gives the children a good start to their schooling.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and effectively supports pupils' good attitudes, personal development and behaviour. It is successful in fully including all groups of pupils into all aspects of school life.
- The school evaluates its performance well and the priorities for short term development are appropriate to the school at this time.
- Through good leadership skills the head teacher has built a team of professionals with a strong commitment to the school and its pupils.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing, geography and history.
- The use of assessment in planning.
- The time-span of the school development plan.
- Meeting statutory requirements.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS PREVIOUS INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997 and since then it has made a satisfactory level of improvement. Key issues relating to standards in reading and religious education have been fully resolved, but writing remains an issue. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is now satisfactory and issues relating to curriculum planning have been met. Weaknesses in leadership and management have been

successfully addressed, but the school still does not fully meet statutory requirements with regard to the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus. Standards have been maintained. The quality of teaching has improved. Pupils' attitudes and relationships are still good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	E	D	D	C
writing	D	C	D	C
mathematics	E	D	D	C

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

When children start school, their attainment is well below average. During their time in Reception they achieve well and by the end of the reception year, children attain standards close to those expected for children of this age in their personal, social and emotional development, creative development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical development. Standards are below expectations in language and literacy and mathematics. Results of National Curriculum assessment test at the end of Year 2 remain below the national average, but are average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to those schools with a similar number of free school meals.

This inspection shows that by the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science are now average, but are below in writing. This is reflected at the end of Year 4, with similar judgements being made. Pupils attain standards well above those expected for pupils of this age in art and design and above in information and communication technology at both Years 2 and 4. Standards are as nationally expected in all other subjects except in geography and history where they are below. Standards of writing in some other subjects, such as history and geography, are below expected levels. Standards are satisfactory in speaking and listening, reading and in numeracy. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language, travellers' children and those from the wide range of ethnic backgrounds, including refugee children, make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes toward school and their work are good. They enjoy school. In lessons they show high levels of interest and enjoyment in their tasks. Pupils make visitors very welcome and are proud to show their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils follow the school's high expectations of behaviour. They behave well in class, around the school and on the playground at break times.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are good; pupils get on well together and with all the adults in the school. Pupils' personal development is good. They work constructively, co-operating in groups and productively on their own.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory, but a small minority of pupils, are regularly late for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and as a result, pupils work hard, show enthusiasm and achieve well. Skills of literacy and numeracy are promoted effectively in a good range of other subjects and pupils are given many good opportunities to develop these skills successfully. However, opportunities for writing independently and at length remain under-developed. Good and better teaching occurs where teachers have a good level of knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and are able to guide effectively pupils' learning, especially in their acquisition of a good range of basic skills. Teachers use the skilled teaching assistants well and this enables them to meet the needs of all groups of pupils effectively. Pupils who have learning difficulties learn well, due to the good targeted support that they receive from their teachers in partnership with the teaching assistants. Pupils from traveller backgrounds and those with English as an additional language receive good support and make as good progress as other pupils in the school. Teachers have identified pupils who are gifted or talented and provide appropriately, ensuring that they also make good progress. Teachers generally have high expectations for pupils' academic standards and behaviour and manage pupils well. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to try hard to succeed and to work productively at a good pace. Activities are interesting and clearly explained and illustrated. As a result pupils are interested in their lessons and get fully involved. In some lessons which are otherwise judged to be satisfactory overall, or when very occasionally less than satisfactory, teachers talk for too long, lose the attention of pupils and fail to engage them through appropriate challenge in practical activity, such as in a very small number of English or science lessons. The marking of some pupils' work is restricted to positive comments and does not always sufficiently indicate to pupils how they might best improve.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school are good for children in reception. For pupils in Years 1 to 4 they are satisfactory. The curriculum in art and design and information and communication technology is good, but there are weaknesses in the regular provision for history and geography.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Clear procedures are in place to support the identification and assessment of pupils. Individual education plans are carefully and thoughtfully prepared. The targets clearly identify the main priorities and teaching and assessment procedures are carefully arranged.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is good overall and enables these pupils to be fully included in all aspects of school life and make the same levels of progress as other pupils. All pupils from the wide variety of backgrounds are fully included in all learning activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is good. It is satisfactory for their spiritual and cultural development and good for their moral and social development. This provision supports the positive attitudes, good behaviour, good personal development and relationships in school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school shows good levels of care for its pupils. The arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of all its pupils are good, as is the day-to-day personal support and guidance for them. Satisfactory assessment

	procedures are used to inform of pupils' achievement but they are not yet used well enough in other subjects to develop the curriculum.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher shows good leadership skills and has effectively built a team of professionals with a high level of commitment to the school and its pupils. He works well with his senior managers, and together they have established a sound vision regarding the development of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The contribution of the governors in shaping the direction of the school is satisfactory. Some governors know the school and are aware of the areas for development. However, they do not plan the future development and improvement of the school strategically in the long term. Some statutory items are missing from the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is good. The head teacher, key staff and governors work well together to identify the school's strengths and areas for development. The head teacher and curriculum co-ordinators effectively monitor teaching, learning and standards.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. The funds available are appropriately targeted and linked to targets in the school development plan. The governing body, head teacher and administrative officer monitor spending and apply the principles of best value satisfactorily. However, although there is a longer term strategic plan for spending, it is not sufficiently linked to the priorities in the school development plan.

The school has a very good level of staffing for the number of pupils. The adequacy of the learning resources and accommodation is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school; • Their children are making good progress; • The quality of teaching is good; • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or concerns; • The school's expectation that pupils will work hard and do their best; • The school is helping pupils to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no points about which the parents had strong feelings.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' views on the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 2, results were below average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to national data and average when compared with similar schools. The school has kept good pace with the national trend of improvement since 2000 and results in reading and mathematics are catching up with the national average. However, results in writing have fallen in test results over the last few years and the school is aware of the problem with writing. However this represents good achievement, because their attainment on entry is well below average and because an above average proportion of pupils join the school at times other than usual.
2. Reception children achieve well and enter Year 1 having met the requirement of the early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development, and creative development. Although they do well in Numeracy, their overall attainment in mathematics remains below average, as do their language and literacy skills, knowledge and understanding. The inspection findings indicate that attainment in reading and speaking and listening are average at the end of both Years 2 and 4, but pupils' attainment in writing is below average at both. In mathematics and science pupils attain average standards at the end of both Years 2 and 4. Standards in art and design throughout the school, are well above those nationally expected, and in information and communication technology, they are above. Standards in geography and history throughout the school are not as good as those expected for pupils of this age, but standards are in line with national expectations in all other subjects, including religious education, where they are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
3. The achievement of pupils in the Reception and in Years 1 and 2 is good and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons, and achieve well against their individual education plans' targets. This is due to the good differentiated work provided, and to the effective support in classrooms. Pupils with English as an additional language are well provided for and they also make good progress and achieve well. Travellers' children receive good support and achieve well in both academic and social aspects of their education. The school has also identified a number of pupils that are gifted or talented in some aspects of their development. These pupils make equivalent progress as other pupils when standards are compared to their prior attainment.
4. Speaking and listening skills by the end of Years 2 and 4 are at levels that are nationally expected from pupils at this age. Most pupils sit and listen carefully to teachers and to other pupils, showing appropriate levels of understanding. They are confident in speaking in a variety of situations and are beginning to develop a wider vocabulary in both English and other subjects. By Year 4, pupils respond to questions positively and confidently. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in speaking and listening. They are generally confident and clear in their conversation.
5. Pupils throughout the school are satisfactory readers. They enjoy books and the level of their understanding and comprehension enables even younger pupils to talk readily about the story and what they think might happen next. They use competently a good range of strategies for attempting unfamiliar words, for example by sounding out letters or looking for familiar patterns. By Year 4, most pupils are confident and fluent readers. Most pupils have a good reading background and are familiar with a range of authors and can talk about their favourite books, explaining why they like them. Pupils research information in reference books well and this helps them with their topics and improves standards in other subjects that have a strong reading

element. This is an improvement on standards at Year 2 at the previous inspection, when improvement was required. Pupils choose texts appropriately, enjoy reading and can talk with confidence about the parts of a book they liked or disliked, and its author. They regularly use the school library and return books to the correct place. They learn letter and word recognition skills systematically and most have a basic sight vocabulary to recognise words or can build words they don't recognise. At the end of Year 4 pupils read a variety of texts, can understand the classification system within the library and are enthusiastic about reading. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in reading. Standards in writing are below average by the end of Years 2 and 4. As this was an identified area of weakness at the previous inspection there has been insufficient improvement overall, although there has been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels, indicating better progress for average and higher attaining pupils. Basic skills in writing are taught well and pupils develop satisfactory handwriting, basic punctuation and accurate spelling. Most pupils produce neatly formed letters and by the end of Year 4 have neat, joined handwriting. However, after this sound start they do not develop their independent writing well enough and there is an over reliance on writing frames and too few opportunities for sustained and creative writing.

6. At the end of Years 2 and 4 pupils' knowledge and understanding of number is average. All pupils deal with numbers and number operations appropriately and develop a sound knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measure and handling data. Their skills in mental calculation are average. Whilst working across the mathematics and numeracy curriculum, pupils show that they make good progress in developing skills in using and applying their knowledge and understanding to solve problems and work out strategies to answer questions.
7. Standards in science are average at both Years 2 and 4. Pupils in Year 2 confidently make observations and record them appropriately. They have a sound understanding about growth and about why some materials are appropriate to specific purposes. Their observation skills are good, such as when they recognised the change in loudness from different distances. However, some are still unclear about the fairness in testing. By the end of Year 4, pupils make more effective use of measurement in their experiments. By this time they have developed a secure idea of a 'fair test'. Their knowledge and understanding in other aspects of science have developed satisfactorily and are average.
8. Pupils' attainment throughout the school in information and communication technology is above that expected for their ages and the achievement of all pupils is good. Those pupils with special educational needs learn effectively through good support using information and communication technology to consolidate and extend learning. The English keyboard presents no problem to pupils with English as an additional language and even from Reception, they know English sufficiently to enable them to develop good skills and use information and communication technology to extend their learning. All pupils are given the opportunity to develop their skills in all areas of the information and communication technology curriculum. They are able to apply their basic skills and use a good range of technical equipment such as a digital camera, to produce good quality pieces of work, such as, calling cards with identification. Routine skills are good and are used competently by all pupils to improve further their computer skills and knowledge and understanding in a good range of other subjects.
9. Standards in geography and history are below those expected for pupils of this age at the end of both Years 2 and 4. Weak enquiry skills impact upon pupils' knowledge and understanding in both subjects. Knowledge, understanding and skills are weak in geography. In history their knowledge is superficial and few pupils are able to give reasons for their hypotheses, such as why there have been changes in the lives of Victorian people and those alive today. Standards in art and design are a significant strength of the school and are well above average. Pupils at all ages have very well developed art appreciation skills and they use this understanding to influence their own work. This has the effect of raising standards in their creativity and in their technical art skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel secure with the expectations for good behaviour and in the positive attitudes promoted by the school. This contributes significantly to the quality of pupils' behaviour and quality of learning. Parents confirm that their children enjoy school and are very positive about the attitudes and values fostered by the school. This has been maintained since the previous inspection.
11. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. This is a strong feature of the school. Most pupils settle quickly to the tasks set and sustain concentration to the best of their ability. They are able to take turns and share when working in a group. In circle time they listen well to each other, such as when another pupil is explaining something kind that has been said about them. There is a minority of pupils who take longer to settle, but teachers and support staff have good procedures in place to guide pupils' behaviour. The rewards system of green cards and golden time is greatly valued by the pupils. Pupils are keen to attend the extra-curricular activities provided both by outside agencies and school staff. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy the extra support they receive, work hard and are delighted with their achievements. Those pupils with English as an additional language are keen to learn and make positive efforts to achieve well in all aspects of their school life. Pupils from Traveller backgrounds work hard, take part in all activities, mix willingly with other pupils and are an integrated part of their class. They are again, pleased with their good achievement.
12. The quality of relationships is good. Adults and pupils relate well to each other. Adults in school are positive role models for the pupils and results in pupils forming positive relationships of their own. This is shown by their ability to work and play collaboratively, often sharing resources. Most pupils are polite and considerate to one another and to staff and visitors. This results in the schools positive and caring ethos, both in classes and around school.
13. Behaviour around school, at playtimes and lunchtimes and in other school activities such as assemblies is good. There have been no recent exclusions. The school is a calm, orderly place where relationships between pupils and adults is positive. There are occasions when a minority of pupils do not behave sensibly in lessons, but the majority ignore this behaviour and get on with their work. The attitudes of support staff are good and lunchtime behaviour is good due to these positive role models. There is a great emphasis on providing good quality play equipment, which is used well by pupils. They enjoy playtimes and most are purposefully occupied playing co-operatively, in groups or on their own. There was no oppressive behaviour witnessed during the inspections and the school has comprehensive procedures in place for dealing with any type of bullying or harassment. Pupils understand the school rules and the need to keep them. They feel secure in these procedures for dealing with their concerns.
14. The quality of pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Whilst most pupils have positive attitudes to the school community, there were few opportunities for older pupils to demonstrate using their initiative and to develop personal responsibility. Opportunities for independent learning are not consistently planned. When opportunities to work independently were seen, as in an art lesson where pupils were all at different stages of developing their work, pupils were mature and sensible. On World Book Day pupils share text with younger pupils and they enjoy this, but it is only an annual occurrence. In a Literacy lesson one group of pupils uses an independent system for leaving the room within a lesson, a coloured card system, this, however is not widely used in school. Some pupils from Year 3 and 4, tidy the libraries, but do not act as librarians to other pupils. At lunchtimes there is a system of family grouping to encourage the relationships between younger and older pupils, but these kinds of learning opportunities within the curriculum are few.
15. Overall pupils' attendance at school is satisfactory. It has improved since the previous inspection and is now in line with national averages. The school has worked hard with parents to reduce the number of unauthorised absences but whilst significant improvements have been made the rate of

unauthorised absence remains above the national average. The majority of pupils arrive at school punctually. However, as reported in the previous inspection, the continuing late arrival of a significant number of pupils - averaging 3 per cent throughout the year - is unsatisfactory. It disrupts the beginning of the school day, not only for the pupils who arrive late, but also all the other pupils in the class and thus adversely affects their learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching is good and promotes good quality learning. The majority of lessons (three-fifths) seen were good or better. Teaching effectively enables all pupils to achieve well and develop good attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching has improved on that reported at the time of the previous inspection. Teaching is good for children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Taking into account the overall progress of pupils in Years 3 and 4, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, although half the lessons seen during the inspection were good or very good. Parents at the meeting and in the parents' questionnaire were highly supportive of the teachers and were right in their view that the quality of teaching is good.
17. The school makes good provision for children at the Foundation Stage. Their progress is supported by clear and careful planning, and good quality teaching and classroom support. The teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent and is good overall. Members of staff make use of the early learning goals to plan a good quality curriculum. The needs of all children are considered through detailed observations, and subsequent planning of suitable activities to help them learn well. A feature of the good teaching is the time given for children to explore and experiment within a warm secure environment, which gives them confidence to learn for themselves. Very good use of day-to-day assessment of children's progress supports their good achievement. Targets for learning are set and securely based on teachers' assessments. Good teaching enables children to achieve well in all areas of learning. Good improvement has been established since the previous inspection.
18. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Clear targets are set and work is closely linked to their abilities in most lessons. Just occasionally work is not sufficiently different to enable them to achieve well. This is where teachers are unclear about the levels, and the content appropriate to individual needs. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported in class and teachers are very aware of their language and more general learning needs. This reflects the school's commitment to the full educational and social inclusion of all pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants are fully aware of all pupils with English language development needs and give these pupils valuable experience of the English language both formally and informally. The children from Traveller families are also supported well by their teachers, teaching assistants and the support teacher from the local education authority traveller service. The school focuses effectively on their social and educational development and monitors their progress carefully.
19. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach and of their pupils' learning needs. Teachers appreciate the learning needs of all pupils and planning satisfactorily meets the needs of different groups of pupils in all classes through their planning of appropriate activities. The quality of learning opportunities planned in art and design is very good and the activities planned in this subject, such as those in weaving, three-dimensional work and painting are stimulating and challenging and show clearly the teachers' high expectations of their pupils in this subject.
20. Basic skills are taught well across a wide range of subjects, especially in Years 1 and 2. These are satisfactorily consolidated in Years 3 and 4. The development of literacy and numeracy skills plays an important part in the school and all adults promote this effectively but the development of writing remains an issue. Teachers teach basic skills in writing well, but there is not enough opportunity planned for pupils to use and apply these in extended writing. The school has

identified this weakness in standards in writing and is working towards raising standards in this aspect through better teaching. The promotion of pupils' computer skills is a significantly strong feature of the teaching of basic skills. This begins in the Reception and is effectively continued throughout the school, where pupils set a good basis for further work, such as using computers to develop early computer based research skills.

21. Teachers' expectations of their pupils are generally good, particularly in the classes for younger pupils. Teachers are fully aware of the levels that their pupils are at and plan appropriately demanding activities. In science however, expectations are too low. Lesson observations and work scrutiny show the level of expectation for pupils to use enquiry skills relevant to their abilities was too low. On the other hand, expectations of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are high and teachers set tasks that are challenging and stretch pupils to their full ability, including some identified as specifically talented in art and design. Teachers consistently expect high standards of behaviour in lessons. By the time pupils reach Year 4, they are reliable and responsible. In lessons, pupils are given opportunity to work in groups and to be independent. Activities such as those in design and technology, when Year 1 pupils were required to build a vehicle and in art and design are very well managed by teachers, who enable pupils to learn through their own experiences in a controlled and safe environment. Expectations of behaviour are made clear and pupils are aware of how they should behave in class to enable lessons to progress appropriately. In the vast majority of lessons seen, teachers support positive behaviour and attitudes to good effect and achieve good standards of behaviour in their classes.
22. Teachers use a good balance of teacher-led and pupil activity to ensure that pupils' gains in knowledge and understanding are good. In better lessons, a good range of interesting teaching strategies is used, such as use of resources, discussion, evaluation in art and design and design and technology and hands-on experience in information and communication technology. Focused questions are used well in a wide range of lessons, and are effective in ensuring that all pupils are fully involved and that they feel confident to answer questions directed to them. Occasionally in English lessons though, the teacher has too much input and there is insufficient time left for pupils to finish their work. This is a source of frustration for them, as they are keen.
23. Support staff are effective in their work in class and they make a positive contribution to the learning of the pupils in their care. They are fully involved in the planning of the lesson and are well aware of their specific responsibilities. They know the pupils well and have good relationships with them, providing sympathetic but firm guidance. They are equally effective when supporting teachers in their work, working confidently and competently alongside or with groups of pupils independently.

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

24. The quality and range of learning experiences are satisfactory and an appropriate school curriculum has been established. This is similar to the previous inspection. The curriculum is broad and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum as well as personal, social and health education. The school has agreed not to include sex education and drugs awareness as yet, as there are no Year 5 or Year 6 pupils. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
25. The school's curriculum has particular strengths in the provision for art and design and information and communication technology. Standards in these subjects are high, reflecting their good curriculum. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good and ensures that children in the reception class make good progress in all areas of learning. For pupils in Years 1 to 4, provision for history and geography is weak. There is an imbalance in the quality of the taught curriculum in these subjects and there is too little emphasis on the development of enquiry and research skills.

This has an impact unfavourably on standards. The spread of content across the two-year rolling programme also means that some year groups do not study either history or geography sometimes for half the school year. This is unsatisfactory and reduces the quality of learning, leading to low standards in both subjects.

26. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been appropriately implemented and are beginning to be successful in raising standards. Standards in speaking and listening, and in reading, have improved. However, standards in writing remain low. This is partly due to the lack of opportunity for pupils to use their literacy skills in subjects such as history and geography, for example. Numeracy skills are used appropriately in subjects such as information and communication technology, design and technology, and science, leading to good achievement in mathematics across the school, particularly in 'number'.
27. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They benefit from the good leadership of an experienced special needs co-ordinator, who has clear oversight of the provision. This ensures good inclusion for these pupils and helps them to make good progress. Their needs are well met. The co-ordinator collaborates with teachers to identify clear, specific targets, which are effectively monitored. Pupils receive very good help from learning support assistants as they benefit from good differentiated tasks in many lessons. All pupils, including those with special needs, Travellers' children and those from minority ethnic groups, have access to all the activities. However, there is some withdrawal from assemblies for additional literacy work. This is unsatisfactory and inhibits pupils' entitlement to collective worship.
28. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Some good activities have been implemented to enable pupils to discuss their feelings and worries, and to promote healthy eating. However, these have not been fully formalised with a full range of progressive opportunities. The good lunchtime activities, and break time discussions, are a major strength in promoting good personal development and encouraging a positive ethos. The school has identified a small number of pupils who are gifted and talented in a particular area. Staff are aware of their needs and challenges are set to extend their learning in some subjects. This is not yet a secure feature across the curriculum.
29. Good provision is made for extra-curricular enrichment through a rich range of activities, often organised by external providers. The school is currently involved in an initiative to specifically promote the development of out-of-hours learning. For example, the 'Stomp' activities are identified as a real strength by staff and parents and the information and communication technology work has a positive impact on standards in this subject. Sporting activities are provided and are important in helping to support standards in physical education, such as raising standards in tennis, enabling Year 2 boys to take part in County tournaments.
30. The school's links with the community and partner institutions are satisfactory. The Community Centre is part of the school building complex, and is managed by a committee on behalf of the school's governing body. It has a separate entrance and is in daily use by a pre-school play group and other community groups, including a weekly toy library which is run by the school. Senior citizen groups also use the centre and on special occasions they are entertained by the school choir. Cubs, scouts, brownies and beaver groups make regular use of the school's hall and other facilities. Besides the obvious links with the play group in the community centre the school is also a member of the East Northampton cluster group of schools, which organises a wide range of liaison activities and training for staff from all the member schools.
31. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is strength of the school. The ethos of the school reflects the respect that exists between members of the school community. The school puts an emphasis on the sense of community and belonging.
32. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. This is an improvement on the previous report. Assemblies, which include an act of worship, give pupils a chance to reflect on the theme and on

their own experiences related to this. Some pupils were however, not in assembly or arrived late, this meant they missed their statutory entitlement. Opportunities for spiritual development were planned for in art, where music is played for “thinking experiences” and artefacts such as “dream catchers” are constructed. Moments of spiritual awareness were few in the time of the inspection; however, in a Year 3 Literacy lesson there was a moment of wonder when pupils saw a wispy silk scarf pulled from a polished lamp. Some children were looking for the genie. Celebration assemblies promote the concept of “I am Special” and this is also reflected in classrooms and in Circle time class assemblies.

33. Provision for moral development is good. The pupils gain a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. The school uses its School rules to guide children to choices and a secure framework of school and classroom rules is shared with all the members of the school, community. Adults provide good role models and share the consequences of incorrect choices.
34. Provision for social development is good. Teachers and adults in school provide good role models and relationships are good. Pupils play very well on the playgrounds and share equipment willingly. Within lessons they can work in groups collaboratively and the school is very good at ensuring pupils with special educational needs, children from the traveller community and those with English as an additional language are fully included in school life. Certificates on display within school show the schools involvement in looking towards the wider community. Snack time has become a social activity with pupils taking time to listen to one another, listen to music and eat a healthy snack in a calm, sociable atmosphere.
35. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school has begun to promote different cultures through the curriculum, for example, in an assembly pupils sing a song from the Caribbean and enter to a piece of Indian music “Love” by Sharma. Evidence from art lessons on display show work in the style of, and an appreciation of well known artists such as Monet, Van Gogh and Paul Klee. In the entrance hall there is a display about Appleby fair, which is a festival from the Traveller community. It provides artefacts and stimulus for thinking about differences between cultures, but as yet pupils have not had the opportunity to learn about it. The pupils experience visitors, linked to R.E. topics of Judaism and Islam and a puppet theatre group to enrich the curriculum. Pupils visit museums and churches amongst other visits arranged. An adequate range of multi cultural resources including books and artefacts are available support to this aspect of development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The steps taken by the school to ensure pupils’ welfare, health and safety are good and continue as mentioned in the previous inspection report. The school provides a caring environment, where the teachers and all the support staff, including the administration staff and mid-day supervisors, know the pupils and their families very well. Child protection procedures appropriate to this school are in place with the head teacher undertaking the role of designated person, and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. Procedures for dealing with first aid, medicines and accidents, including notifying parents, are well established. Health and Safety risks are reviewed at least annually and remedial actions taken, but without the benefit of a formal checklist, or specialist assistance. Checks by appropriate professional specialists on potentially dangerous equipment take place regularly. Practice evacuations of the buildings take place every term, with the time and any difficulties recorded.
37. The procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality are good, and this is an aspect that the school has worked hard on since the previous inspection, although there remain a small minority of families who do not co-operate fully with the school over these issues. In such cases the school is well supported by the education welfare officer from the local education authority. The absence data for the school has to be viewed with some caution, because of the inclusion of a number of

pupils from traveller families within the statistics. Their legitimate absences are recorded formally as authorised absences and this can distort the statistics, even though the great majority of pupils attend school regularly.

38. The procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. A positive behaviour policy is in place and is applied consistently by all staff throughout the school. Pupils know and understand the school rules, the behaviour that is expected of them and the green-yellow-orange-red card system that the staff operate. They enjoy celebration assemblies on Fridays when they can receive awards or certificates, or alternatively show awards they have won for out of school activities.
39. Procedures for monitoring personal development are good. As reported in the previous inspection, in the foundation stage detailed records are maintained but in the rest of the school no formal on-going records are kept except where they feature in the individual education programmes for pupils with special education needs or if a pupil is experiencing particular behavioural problems. The personal and social section of annual reports shows that teachers know the pupils very well.
40. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. They are good in information and communication technology, but there are insufficient assessment procedures in many other non-core subjects. The data collected in English and mathematics is generally used effectively to match work to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and Traveller pupils. As a result, pupils' achievement in these subjects is improving. In some subjects, such as science, geography and history, assessment information is not used well enough to impact upon planning and this inhibits pupils' achievement. Teachers know their pupils well and this enables good progress to be made overall, even where there are no formal assessment procedures.
41. The school recognises the need to improve the accuracy of assessment and make more effective use of assessment information to raise standards higher but has been slow to implement whole school moderation of standards in subjects to inform teaching. Recording of achievement that is above predicted targets is not sufficiently refined to clearly support and accelerate learning. The school correctly identifies the need to analyse assessment information by racial group and to improve its practice in communicating outcomes to staff, parents and the governing body.
42. Analysis of whole school statutory and non statutory National Curriculum test results provides the school with important data on which to base secure judgements on areas for development, such as writing. Analysis at an individual pupil level supports the setting of pupils' targets and identifying those who need extra support or extension work. The very good practice in reception and in Year 1, where teachers note evaluations of individual pupils learning in all areas of the curriculum to inform their short and medium term plans is inconsistent across the school. Pupils' academic progress from analysis of data of half termly assessments in core subjects helps teachers clarify how well individual pupils' targets have been met.
43. Assessment procedures for pupils with SEN are very good. Their targets are very well monitored to ensure that they are making consistent progress over time. Annual reviews are in line with the New Code of Practice. The progress of pupils with pupils with English as an additional language is carefully monitored. Traveller pupils' progress is carefully assessed by class teachers and the teachers from the Traveller Support Unit.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents' views of the school are very good. In meeting parents at school, informally and at the parents meeting, and from responses to the questionnaire there was very little criticism. Parents greatly appreciate the caring ethos of the school, the standards that pupils achieve, and the good behaviour and discipline that they learn.

45. The information provided by the school to parents is unsatisfactory overall. The general information provided through a series of frequent letters is satisfactory, and includes all relevant information about future events and dates for the calendar. The Prospectus is brief, and neither it, nor the Governors Annual Report, includes all items that are mandatory. A key issue in the previous report was for these formal documents to comply with statutory guidance and this has still not happened.
46. Parents feel able to approach the school at any time to understand how their children are progressing, and formal consultation evenings are held in the autumn and spring terms. At the end of the summer term parents receive the annual reports on individual pupils. These reports are satisfactory: they describe what the pupil has done but not always what progress has been made or the standards achieved, and very little comment on things that are not so good or need working on; there is a commentary on personal development; except in the foundation stage, there are no targets for further improvement specified.
47. Links with parents of pupils with special educational needs are good. They receive copies of individual education plan targets regularly and are invited to comment on progress made each term. There is good liaison between the school and the parents of Traveller children through the Traveller support teacher who works in the school.
48. Parents' involvement in the life and work of the school is satisfactory. They support the pupils very well in their homework assignments and, particularly in the earlier years, through reading with their children and completing reading record books. Only a very small number of parents regularly assist in classrooms. There is a very high level of support for any special events, including productions and sports day. Through the school's Home School Association parents have been very successful in raising substantial sums, which have contributed most recently to providing a modern sound system for the main hall and some of the good range of out-door play equipment.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The quality of leadership and management of the school has been maintained since the previous inspection. The head teacher provides effective leadership of the school staff and pupils and he has very successfully built an effective team that supports the good achievement of the pupils in the school's care. The governors play a supportive role and the overall leadership and management are satisfactory. The head teacher carries out his management responsibilities effectively and financial planning is still good in the short term. The head teacher and the governing body have addressed the key issues identified in the previous report satisfactorily. Standards in reading have been improved, but writing still remains an issue. Standards in religious education are better, curriculum weaknesses have been dealt with effectively. Roles and responsibilities are now clearer, and curriculum co-ordinators know better what is happening in their subjects. However, the school development plan still needs improvement and items are still omitted from the governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus. Parents are pleased with the leadership and management of the school.
50. The school has a positive ethos through which all staff, adults and pupils are valued. Its aims are reflected satisfactorily in its work and are shared by staff, governors and parents. The school is aware of the need to consider inclusion in its provision. Different initiatives in the school development plan and in its practice indicate the school is providing for this whilst still developing and refining its provision. The school has a need to be aware because of the different groups in school, special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language, and traveller pupils. There are appropriate action and development plans, which demonstrate the school's awareness and willingness to develop. These include for example, accessibility plans, the action

plan for meeting the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and for raising the multicultural profile in the school.

51. One of the head teacher's strengths is his delegation of responsibility and effective team building. The head teacher has very definite views on the value of staff development. He has effectively created leadership and management opportunities for staff at all levels, including teaching assistants. There is a commitment to consult with all staff as part of the school's ethos and the consultation process creates a sense of involvement and ownership for all adults working in the school. This also creates good opportunities for staff to be involved in evaluation of their effectiveness and that of the school and effectively addresses the issue raised at the time of the previous inspection. There is a commitment to extend the professional skills and knowledge of the staff. This comes through in staff being given the opportunity to lead their own initiatives and staff are well prepared to take on responsibility. In the recent past, both the head teacher and the deputy have been seconded to support other schools in weaknesses. In both instances, other senior staff took on the role of the deputy head teacher. There is a wide range of responsibility, both within the management structure and in subject responsibility including a post for data analysis and tracking pupils' progress. Special educational needs provision is well led and effectively organised. However, not enough monitoring of withdrawal for these pupils from lessons and the daily acts of collective worship has taken place. This sometimes impacts on pupils' equality of opportunity.
52. Monitoring of lessons by the head teacher and by representatives of school management has helped to raise the quality of teaching. There is an annual programme of lesson observations and these focus on specific aspects and evaluate how well teaching is progressing. Strengths are identified and recorded as are areas for further development. Further observation takes place through the school's performance management procedures, which are very good and contribute significantly to the school's monitoring process. Data from optional and statutory National Curriculum tests is analysed carefully by the teacher with this responsibility and findings are presented to the senior management team, which decides what course of action needs to be taken to remedy any identified weaknesses.
53. The school's priorities for development were arrived at through self-evaluation involving all staff and the governing body. They are clear and well thought out. Priorities give a clear indication of the direction in which the school is heading and are shared so that all staff feel they have ownership of them. The vision for the future of the school focuses on standards and other matters that are appropriate to the pupils at this time, including extending the age range from September onwards. Although this is an important feature of the school at present, development to prepare for this does not dominate, but is impressively held in good balance with the needs of the pupils currently in school. However, the school development plan is for the current year only and this is a weakness, particularly in this school's circumstances with a change of age range and a move into other premises imminent. There are documents that identify the school's plans for this change and the school is aware of their commitments in the near future. However, these plans and intentions are not brought together and there is no single, clear written overview of how the school will develop in the near future.
54. The governors continue to support satisfactorily the head teacher and the senior management team in their work and there is ongoing consultation. There are structures in place for the governors to build a sound understanding of the school. The governing body has developed this through full governing body and committee meetings, individual links with the school, governors each having their own specific roles and responsibility which some of them work to. Governors who work in the school or in the attached community centre have good first-hand knowledge of the school. This has resulted in them being able to contribute to the setting of relevant aims for the school, to contribute to the compiling and monitoring of an appropriate school development plan with relevant targets in the short term. However, governors are not sufficiently pro-active in the long-term strategic management and development of the school.

55. The school makes satisfactory use of its financial and other resources. The head teacher has ensured that classes have favourable pupil teacher ratios. The finance committee is led satisfactorily by its dedicated chairperson who has a sound understanding of the school's financial priorities. The committee acts as a critical friend such as in asking what the impact on standards is of financial commitments. However, because the school development plan is in the short-term, financial planning does not include projections of how spending patterns might develop beyond this year. This is a weakness. The school has used its specific grants well, as for instance those providing for pupils with special educational needs. The school administration officer secretary makes a very good contribution to the day-to-day financial management and general running of the school. This enables the head teacher to focus on educational matters rather than administration. Both she and the staff use new technology well in the course of their duties, and the co-ordinator and teaching assistants in information and communication technology have also ensured that pupils are now using the computer resources effectively.
56. The professional development of staff is a strong area of management and there are clear links with the school priorities in the school development plan and the performance management process. At Ecton Brook not only the senior management team and teachers but support and administrative staff enthusiastically strive towards greater effectiveness. The November 2001 Investors in People Award gave due recognition to the way in which the school encourages continuous staff development. Better emphasis has been placed upon monitoring and evaluation systems for curriculum co-ordinators to focus on standards in subjects and to ensure that pupils of all abilities and ethnic groups have equality of opportunity. There are very good strategies to prepare staff to undertake new roles and for inducting new members into the school. The school makes a valuable contribution to the training of student teachers. Staff are valued and enjoy the shared team approach which contributes well to the very low absence and turnover of teaching and non-teaching staff. The stability and the good ratio of staff for the number of pupils in the school, impacts favourably on pupils' learning and enthusiasm for school.
57. Opportunities for professional development of support staff impacts highly on their commitment and ability to enhance the progress of the groups of pupils they support and application of effective management strategies of pupils who find difficulty in concentrating. They have a good balance of experience and specific skills such as in the teaching of speech and language, which are valued well deployed and appraised by the school. School management recognises their professionalism for example, by including those who support pupils with special educational needs in pupil reviews. The school administrator capably manages a significant amount of her own work so that she and members of her team provide very efficient support to the school. Mid-day supervisors positive play training ensures that the mid-day runs smoothly. The caretaker and cleaners take pride in providing a welcoming environment where pupils feel secure and valued.
58. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall. The main building is light and airy with classrooms that are adequate to deliver the curriculum. Good use is made of the other shared areas throughout the building. The main hall is well used throughout the day for a variety of purposes. The grounds are extensive for play during dry weather, and the hard play areas allow a small football pitch as well as room for all the other pupils to play, whilst there is also a separate outdoor play area for the reception children. The premises have been well looked after, cleaned to a high standard, and enhanced by attractive displays, including examples of pupils' work. The unsatisfactory aspect of the schools accommodation is the use of demountable temporary classrooms in the grounds for some of the older pupils. Besides lacking basic facilities such as running water and toilets, use of such facilities is not conducive to an integrated school community. This type of accommodation will not be needed in a year's time when the school moves to a new site.
59. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall and there are sufficient resources in all subjects to meet the demands of the curriculum. Resources are particularly good in art and design, where a

very good range of visual and tactile art, craft and design materials enhances the learning of the pupils and helps to keep standards high. Resources are good in religious education, where a good range of artefacts helps pupils to develop their understanding of faiths and cultures that are different from their own. There is a slight weakness in resources for information and communication technology. The current ratio of computers to pupils is 1:14, which is below the national average. However, some good software enhances pupils' experiences and helps them to make good gains in learning and teachers make good use of the resources available. In all other subjects, resources are satisfactory and are used appropriately to enhance learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. To improve the standards and the quality of education, the governing body, head teacher and staff should:
1. Improve standards in writing by improving opportunities for independent and sustained writing in English and in other subjects.
(Paragraphs 1, 5, 76)
 2. Raise standards in history and geography by:
 - Improving curriculum planning and delivery to ensure that basic skills are developed progressively.
 - Using pupils' basic skills to effectively broaden their knowledge and understanding.
 - Rigorously monitoring improved provision and outcomes.(Paragraphs 9, 25)
 3. Improve the use of assessment of pupils' work to improve the quality of the curriculum, to improve overall planning and establish consistent practice across all subjects.
(Paragraphs 40, 41, 42, 43, 78, 93, 104, 108, 113, 136)
 4. Improve school development planning so that it clearly identifies priorities and development over a longer period of time, brings together all plans for the school's future and guides more effectively school improvement in the long term.
(Paragraphs 49, 53, 54, 55)
 5. Meet statutory requirements with specific reference to:
 - Ensuring all mandatory items are included in the governors' annual report to parents and in the school prospectus.
 - Withdrawal of pupils from the daily acts of collective worship.(Paragraphs 27, 49, 51)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	4	21	21	1	0	0
Percentage	8	8	41	41	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	216
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	55

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	35
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of The end of Year 2 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of The end of Year 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	21	20	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	12	18
	Girls	18	18	20
	Total	33	30	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (77)	73 (85)	93 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	18	17
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	33	38	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (79)	93 (92)	90 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
183	0	0
0	0	0
9	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
6	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0

No ethnic group recorded

3

0

0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.28
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	220

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a
Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
	£
Total income	532030
Total expenditure	553718
Expenditure per pupil	2450
Balance brought forward from previous year	52500
Balance carried forward to next year	30812

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	216
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	22	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	77	21	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	31	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	71	26	3	0	0
The teaching is good.	79	19	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	25	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	15	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85	15	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	61	36	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	74	21	3	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	77	21	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	68	25	3	0	4

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

61. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, and they make good progress in all areas of learning. This is due to mainly good teaching in the reception classes, and to the good range of exciting activities provided. Currently, 40 children are placed in the two classes and they have many opportunities to join in with each other and play together. This is an improvement on the previous inspection's judgements.
62. On entry to reception at the age of four, many children are well below expected levels in all areas of learning, particularly in communication skills, language and literacy. By the time they leave the reception class and enter Year 1, children have attained levels broadly the same as other children across the Country in all areas, except in their communication, language and literacy skills, which remain below expectations, and in some aspects of mathematical development, which remain just below expected levels. Overall, however, children make good progress in their lessons and achieve well.
63. The indoor accommodation is appropriate to children's learning needs, with two small class bases for group activities and stories, and a large joint play area for the more creative aspects of the school day. The outdoor accommodation is satisfactory. Children have free access to outdoor activities and play, enabling independent decisions and making choices. However, there is no covered outdoor area for wet weather or winter play. This is a weakness that has been identified and plans are rightly in place to rectify the situation. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Provision for the personal, social and emotional development of children is good. They make good progress in all aspects of this area of learning due to good teaching and exciting activities. In a lesson where children were making sandwiches for 'Snow White's Party', with fillings which they had previously suggested, they showed good understanding of routines and a willingness to tackle problems. Their contributions to the discussion activity at the beginning of the lesson were valued and taken seriously. Children worked well together, sharing resources and making their own decisions.
65. Oral discussions, often at the beginning of the day, enable children to talk about their own feelings and worries. These are sensitively dealt with. The very good relationships in the two reception classes encourage children to talk about themselves, their homes and their experiences. Children behave well in and around school, are polite to each other and to adults, and take turns well. For example, they show good understanding of 'how many' children can play at the sand and water areas, and wait for a space patiently. They choose appropriate activities and help to clear up any mess. Just occasionally, children wander around the large, joint play areas, hovering on the brink of an activity, but their confidence to join in is developing well.

Communication, language and literacy

66. Provision for the development of children's communication, language and literacy skills is good and children make good progress in this area. Each aspect is planned for and the good discussion periods at the beginning of the day, and before break times, promote confidence and competence. Children are valued as speakers. This encourages them to offer opinions and interact with adults. Provision of creative play activities, such as an 'opticians' and a 'post office' enables them to talk to others, initiate conversations and answer when spoken to. Children enjoy these play activities and 'chatter' freely to each other during their turns.

67. Two children were observed making sandwiches for a party. They were discussing the kind of filling Snow White might like. "I like jam, but I think Snow White would like Marmite", commented one child, showing good awareness of grammatical structure, including verb tenses. Other children, however, have difficulty completing whole sentences and are reluctant communicators. Staff quickly identify any such problem, and gently encourage these children to extend their language.
68. Children enjoy sharing books and listening to stories. They enjoy literacy lessons and listen well. They are beginning to recall events and characters. For example, they have been learning about the story of Snow White through listening, using puppets and through a range of creative activities. They can comment on the sequence of the story and predict what might happen next. They have not yet achieved the Early Learning Goals in reading or writing, and often their use of vocabulary, use of grammatical sentence structure and language is immature. Children are beginning to write simple words and phrases, however, and a few higher achieving children use their phonic knowledge to write simple, regular words. However, the majority of children have some difficulties with writing, but they are ascribing marks to their pictures, describing the meaning, and beginning to use writing as a means of recording. Good provision for many different writing activities is helping to improve children's awareness of writing, and eagerness to improve.

Mathematical development

69. Provision for mathematical development is good. The practical approaches used are a major strength and a key feature of the good progress that children make in lessons. Teachers have good skills and knowledge in this area and make very good use of resources to ensure that teaching is always good. For example, in one lesson, children were learning the language of subtraction and undertaking simple problems to extend their skills. The teacher made very good use of resources linked to the current literacy project of Snow White, to keep children focused and help them understand the aspect. They were able to work out answers to questions such as, "If the seven dwarfs were in the house, and four went into the garden, how many dwarfs were left in the house?" Because the teacher modelled the question, using real objects, almost all children succeeded very quickly with this task. Daily counting activities promotes good recollection of number names and recognition of numerals to 10 and beyond. In one lesson, children were able to count in twos to 10 very accurately, and a few could count in tens to one hundred. Children show that, by the time they enter Year 1, many will have reached the Early Learning Goals for number and calculation, and the others aspects of mathematics, such as shape and space remain below expectations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. Provision for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world is also good and leads to children achieving the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. This is because a good range of activities is available daily, and some good opportunities to ensure that children develop their exploration and observation skills are planned. Good teaching focuses on developing children's experience of the wider world. For example, children have explored the school environment and found 'bugs' to observe. They have visited a Garden Centre, where they planted sunflower seeds. Also, they visited a post office, and, after buying stamps, posted letters they had written, and watched as the postman opened the post box, put the letters into his sack, and then took them off in his van. Children celebrate different cultures through stories and activities, such as making friendship bracelets and learning about the different faiths and cultures of some of their peers. A good early start is made to develop children's computer skills and this establishes a good base on which they are able to confidently build later in the school. This is because of the high expectations of the teachers, one of whom is the information and communication technology curriculum co-ordinator and has the teaching skills and knowledge to develop children's computer skills effectively.

Physical development

71. Provision for physical development is good overall, with aspects of very good provision and some excellent teaching, leading to standards in line with the Early Learning Goals and, sometimes, standards that are high. For example, children improve their movement skills through many exciting activities. They use pedals to ride bikes and trolleys, and push and pull each other on toys in the playground. Children can run, jump, throw and catch accurately. In one lesson, they were working with their parents and carers to improve their physical skills. This led to high achievement as they worked really hard to make good use of space, improve their fitness, learn about the impact of exercise and have fun! A weakness in the provision is the lack of an outdoor covered play space. This inhibits physical development when weather is unsuitable.

Creative development

72. Provision for creative development is good and some good teaching leads to children achieving the Early Learning Goals and making good progress over time. Children were observed using pastels to draw fruit. They made sensible decisions about what they wanted to draw, chose their own colours and undertook careful observations. They worked hard to achieve some good outcomes and were challenged effectively by the task. The array of good paintings around the classrooms shows clear evidence of the good range of learning activities. Children's cultural awareness is fostered through art as they paint pictures, using vivid colours in the style of the artist Kandinsky.

ENGLISH

73. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were below the national expectations. A key issue for action was to raise levels of attainment in English, especially in reading and writing. Since then, good progress has been made by pupils, in reading and speaking and listening. By the end of Year 4 pupils have made satisfactory progress. Pupils are now meeting the national expectations in these areas. Standards in writing however, are still below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. As this was a weakness identified in the previous report improvement in this aspect of literacy has been unsatisfactory. All pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils with English as an additional language and from Traveller backgrounds, achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 and 4.
74. Pupils are given many good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and by the end of Year 2 most pupils sit and listen carefully to teachers. They are confident in speaking in a variety of situations and are beginning to develop a wider vocabulary. In a Year 2 literacy lesson on alliteration, pupils were given the opportunity to have a "talking partner" to develop ideas for an alliterative poem. By the end of Year 4 pupils are able to respond to questions about a persuasive text. However, despite some satisfactory opportunities for speaking and listening at snack time, there are few planned opportunities for further developing their spoken skills through independent learning and drama. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in speaking and listening. They are supported by the Northampton scheme for developing their language acquisition and through good planning and delivery, pupils achieve well. Likewise, pupils with special educational needs and those from a Traveller background, make good progress in acquiring satisfactory speaking and listening skills.
75. Pupils reading skills are developing steadily. At the end of Year 2 and Year 4, standards are in line with national expectations. This is an improvement on standards at the previous inspection. The school has made a concerted effort to improve reading standards. Pupils choose texts with confidence and enjoy reading. They talk confidently about the parts of a book and its author. The well-stocked library has been successful in helping to foster pupils' interest in reading. Most pupils have a basic sight vocabulary and can build phonically regular words. They are taught the

skills of letter and word recognition, and a variety of phonic skills, systematically. By the end of Year 4 pupils read a variety of texts confidently, can understand the classification system within the library and are enthusiastic about reading. The school has successfully involved parents with the development of reading. Parents are encouraged to hear their child read at home at least four times a week and to record this in a reading log. This has been a successful effort and has had a positive impact on standards. In addition, pupils are rewarded for their efforts with certificates in a special assembly. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in reading. The school has an appropriate range of texts and supplementary material to help these pupils develop their reading skills.

76. Standards in writing by the end of Years 2 and 4 are below national expectations. Analysis of test results shows that the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels compares with the national average percentage. However, the higher proportion achieving the lower levels depresses the results and brings overall attainment down. Higher attaining pupils are keeping up with the national trend of improvement. As this was an identified area of weakness at the previous inspection improvement is therefore unsatisfactory overall. Pupils in Year 1 begin emergent writing and use phonic skills to spell. They develop well-formed letters. However, after this start, although pupils are offered a range of writing styles to develop their writing, there is an over reliance on writing frames and too few opportunities for sustained and independent creative writing. In Years 3 and 4 teachers' subject knowledge and pupils' basic skills are good but the time constraints of the current lesson organisation and the use of worksheets leads to unfinished work and a lack of productivity. There are missed opportunities for extending the range of writing in other subjects, for example by writing reports, accounts and stories in History, Geography, Science and information and communication technology. Although pupils have a writing target sheet within their literacy books, teachers' marking is rarely used to inform pupils of their progress and how they could improve their work. Most pupils produce neatly formed letters and by the end of Year 4 have neat, joined handwriting. Pupils with English as a second language are supported appropriately for writing. Most takes place within class with differentiated work if appropriate. Some pre-teaching takes place for these pupils, where new vocabulary is introduced to aid understanding.
77. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. The National Literacy Strategy has been fully implemented and teachers effectively plan from this. In the more successful lessons teachers use good questioning techniques to consolidate learning. In a Year 1 lesson using an information text to sequence the days of the week, the teacher used a wrapped present to hold the pupils interest and to get them to ask their own questions. There was also a cross curriculum link when the present revealed a photograph of Barnaby Bear and the pupils began to ask him where he had been. In less successful lessons teachers are sometimes inflexible in the use of time and activities are ended before pupils have completed their work. This is frustrating for them and lessens their sense of satisfaction. The attitude of pupils is mostly good but at times some became passive after long periods of listening. The subject co-ordinator is aware of these areas for development and has identified them in the school development plan.
78. The co-ordination and management of English are satisfactory. There has been some monitoring of the subject and the co-ordinator is aware of the weaknesses in writing and the lack of opportunities for sustained writing. She has identified these areas for development but has had little opportunity to implement her ideas. She has identified the need to update the planning for Years 3, 4 and 5 so that there is no repeating of the same work due to mixed year groups and sets. There is a system of assessment in place but this is not consistent across the school and does not always lead to the evaluation and adapting of plans to improve learning. The co-ordinator is also responsible for the co-ordination of support of pupils with English as a second language. She works effectively and supportively with the teaching assistant to assess, deliver and monitor effective support.

MATHEMATICS

79. Results in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 taken by seven year olds were below average when compared to the schools nationally, but average when compared to similar schools. There was a good match between the proportion of pupils in thy school gaining the higher levels 2A, B level 3, but the proportion who only achieved the lower levels was greater than the national average percentage. This had the effect of depressing the results and reflects the well above average proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs. Results in tests at the end of Year 2 have improved at a pace better than the national trend of improvement since 2000. This improvement has continued into this year, and standards in the current Year 2 are average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 3 and 4, and by the end of Year 4, standards remain as expected nationally for pupils of this age. This is similar to judgements made at the time of the previous inspection, when standards at the end of Years 2 and 4 were as expected for pupils nationally.
80. In Year 1, pupils consolidate basic number skills and knowledge, and achieve well in developing problem solving skills, and in widening their knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures. In these aspects of mathematics, pupils gain a sound knowledge, but the development of their skills in using and applying this knowledge is sometimes held back by limited literacy skills. Pupils' mathematics books show that they tell the time well and measure length and weight accurately using appropriate standard units, reading dials and scales accurately. Pupils know the names of a suitable range of two and three-dimensional shapes, and can match pictures to names accurately. They use coins accurately to make up sums of money and write these down, placing the decimal point in the right place.
81. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed a sound understanding of numbers and simple number operations, but they find some difficulty in applying their numbers skills to solving simple number problems. Pupils of average attainment understand numbers satisfactorily and by now are able to perform simple multiplication and division sums, as well as addition and subtraction. For the lower attaining pupils, numeracy skills develop well, but remain at a basic level, such as doubling and halving when multiplying and dividing. Higher attaining pupils have much better developed skills and knowledge. They work competently with numbers in sequences, and spot number patterns quickly and accurately. They have a good understanding of place value in numbers, sometimes up to 1000, and they use this confidently when deciding the order of a group of numbers.
82. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 3 and 4, but they progress well in improving their problem solving skills. For example, when the teacher asked pupils how many taxis would be needed to transport 10 children, if three could be taken in each cab, pupils correctly calculated that four cabs would be needed, showing effective applying of problem solving skills. They develop sound strategies to solve problems through analysing a question to decide what is needed, analysing what information they are given and developing strategies, using the information, to solve the problem. This is good mathematical technique and forms the basis for further good development in this aspect of mathematics. All groups of pupils achieve well and the school's commitment to inclusive education ensures that all are given good opportunities to develop their skill, knowledge and understanding of mathematics. In lessons seen all pupils, including those with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils from traveller backgrounds, were fully involved and made as good progress as the whole group.
83. Pupils' attitudes towards their work are good. Teachers make their expectations clear and they support their pupils' behaviour well through recognising and acknowledging positive attitudes and good behaviour. Pupils respond well to interesting activities and challenge. They show positive attitudes, and are keen to take part in question and answer sessions, although some occasionally lack confidence when tasks and questions are more challenging. Pupils stay on task and listen

attentively, so that they are clear about what they have to do and what is expected. Most maintain good levels of interest over time and behave well. This enables teachers to concentrate on teaching. Pupils get on well together.

84. The quality of teaching is good and supports the overall good progress made by pupils in Years 1 and 2, and the good quality learning in Years 3 and 4, especially in developing skills in using and applying their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of mathematics is good. This enables them to give clear instructions to their pupils, who know what they are expected to do and confidently move from one part of the lesson to the next. Teachers have good questioning skills which they use well to probe and develop pupils' knowledge and clarify understanding. Basic skills are taught well and the vocabulary that supports the topic is often cleared at the beginning of the session, so pupils have a better understanding of what is being said. Numeracy skills are taught well so standards in numeracy are often better than some other aspects of mathematics, particularly lower down in the school. However, teachers are aware of this and it is rectified this by the end of Year 4. The use of teaching assistants is good and they are clear about their role in the class and are confident with pupils. They are very skilled and play a significant part in the success that these pupils have in learning mathematics.
85. Teachers' expectations of work are often high, but occasionally only satisfactory. Planned tasks are appropriate and achievable. Expectations of pupils' behaviour and courtesy are much higher. Teachers mostly lead by example and respectfully deal with any inappropriate behaviour or attitude. They recognise and praise good behaviour and progress. Where this does not happen, and the teacher takes a more negative approach, behaviour deteriorates. Teachers use a satisfactory range of methods that is consistent with the National Numeracy Strategy; oral mental maths, focused group work and pupils working independently or collaboratively. These methods are successful where good behaviour is established and often pupils work well without the direct supervision of the teacher. The management of pupils is good. Almost always, teachers rigorously apply the school's agreed strategies for the management of pupils' behaviour and the pupils willingly comply with the teachers' wishes.
86. The school has implemented the National Numeracy strategy well in terms of planning, teaching, development of resources, and the introduction of planning, supported by a commercial scheme, to match pupils' levels of attainment. This is having an impact on raising standards in numeracy, which are now often as expected by the time pupils leave school. Co-ordination of the subject and its development over recent years are good. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has identified appropriate priorities for development, which are based on identified weaknesses in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. There is at present no structured plan for the development of mathematics in other subjects such as science or geography.

SCIENCE

87. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 4 are average. Inspection confirms teacher assessment that, in comparison with the national average, the proportion of pupils who attain national expectations by the age of seven is average. The proportion who attain above this is below average. This is partly because pupils have insufficient opportunities to measure and present their results using graphs to identify patterns of cause and effect. Standards are similar to those observed at the previous inspection.
88. The school gives due emphasis to group investigative work and this provides suitable opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in recording their work. This is better than at the time of the previous inspection. By the age of seven they now record what they think might happen and offer explanations for what they observe. By the end of Year 4, higher attaining pupils write at length

to offer correct scientific reasons about what factors affected their investigations and caused changes. Pupils of all abilities regardless of ethnicity or gender, achieve well because of their involvement in purposeful practical activities. Because of the good support they receive from pre-teaching sessions and well labelled resources pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs develop the key vocabulary well, for example about plants, materials and light and shadow.

89. By the age of seven pupils are confident in making comparisons and record observations of differences on appropriate charts. They recognise the needs of green plants for healthy growth but are uncertain about how the tests carried out to look for growth are 'fair'. They understand that materials are selected for purposes relevant to their properties and this is extended well in art and design activities. Pupils have a good understanding of physical science. From different distances, they recognise the change in loudness of a sound. They observe and predict that cars travel longer distances when rolled down steeper slopes. Higher attaining pupils have not yet used standard measures to record and graph what they observe.
90. By Year 4, pupils make more effective use of measurement, sometimes repeating tests to improve accuracy for example, when timing dropping parachutes. Many have a secure idea of a 'fair test'. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 make effective use of the school grounds to identify places where and how small animals live. They correctly use their knowledge to predict conditions woodlice prefer when predicting which conditions they move to in a vivarium and how worms behave in a wormery. The majority of pupils use correct terms when comparing the rate of absorbency of different paper and in their written explanations about forces correctly recognise that the size or shape of objects and the texture of surfaces affect the rate of movement. They are able to say how they might improve their investigations. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding about how light travels and can be blocked to form shadows of different sizes.
91. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and carefully plan for pupils' success in carrying out activities. Teachers sometimes have too low an expectation of pupils' ability to use their enquiry skills. One lesson was unsatisfactory because the science content of the lesson was insufficient. In the lessons where teaching was judged as 'good' the work was better matched to different abilities within the class. Effective planning was clearly shared with teaching assistants so that they were enabled to support all groups of pupils well. Clear teacher demonstration during the introduction to lessons guided pupils to carry out tasks methodically. This enhanced their understanding of difficult ideas such as, how the size of a shadow changes. Generally, the marking of pupils work is insufficiently informative about how well the pupils are doing. There are good examples in Year 2 however, where marking recognises what pupils have achieved and includes questions intended to further extend pupils' thinking and knowledge.
92. Good class management effectively meets the needs of pupils of different needs in most lessons. Because pupils' curiosity is stimulated well, they enjoy science investigations and co-operate well in small groups. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs gain in confidence because pre-teaching and practical experiences develop their understanding of new words and they are fully integrated into lessons. They learn well because support staff use probing questions that inspire pupils of either low or high ability to raise their own questions and to find out information for themselves. In two of the lessons in the infant classes although pupils listened well and were keen to talk the pace of learning was too slow because pupils' were inactive too long. In some lessons in Years 3 and 4 the content was too high for lower attaining pupils and many of them became confused. Higher and average attaining pupils generally respond well and are keen to offer written and oral explanations.
93. Leadership and management of the subject are both satisfactory. The head teacher provides good guidance and support to ensure that science enquiry is included in planning and in classroom practice. Insufficient monitoring takes place against clear achievement criteria to track pupils'

progress as they move through the school. The school has correctly identified continuity in pupils' enquiry skills as an area for improvement in the school development plan.

ART AND DESIGN

94. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards that are well above those expected nationally standards by the end of the year. This represents a very good level of achievement throughout Years 1 and 2. This continues throughout Years 3 and 4 and very high standards are maintained. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language and traveller pupils achieve well throughout the school. The good standards observed in the previous inspection have been improved upon. Art has a high profile in the school and is valued as an important part of the curriculum. Combined with the curriculum co-ordinators enthusiasm and the very good skills of many teachers, this ensures high standards are achieved throughout the school.
95. Pupils also value art. This begins at a very early age when Year 1 pupils are given the skills to appreciate a wide range of work from famous artists. In an excellent lesson, pupils considered two paintings on a similar theme, one by El Greco and one by David Hockney. Quite remarkably, they expressed their feelings towards the two paintings, which showed a level of appreciation of art that is very rare in pupils so young. They expressed fear, feelings of peace and a desire to "be there". They included the use of colour in their explanations and referred to the mood that the paintings inspired. Later in the lesson, they listened to two pieces of music, which they matched to the paintings. This lesson demonstrated the depth of these pupils' appreciation of art and this knowledge and understanding, forms the basis of their practical work, which is also of a very high quality.
96. Pupils develop a very good range of skills from a very early age and, in particular, the ability to use their imaginations creatively. They learn also to use colour effectively and choose the combination of colours for maximum effect. At the time of the inspection, Year 1 pupils were working on a topic on weaving. They were supplied with a wide range of unusual items such as bicycle wheels, plate racks, garden hanging baskets, goal posts with netting and a wide range of other items that could be used as weaving looms. Initial inspiration for weaving came from a print of a large scale weave by a famous artist and pupils used their vision of this in producing weavings with high levels of creativity and thought. Pupils used their knowledge of colour to select materials on tones of one colour or those which contrasted. They thought very carefully what the finished product would look like and carried a vision in their heads, which they patiently worked towards. They showed artistic skills and talents that were well above those expected for pupils of this age. Year 3 and 4 pupils work on three-dimensional models of characters from Harry Potter books during the inspection. They used modroc, bottles and newspaper very effectively to make figurines, which are carefully painted to resemble these characters. This work also utilised a wide range of art and design skills, which pupils carefully and patiently applied to their high-quality models.
97. The use of paint is equally effective at all ages. A recent project on painting flowers clearly showed the high level of appreciation of shape, form and texture. They use paint well, with good use of tone to give their paintings depth. The use of colour is very effective and they accurately capture the depth of colour in different flowers. Poppies were painted in vivid red and lilies in a very accurate shade of purple. Green foliage is accurately captured in all this flower paintings and the shape and form of all flowers is very accurate. Clear progress can be seen in the full display in the hall, which highlights the development of pupils' skills as they get older.
98. The quality of teaching is very good overall and much of it is excellent, particularly in Year 1. Teachers show a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and develop pupils' skills extremely well through good use of demonstration, discussion and explanation, combined with excellent opportunities to appreciate the work of artists, and to be creative. Work throughout the

school and teachers' planning indicate an emphasis on the understanding and appreciation of the work of different artists. As a result of very effective management of pupils in lessons, attitudes and behaviour in class are of high quality and pupils work with care and concentration to produce high-quality outcomes. They take pride in the work they produce, because teachers use praise well, but only when it is deserved. Work on display indicates that the emphasis on producing work of good quality prevails throughout the school. The use of an art program is used to satisfactorily support the work produced in art and design on the computers.

99. Teaching and learning of art and design is further enhanced by very good initiatives set up by the co-ordinator and the enriched curriculum planned, which is very good. The curriculum co-ordinator ensures that displays are of a high standard and regularly changes the prints and artefacts on display around the school to stimulate interest and appreciation of the work of different artists. Leadership and management of the subject are excellent and the high profile given to the subject supports very high attainment and achievement. Class teachers use the very good scheme of work effectively to plan their lessons and assess pupils work at the end of each unit. In this way they receive very good guidance and support from the curriculum co-ordinator. The co-ordinator monitors the planning and the pupils' work to ensure very good achievement over time is maintained. Resources for art and design are very good and include a range of unusual pieces of equipment, such those used for weaving. Art and design makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through appreciation of the work of others and their own achievement. There is a good range of practical equipment and a variety of media for pupils' art work and pupils use art software well to produce patterns and pictures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Standards in design and technology by the end Years 2 and 4 are in line with those expected nationally. Standards are similar to those observed at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress.
101. By Year 2, pupils have satisfactory designing and making skills. For example, they have made colourful imaginative puppets. They use paper patterns to guide their cutting of felt and succeed well with their stitching skills. They proudly explain how they added different detail, and suggest how they could improve them, for example, by changing the eyes or making longer ears. They correctly explained that their puppets were designed for themselves but that some would be suitable for younger children. Pupils in Year 1 explore different mechanisms and use several construction kits to make models before designing their own imaginative ones such as a dolls pram or a tricycle. They used the knowledge gained from practical exploration and from looking at labelled pictures of a fire engine and bicycle to plan how their vehicle would move. Planning included drawing exploded sections from different angles that were labelled with the correct technical terms. It is clear from the evidence that standards, although satisfactory overall, are higher in Year 1. Good teaching in Year 1 leads to good levels and higher attainment and this is not sustained in later years.
102. By the end of Year 4, pupils have a clear idea that the purpose of design and technology is to meet the needs of a specific person or group of people. Teaching provides good opportunities for pupils to consider different lifestyles of well known characters or pupils own families before deciding on a plan. In Years 3 and 4, insufficient time is allocated for pupils to make their imaginative designs, for example, of different torches that include an electric circuit. Their sketches show that pupils are sensitive to the needs of others, for example one pupil planned a torch for a miner that included a pocket for extra batteries since he would be in the dark for a long time.

103. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Only one lesson was observed because of the timetable and this was in a Year 1 class. The teaching was very good and showed that pupils attain high levels when challenged. Pupils, whatever their ability, gender or ethnicity made similar progress. The teacher had high expectation and teaching assistants were used well to encourage pupils' thinking skills. A rich learning environment was established. Very good class management and questioning allowed pupils to work with a high level of independence to select their own components and tools safely. Pupils assisted each other very well, enthusiastically offering explanations for modifying their work or through discussion to make decisions. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to use the computer to present data, for example, about opinions on the appearance and taste of sandwiches they have made from combining several ingredients.
104. Leadership and management of the subject are both satisfactory. The school has adapted a government scheme of work but the time allocated to allow the completion of planned products is sometimes inadequate. The school has not yet developed an assessment system to monitor pupils' progress against national expectations for their age.

GEOGRAPHY

105. The majority of pupils make unsatisfactory progress and standards are below expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4. This is a worse situation than was found at the previous inspection.
106. Whilst long-term planning identifies the areas of the curriculum to be covered, there is very little evidence of geographical skills being taught in a systematic way. Whilst some Year 1 pupils are able to identify buildings at the seaside and in Ecton Brook, Year 2 pupils cannot name a seaside town. Pupils in Year 4 talk animatedly about a visit to a Space Museum for the Earth in Space topic, but have little experience using an atlas. They can talk about things they have seen on a video about India but find it difficult to compare physical and human features of the localities. A higher attaining pupil located Northampton in an atlas by working out grid references, which he said were like co-ordinates in mathematics. Pupils of average ability struggled to identify India on a globe, eventually pointing to an area with the word India across it, not realising the size of the country or that it was surrounded by an ocean. Work samples show that pupils have too few opportunities to use maps. There are no examples of the use of information and communication technology or extended writing to enhance pupils' learning.
107. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Although only one lesson was seen, which was satisfactorily taught, it is clear from the work in pupils' books that learning over time is too slow and that teachers do not cover the curriculum sufficiently well.
108. The leadership of this subject is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has begun to monitor the subject and provided suitable resources, but weaknesses in teachers' planning have not been addressed. There is no effective procedure for assessing pupils' work and recording the progress they make. Pupils' work is not monitored sufficiently to ensure the continuous and progressive development of skills. The time allocated for the subject on the long-term curriculum plan means there are long periods when no geography is taught. Therefore, pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop and consolidate their skills, knowledge and understanding.

HISTORY

109. Only one lesson was seen during the week of the inspection. From the scrutiny of pupils' work, and discussions with pupils and staff, it is evident that standards are below those nationally expected by the end of Years 2 and 4. This means that there has been an unsatisfactory improvement in standards and in achievement since the previous inspection. This is due partly to the lack of regularity with which history is taught to enable pupils to learn the skills and knowledge

needed to improve their understanding. Long-term planning for the subject inhibits progression and continuity in learning.

110. Pupils in Year 2 use their observation skills appropriately to gather information about the past as they study photographs. They were observed undertaking an information-gathering exercise about seaside holidays in Victorian times. They showed appropriate understanding that the past was different to the present day, and were able to find a few reasons to account for this. Pupils identified the different clothes and materials used at that time, but found it difficult to offer reasons why they were 'different'. The scrutiny of pupils' work showed insufficient work is completed over the year and pupils' historical skills are weak.
111. In Year 4, there is evidence that pupils have undertaken a museum visit in their study of the Vikings. They show appropriate awareness of the Viking homes, lifestyles and activities, with satisfactory understanding of why the Vikings attacked the monasteries on their raids. However, much of the content in their books is copied, with few differences evident in the work of higher and lower attaining pupils. Too little work is evident to ensure adequate coverage of the planned topics. There is too little evidence that the historical skills of enquiry, chronology and interpretation are being systematically taught to improve standards.
112. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall throughout the school because there are weaknesses in planning. As a result, the progress pupils make is too slow and standards are low.
113. The quality of leadership in history is unsatisfactory. Although some monitoring has taken place, there has been no attempt to increase the amount of history studied. No assessment procedures have been established and the long-term plan for the subject does not allow for consistent reinforcement of skills. Too few enrichment activities are planned to enhance the cultural development of pupils, although there has been a small number of visits to places of historical interest. The use of literacy within the subject is weak and does not help to sufficiently improve writing across the school. In discussions, pupils commented on how much they enjoyed the subject, and were keen to do more, but they were unclear what 'history' was.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

114. Pupils achieve well and by the end of Years 2 and 4, attainment is above that expected for pupils of this age. This is an improvement on standards at the time of the previous inspection, when they were judged to be satisfactory. Since the previous inspection the school has had a small suite of computers installed and provided training to improve teachers' expertise. This has resulted in better teaching and greater opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their information technology skills. Standards have therefore improved, particularly in the light of far higher demands and expectations nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and travellers' children make good progress. They are all fully included in lessons and have the same opportunities to make good progress.
115. Younger pupils use computers effectively to support number work. They show good skill in using the mouse to 'drag and drop' numbers round the screen. They do this accurately and quickly and routine skills quickly develop from an early start in Reception. This enables teachers to give pupils good opportunities to learn higher order information technology skills. In Year 1 for example, pupils learned that most questions can be answered with a yes or a no. They learned how to represent this on a 'yes' and 'no' binary tree and, after suggesting some questions, pupils began to follow a route through the tree to make decisions. This was good for pupils of this age and provided a sound basis for subsequent work in science, when they will use this skill to identify animals and plants for example.

116. Year 2 pupils maintain standards that are above those expected nationally for pupils of this age. Early skills in creating hyperlinks within presentations were developed well in a Year 2 lesson. Pupils used a computer based encyclopaedia to reference information on specific subjects. They had to recognise key words to find information on topics such as 'cactus trees'. Pupils at all levels of attainment were fully included because the teacher had planned the reference searches carefully so that all pupils had appropriate tasks and were able to develop the skill well, using appropriate words and complexity of task. Others were busily using hyperlinks to move from one page of a reading book to another and back again. This task effectively supported pupils' language and literacy skills of research and reading.
117. Older pupils continue to develop information and communication technology skills affectively. Although no lessons were seen in Years 3 and 4, the computer club provided secure evidence on standards above those nationally expected. Pupils were independently and confidently producing their own 'calling cards'. They took their own photographs using the school's digital camera and loaded this into the computer. They combined their photographs with text in different fonts, sizes and colours and with pictures from clipart. These were assembled into a single page, which were particularly effective and clearly demonstrated the good level at which these pupils are working.
118. The quality of teaching is good and enables the pupils to make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants have been effectively trained and have secure subject knowledge. The curriculum co-ordinator has a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Management of pupils is good. Teachers support good behaviour through recognition and praise. As a result pupils' behaviour is good. Interesting activities are based on teachers' high expectations and are challenging at all levels of attainment. Pupils are inspired by the opportunities to work with computers, often to the point of excitement. Consequently they try their hardest to do well. Teachers are not frightened to explore new territory and offer a good range of opportunity that meets National Curriculum requirements.
119. The curriculum co-ordinator is effective and has led the development of information and communication technology very well. This has resulted in higher standards and good improvement since the previous inspection. Resources are adequate and the number of pupils is slightly below the average for this number of pupils. However, teachers make good use of the resources and to good effect.

MUSIC

120. Standards in music are in line with those expected by the end of Years 2 and 4. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and from Traveller backgrounds, make satisfactory progress in the subject overall, although in some lessons, they achieve well. This is when they benefit from good quality teaching. Standards are broadly similar to those at the time of the previous inspection.
121. At the end of Year 2, pupils are able to sing in tune, recognise and explore how sounds are made and how they can be developed. They recognise how to make changes in dynamics and texture. In one lesson, pupils were observed finding out the difference between these two elements. They were able to use their voices to build layers of sound into a vocal composition. Pupils achieved good standards of participation, enjoyment and response during the lesson.
122. In another lesson, pupils in Year 2 were learning how to develop pulse and rhythmic pattern in music. They were able to clap the rhythm accurately as they listened to a piece of music. The use of a drum by the teacher, to give a rhythmic pattern, helped pupils to achieve the aims of the lesson, and the effective use of musical terminology promoted understanding of terms, such as 'tempo', 'dynamics', 'pulse' and 'rhythm'.

123. Standards in Years 3 and 4 are also in line with those expected and pupils make satisfactory progress in music, achieving well in some aspects. For example, in one lesson, pupils worked very well in twos to develop their own rhythm using body movements and bongo drums. They practised hard to perfect their own rhythmic sounds, creating a simple repeating pattern. During the plenary session, several pairs performed their compositions for others to appraise, with some appropriate and sensible comments. Pupils were heard singing in assembly. They sang sweetly and in tune, but used little expression in their singing. Limited work with instruments was evident during the inspection, and too little work on improving pupils' performances was noted to raise their standards further.
124. The quality of teaching and learning in music is satisfactory with some good features. The main strengths are teachers' confidence and willingness to teach the subject and the good encouragement and praise that they offer to pupils. This ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, join in with enthusiasm. Pupils like music. They have good attitudes to the subject and behave well in lessons. This is because they enjoy the practical activities provided. However, not enough time is allocated to listening to different styles of music, or to playing and performing with instruments. Pupils are not given enough chance to improve their music-making through constant practise and clubs, and this inhibits higher standards.
125. Leadership of music is good. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of music and has monitored and evaluated the quality of provision well. This is leading to confident teaching and improving standards. The main weaknesses in the provision are the lack of formal assessment opportunities and, particularly, the lack of use of technology. This is inhibiting pupils' awareness of how they can make music in a different form that is more complex and challenging than the music they can play themselves.
126. Some peripatetic music is taught, but no evidence of instrumental work was available during the inspection and pupils' talents were not used during assemblies, for example. Resources are appropriate to the demands of the curriculum, and pupils do have some good opportunities to listen to live music by visiting musicians. This enhances their cultural development in particular.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. All pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and achieve overall standards that are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4. This is similar to the previous report. During the inspection it was only possible to observe lessons in dance and games. Swimming, gymnastics and athletic activities are planned for and meet the requirements of the national curriculum. There is a good scheme of work, which teachers use well to plan lessons. This ensures systematic progression of pupils' skills.
128. In games activities pupils are able to throw and catch successfully but there are too few opportunities for them to practise these skills in other situations. Standards were good in dance and satisfactory in games. In dance, pupils in Year 1 understand the importance of beginning and finishing their lessons with a warm up or cool down. Most can complete a Maypole dance routine after practising in small groups.
129. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of time and resources and pupils are managed well. Teachers are aware of safety factors but do not alert pupils of potential difficulties in the area they are working. Pupils are enthusiastic about the lessons and work co-operatively in groups but are given little opportunity to evaluate of their work. Teachers also select and distribute all resources. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were using hoops and balls to practice throwing but the equipment to use was given when they could have selected their own and created their own activities. Therefore, many opportunities for independent learning are missed.

130. A wide range of extra-curricular activities including game, basketball and country dance clubs enrich the curriculum and make a positive contribution to the standards achieved by those who take part. The provision of tennis equipment at playtimes has seen some pupils take part in local events very successfully.
131. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory management. She monitors planning and has been given opportunities to monitor quality and standards in classes, enabling her to identify areas for improvement. There is a range of equipment to support the curriculum. The school has a system for assessing progress in skills for gymnastics and dance but this has yet to make an impact on the quality of independent learning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

132. At the time of the previous inspection standards were below average in relation to the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus. The school has worked hard at improving the curriculum, the quality of teaching and learning and in improving the range of resources. Consequently, standards have improved and they meet those expected by the Agreed Syllabus and all pupils make satisfactory progress.
133. Pupils in Year 2 recognise why Christians go to church and think of Jesus as a loving and caring person. They identify how the symbol of light is an important part when celebrating significant religious events such as Hannukah and Christmas. In their written accounts higher attaining pupils provide valid reasons why God sent the flood and a rainbow. Teaching provides good opportunities for pupils to dramatise stories and this helps pupils empathise with how characters feel. A good example was in a lesson where pupils took on the role of Joseph's brothers and the teacher in the role of Joseph. This helped pupils make the link between these events and how Christians should love and forgive one another.
134. Pupils in Year 4 correctly describe the Bible as a collection of religious books and are beginning to appreciate the links between belief and the way people live their lives. For example, how the teachings of Jesus inspire faith and good lives such as that of Julian of Norwich. They realise that religious teachings inspire people to be charitable, such as when the school raises money for the homeless. In their written work about the sacrifice of Abraham they show an understanding of faith as belief and trust. They describe how the teachings of Muhammad, are followed by believers observing the five pillars of Islam in their daily life. They have a secure understanding of the link between symbols and beliefs. Following meaningful teaching about the symbols of the Exodus on a Seder Plate, pupils made their own plates. Pupils recognise that different things are special to different people for example; one pupil included on a plate a musical box as a reminder of peace hope and happiness.
135. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, but with some good features. Teachers use effective strategies such as drama, good quality artefacts, visitors to talk about Judaism, a Muslim parent and a Vicar to help pupils learn about a balance of major faiths, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Religious education makes an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development since pupils enjoy time to reflect on the meaning of religion and how they can develop respect for different faiths and tolerance in their attitudes toward each other.
136. Leadership and management of the subject are good since improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. The school does not have a formal assessment system and this is an area for development. Resources are of a good quality. Pupils have visited St. Andrews and action planning includes visits to places of other major world faiths and how to extend provision for older age groups next year. Literacy is promoted well through discussion and drama. Professional development has been very good and the monitoring and supportive role of the subject leader has raised the profile of the subject.