

INSPECTION REPORT

NEEDWOOD C.E. AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newborough, Burton-on-Trent

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124377

Headteacher: Mrs I.C.Davies

Reporting inspector: Mrs O.M.Cooper
10859

Dates of inspection: 16 – 17 June 2003

Inspection number: 248596

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Yoxall Road
Newborough
Burton-on-Trent
Staffordshire

Postcode: DE13 8SU

Telephone number: 01283 575216

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A. Whitten

Date of previous inspection: 9 – 11 March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10859	Mrs O. Cooper	Registered inspector	English Information & communication technology Music Special educational needs Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9505	Mr D. Haynes	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30935	Mrs K. Mc Arthur	Team inspector	Science Art & design Design & Technology Foundation Stage curriculum	
23081	Mrs C. Waine	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Needwood is a small Church of England Aided primary school situated in the village of Newborough. It also serves the surrounding villages. There are 75 full-time pupils on roll, 36 boys and 39 girls between four and eleven years of age, with approximately ten per cent travelling from further afield by choice. The pupils are predominantly white and of British heritage and none speak English as an additional language. A well below average proportion of pupils is entitled to claim free school meals and the proportion with special educational needs is below the national average. No pupil has a formal statement of special educational needs. Overall attainment on entry is broadly average for pupils' ages. The headteacher was due to retire at Easter 2003, but remained for another term due to staffing difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school providing a good quality of education for its pupils within a strong Christian environment. By the time the pupils transfer to high school, overall standards are well above average. This is because the school is well led and managed; teaching is good overall; pupils are well cared for, have very positive attitudes to school and work and behave very well. Parents also make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in school and at home. Taken overall, the school is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Overall standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The school is well led and managed with a clear focus on raising and maintaining standards.
- Teaching is good overall and enables pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well.
- Good parental support for the school and its work promotes pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- There is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' writing skills through other subjects.
- Standards in history in Year 6 are below those expected for eleven-year olds.
- The provision for children in the Reception Year.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1998 and has made good improvement since. Overall standards have risen, the good teaching has been maintained, even with significant staff turnover and turbulence, and pupils' behaviour has improved. Leadership and management of the school continue to be good. Other aspects of the school, which were good at the time of the previous inspection, have been maintained. In addition, the action plan to remedy the weaknesses found at the time of the previous inspection has been largely successful. As a result, standards in information and communication technology have risen, curriculum planning and assessment procedures have improved and the school prospectus contains all the required information. The omission of information about disabled pupils from the governors' annual report to parents has been rectified.

STANDARDS

The table showing the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests is omitted because there were fewer than 10 pupils in the year group.

By the end of their year in Reception, most children are on course to reach the levels expected for their age in language and literacy, numeracy and in their creative development. In their personal, social and physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, the children are likely to exceed the levels expected nationally. Overall progress is satisfactory.

The school's 2002 results of national tests at the end of Year 2 were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and compared favourably with those of similar schools. These pupils achieved well. In science, teacher assessments showed standards to be very high. Current standards of work in Year 2 show these standards have been maintained at well above average levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils continue to achieve well. In all other subjects seen standards are average for the age of the pupils. In physical education too few lessons were seen to enable a secure judgement to be made.

The school's 2002 results of national tests at the end of Year 6 were above the national average when taken overall. All pupils reached the level expected for their age, or higher, in mathematics and science. However, the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level was below the national average in English and mathematics, indicating some underachievement among more able pupils. Current standards of work amongst Year 6 pupils are well above the national average in mathematics and science and above the national average in English. Overall standards are well above average and pupils achieve well. The school has focused on raising the attainment of more able pupils and has been successful in doing so. However, there is room for further improvement in standards in writing as identified by the school. Standards in information and communication technology have risen and are in line with those expected of pupils of this age. In all other subjects except history, where they are below, standards are in line with those expected for eleven-year olds. No judgement could be made in physical education.

The trend in improvement in the school's results over the last five years is broadly in line with the national trend. The school met its challenging targets in English and mathematics in 2002, but may not meet its targets for 2003 due to recent mobility of pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and want to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. In lessons, at play and at lunchtimes behaviour is very good. There have been no exclusions for unacceptable behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' personal qualities are very well developed and they become mature and responsible. Relationships with each other and with staff are very good and there is a strong sense of a school community.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average, with no unauthorised absence.

Pupils show a high level of care and concern for each other, which is appreciated by parents, particularly when young pupils travel by bus from other villages.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall teaching of English and mathematics is good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory in Reception and good overall in Years 1 to 6, although writing skills are not as well taught through other subjects as they could be. Overall strengths in the teaching are in sharing the purpose of lessons with pupils at the beginning so pupils in each year group know what they are expected to learn and in the use of time and resources. In Years 4 to 6 the teaching seen in all lessons was good or better, although this had not been the case earlier in the year in history, where teachers' expectations were too low. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching is better in Year 2, where it is good in most lessons and occasionally very good. In Years 2 to 6, the teachers have secure subject knowledge and are skilful in teaching different

lessons to the different age groups, ensuring all pupils receive some direct teaching each lesson and some support from teaching assistants when available. A weakness in the satisfactory teaching in Reception is the over reliance on worksheets, which does not enable more able children to make as much progress as they could. Most pupils, particularly in Years 2 to 6 make good progress in acquiring knowledge and developing their skills as the good teaching meets their learning needs. Occasionally more able pupils are insufficiently challenged. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as they receive good support when withdrawn for specific activities. Pupils are interested in their work, try hard to succeed and work well independently, which helps their rate of progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is a satisfactory range of relevant experiences and opportunities for learning, enhanced by a sound range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school. All statutory requirements are met, but the time allocated to teaching some subjects is insufficient.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' individual education plans are detailed and ensure small steps in development can be recorded. They are reviewed regularly. Support from external agencies is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, for their spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils are well prepared for transfer to a large high school and for life in our multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are securely in place and there is good regard for ensuring pupils' health and safety. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and checking their progress are satisfactory and have improved since the previous inspection.

The school works well in partnership with parents, taking care to ensure that those living in other villages or beyond are fully informed and included in all school events.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Given the heavy teaching commitment of the headteacher, she still gives clear direction to the work of the school in order to raise standards and to develop the management roles of other staff. The programme drawn up for monitoring teaching and learning has been hindered because of the turbulence in staffing over the last year, but support from the local education authority's inspectors has ensured teaching has continued to develop.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors play an active part in determining the direction of the school, have good knowledge of its strengths and areas for improvement and plan strategically for its development. They fulfil all their statutory obligations except for the detail in the financial information provided in their annual report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher and staff evaluate the school's performance through thorough analysis of the data about each pupil's progress, and comparative information about the performance of similar schools. Individual pupil targets are set in English but not in mathematics.

The strategic use of resources	Good. The governors have good systems to oversee the budget and to obtain best value for money. Specific grants are used well and in the best interests of the pupils and the standards achieved. Staff are deployed efficiently and the principles of best value are applied well.
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There are sufficient teachers and support staff for the number of pupils on roll. Resources for learning are good, with the exception of outdoor resources for children in the Reception Year. The recent extension to the building has improved cloakroom space, but the classroom for the Reception and Year 1 pupils is cramped and has no access for children who prefer to learn out of doors. One class is accommodated in the school hall, which is undesirable and overall, accommodation is unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The teaching is good. • Pupils are expected to work hard and achieve their best. • Behaviour is good. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for setting homework. • The frequency of information on their child's progress • The range of activities outside lessons

Inspectors support the parents' positive views of the school. Arrangements for setting homework are satisfactory and similar to those found in many schools nationally. Projects set provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their research skills. There is no opportunity for parents, other than those of children in the Reception Year, to meet formally with teachers to discuss their children's progress until half way through the school year, which is too late if children are experiencing any difficulties. The range of activities outside of lessons is satisfactory, but is limited because of pupils who are transported to and from school by bus, and by the small number of staff to lead them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In most years the children's attainment on entry to the Reception Year is broadly average. Some parents choose to send their children to independent schools and this has an impact on the overall attainment of each intake. Some pupils travel from further afield than the surrounding villages and so the intake of pupils is not a true reflection of the advantageous area immediately around the school. For the current children in the Reception Year, their attainment was slightly above average in early reading skills, but broadly average overall. The children make satisfactory progress in all the areas of learning. Strong emphasis is placed on personal, social and emotional development as a significant number do not receive any pre-school education. In this area of learning the children are on course to exceed the level expected by the end of their year in Reception. Similarly in their knowledge of the world around them and in their physical development, the children are likely to exceed the level expected by the end of the academic year, as a significant proportion are already exceeding the expected level. In language and literacy, numeracy and in their creative development, most children are on course to reach the expected levels, although attainment in reading is lower and some are unlikely to reach the expected level by the end of their time in Reception.

2. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, the results were well above the national average as all pupils achieved the expected level, or higher, in reading, writing and mathematics. The results were also well above the average for similar schools in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was well above the national average in reading, above the national average in writing, but broadly average in mathematics. Teachers' assessments showed standards in science to be very high both at the expected level and at the higher level and were in the top five per cent of schools nationally.

3. Current standards of work amongst Year 2 pupils are very similar, but with an increased proportion reaching the higher level in mathematics, reading and writing, indicating the school's focus on higher attaining pupils has been successful. Standards are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress over time, but their rate of progress is better in Year 2 than in Year 1. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys, the majority of lower attaining or pupils with special educational needs are boys and this makes it appear that girls do better.

4. The results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were well above the national average in science, above average in mathematics and broadly average in English. The proportion reaching the higher level was above the national average in science, but was below the national average in mathematics and English, indicating some underachievement for higher attaining pupils, which the school had identified. When compared with similar schools the results were above the average in science, broadly average in mathematics, but in English fell well below the average and were not high enough. The school has again focused on higher attaining pupils and improvement is evident.

5. Current standards of work among Year 6 pupils are well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. Overall standards are well above average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level has increased in all three subjects. The comparison of National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 and current levels of attainment show pupils have achieved well in all three subjects, as their results in Year 2 were below the national average in reading, well below in writing and average in mathematics. There has been some mobility of pupils, particularly recently and this has adversely affected overall standards in English because one pupil counts for over ten percentage points. Standards in reading at the higher levels continue to be better than in writing, and there is room for improvement in writing skills as they are insufficiently promoted through other subjects. Pupils

with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets. Their individual plans identify small steps in progress, pupils know what they have to do to achieve them and this helps to build their self-confidence in their abilities. Good support for pupils needing a boost to their performance in literacy, for example pupils in Year 3, helps them to make good progress in their reading and spelling skills. The school has not identified any pupils as being gifted or talented, but because of mixed age classes, pupils can work with older or younger pupils when this is more appropriate. This strategy is helpful.

6. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are continuing to have a positive influence on standards. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills, both in literacy hours and in other subjects and these develop well. Sufficient emphasis is placed on developing subject specific vocabulary and this was particularly good in withdrawal groups in literacy led by a teaching assistant. By the end of Year 6 pupils are confident, mature speakers when addressing small or large audiences. They can express their ideas and opinions articulately, using a wide range of vocabulary. Pupils listen carefully, join in class discussions and respond well to questions posed. In reading, pupils are slow to develop strategies for reading unfamiliar words in Year 1, although this improves from Year 2 upwards. Parents make a significant contribution to hearing pupils read and this helps their rate of progress. In Years 3 to 6, pupils increase their strategies for attempting to read unfamiliar words and by Year 6 most are confident, fluent readers. Pupils use their reading skills effectively when searching for information. Writing skills develop well as teachers have undertaken further training. Pupils make good use of their range of vocabulary in their writing to add interest for the reader. Pupils do not make sufficient use of their literacy or numeracy skills in other subjects when worksheets are used instead of requiring pupils to record their work independently. Numeracy skills develop well. Pupils improve their skills in mental recall of number facts and in strategies to help them carry out mental calculations. They gain good understanding of shapes and measures, of handling data and develop their investigative skills well. Pupils use their numeracy skills satisfactorily in other subjects such as science and design and technology.

7. Current standards of work among Year 2 pupils are broadly average in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, design and technology, history, geography and music. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement in physical education. Teachers plan the use of laptop computers into lessons as appropriate and this is helping pupils to make better progress, which is partly why standards have risen, but there is room for further improvement in the use of computers in several subjects. Standards are very similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection in other subjects.

8. By the end of Year 6, current standards are average in ICT, again showing improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and music are broadly average. This represents a decline in standards in art and design and music where less time has been allocated to the subjects than previously with the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Standards in history have also declined and are below average for eleven-year olds. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates some unsatisfactory teaching for these pupils over the course of the year, with low expectations of pupils and insufficient time given to teaching the subject. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards in physical education. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in most of these subjects, the exception being in history.

9. The school sets itself challenging targets in English and mathematics each year. In 2002 it achieved its targets. The targets set for 2003 are challenging and may not be met in mathematics, but this is due to recent mobility of pupils and insufficient time for the school to raise attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and contribute well to the positive learning environment that exists within the school. These aspects have been

maintained since the previous inspection and they remain a strength of the school. Pupils are keen to enter school immediately they arrive and then settle quickly into the daily routine without undue intervention from the class teacher. During nearly all lessons, pupils concentrate well and show enthusiasm. Pupils with special educational needs respond particularly well when withdrawn for short periods for intensive teaching in specific aspects of their work.

11. Behaviour is very good. On very few occasions is it necessary for pupils to be reminded of the rules. Behaviour around the school, in assemblies and at play is very good. Incidents of bullying or aggressive behaviour are rare and this type of behaviour is not reported as a problem by either parents or pupils. The school is a very orderly community. There is no evidence of vandalism and learning resources and property are treated with respect. Pupils demonstrate a natural courtesy to adults, which is well demonstrated by those from all year groups as they walk about the school and during lunch times. Pupils relate very well to each other and to all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff. Respect for the feelings of others is well addressed particularly in assemblies; the respect of the beliefs of others is satisfactorily addressed. Pupils work well together during lessons. Family assemblies, held every Friday, and attended by members of the local community celebrate individual pupils' achievements both in and out of school.

12. The school offers a range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility for the day to day running of the school and in their own learning. This was particularly evident in a Year 2/3 ICT lesson when pupils had to research and then decide themselves how best to portray information in graphical form. In mixed age classes older pupils regularly assist younger pupils and there is an effective school council. The school council has recently been consulted over the design and building of an extension to the premises. Sports activities after school and activities in the community are well attended and are open to both boys and girls of all abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included. The school supports local and national charities and pupils are aware of those less fortunate than themselves.

13. For the reporting period overall attendance at 95.7per cent is well above the national average with negligible unauthorised absence, a situation similar to that found at the previous inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, although it is better in Years 2 to 6 than in the Reception Year and Year 1 where it is mostly satisfactory. No lessons were less than satisfactory, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. There were examples of very good lessons in English, mathematics and geography and over a half of the lessons seen were good. The teachers plan carefully for the different age groups in their classes and are very adept at switching between two different lessons going on at the same time. The teaching assistants also change over to help those pupils not being taught by their class teacher and their good support and guidance does much to aid the class teachers and help pupils make good progress in their learning.

15. In the Reception Year, appropriate activities are planned to cover all the areas of learning. However, in many of the activities observed, the children were mainly supported by the classroom assistants who did not interact with and question the children sufficiently to enable them to make consistently good progress. Some of the activities planned did not challenge the higher attaining children sufficiently, for example in mathematical development where the children were making number bonds to seven. One child had moved on to $7 + 7 = 14$ and $6 + 6 = 12$. When questioned about the answer of 11, the child was able to correct it by counting on and would have benefited from a more challenging task. The overall weakness in the satisfactory teaching is in the over reliance on worksheets, some of which again lack sufficient challenge. The worksheets for all areas of learning are kept in one file, are sometimes undated and so it is difficult to see clearly the progress being made in literacy, numeracy or in children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

16. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in Years 2 to 6 and satisfactorily in Year 1, but there is room for improvement in the teaching of writing skills through other subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well and continue to have a good effect on the overall quality of teaching. In addition, further national materials to help pupils needing a boost to their performance in literacy have been adopted and these have helped to improve the teaching and pace of learning for those pupils concerned. The teachers are secure in their understanding of the strategies and the framework for teaching them and plan interesting activities. Pupils learn to work independently or as part of a group, and make decisions about their work, such as whether to use computers or where to find information needed. In both literacy and numeracy lessons, the introductions are followed by purposeful direct teaching. The time towards the end of lessons is occasionally used well to consolidate or reinforce what has been learned, but more often this part of lessons is weaker. Class teachers ensure all pupils have time for speaking and listening and sharing their ideas, either with a partner or in small groups. The marking of pupils' writing in literacy lessons is a particular strength of the teaching. Targets for improvement are set frequently and progress towards them noted in future marking. The National Curriculum level achieved and the criteria, which have been met, are also noted in the marking so pupils know their rate of progress.

17. In science, teaching is good overall, although there is a heavy reliance on the recording of work on worksheets, which provide insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. Only one lesson was seen in ICT, so no secure judgement can be made. However, discussions with pupils and their level of knowledge and skills indicate good features in the teaching. In music, design and technology and geography, teaching is satisfactory. No secure judgement can be made in physical education, art and design, or history, as insufficient evidence is available. However, from the scrutiny of pupils' work, the teaching in history in Years 4 to 6 is judged to be unsatisfactory as expectations of pupils have been low and insufficient work completed.

18. The key strengths in the teaching throughout the school are in the identification of learning targets in planning and in the use of teaching assistants, time and other resources for learning. The learning targets for each lesson and for the week in literacy and numeracy are shared with pupils in language they understand, which provide a focus for their learning and for their teachers' assessment of their progress. Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide valuable support for pupils, encouraging them, for example to use dictionaries and not doing the work for them. They are well briefed about their roles and the teachers' expectations. The resources available, including the good range of books and the laptop computers are used well to encourage independent learning. Other resources such as small whiteboards for quickly recording answers to mental arithmetic questions or practising spellings are also used effectively. Time available for learning in lessons is also used well, time limits are frequently set for the completion of tasks and this helps to maintain good pace and challenge for pupils. The very good lessons in English, mathematics and geography were characterised by the good planning for different year groups, the organisation of the pupils to ensure they could get on uninterrupted by other year groups, the pace, challenge and teachers' high expectations of work and effort. In satisfactory lessons the pace slowed at times and teachers' expectations of all groups of pupils were not high enough in the case of higher attaining pupils. Occasionally, expectations were too high for pupils with special educational needs when all pupils were given the same worksheets to complete.

19. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good when they are withdrawn from class for intensive teaching to overcome a specific problem and good progress is evident in these sessions. In class support is sometimes less effective, when teaching or support assistants sit during whole year group sessions, and have little interaction or involvement with the pupils. There are good records of progress made towards their targets and, activities planned closely match those identified in their individual education plans.

20. Taken overall, the teaching meets the learning needs of most pupils and enables them to make good progress over time in increasing their level of knowledge, deepening their understanding and in developing their skills. The development of pupils' research skills is promoted well in several subjects and pupils organise themselves sensibly. They concentrate

well and try hard because most lessons are interesting and they want to succeed. They are happy to work independently; taking responsibility for their own learning and this is a key strength in Years 4 to 6. Pupils have good knowledge of their learning in literacy and science, but this is less evident in other subjects. Homework is set, which successfully extends learning into the home, but some parents are unhappy at the projects set, such as making models of Tudor houses or Viking ships, which can become a competition between parents.

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

21. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and provides a soundly balanced range of learning opportunities for all pupils, as it did at the time of the previous inspection. There has been satisfactory improvement in producing new policies and schemes of work for all subjects. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and provides well for their education about the misuse of drugs, the importance of stable relationships and their sex education. An equal opportunities policy is implemented well, with no significant difference in provision for pupils because of gender, disability, race or culture.

22. There is a sound curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage that develops their skills, knowledge and understanding in all the recommended areas of learning. However, children have no direct access to a secure outdoor area where they could develop their physical skills in energetic activities, using an appropriate range of equipment. They do take part in well taught physical education lessons, with a specialist teacher. In lessons in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world, their learning is often restricted by the overuse of unsuitable worksheets.

23. The school correctly places a strong emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics and implements the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well, with a clear focus on the basic skills that pupils need to learn across the whole curriculum. Planning has improved since the previous inspection, with the introduction of national schemes of work to guide teachers in planning the progressive development of pupils' skills and knowledge. However, not all teachers use this as effectively as they should to develop pupils' skills. For example, in science, and in some lessons in geography and history too much time is spent on worksheets or colouring activities and pupils do not focus sufficiently on key points for investigation. Worksheets limit pupils' opportunities to record their work independently and develop a wide range of writing skills and also limit the amount that they write because the space is too limited. There are some good opportunities for pupils to make decisions about how to organise and record their work and to carry out research but this is not always as sharply focused or well developed as it might be. For example, in a Year 4 geography lesson, pupils read about tea production on a CD-ROM but did not make notes to help them in the following task. The use of a specialist teacher in physical education enhances the curriculum for that subject and appropriate use is also made of a music specialist in some lessons. More use is made of computers in lessons than at the time of the previous inspection but these are still not used sufficiently, such as in literacy and numeracy lessons.

24. The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is good. Very few pupils require support other than that provided by the class teachers, and where external support is provided, it is of good quality. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are clear and relevant, and are reviewed at appropriate intervals, but there is little reference to them in lesson plans. Parents willingly support their children at home and this contributes to the progress they make. The school has not identified any gifted or talented pupils and so no provision is made.

25. The school enriches its curriculum by taking pupils on a sound range of visits to local venues, such as a forestry centre and museum. The number of clubs is appropriate but limited mainly to sports, with occasional events such as concerts and dancing. Whilst clubs promote pupils' physical education and social skills well, they do not contribute to their creative and aesthetic development sufficiently. A satisfactory range of expert visitors and good links with the

community enrich learning. For example, parents, former parents and villagers make a good contribution to learning by provision of resources and by leading sports clubs. A link with other schools provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sports. This is one aspect of the school the parents would like to see improved, but there are difficulties because of pupils being transported to school by bus each day.

26. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall. That for spiritual and cultural development is good and that for moral and social development is very good. This is similar to the provision noted at the last inspection but moral development has now improved. There is no whole school policy for the development of this aspect of pupils' learning and teachers do not plan systematically to develop it across the whole curriculum and so miss opportunities to do so.

27. Provision for spiritual development is good and firmly based in the school's Christian faith. Staff encourage pupils to develop a sense of self worth through praising their efforts and successes, which encourages them to do their best. This is reinforced by rewards, such as merits and is celebrated in a weekly assembly attended by parents, families and friends. Some good work is celebrated in displays, particularly in the youngest class but this is insufficiently developed to reflect work in all subjects. For example, most displays in English are created as a learning resource, with few examples of pupils' work displayed as an inspiration to others. The school meets the statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship, providing time for prayer and praise and providing opportunities for personal reflection and response. Visiting faith members lead some acts of worship but none took place during the inspection.

28. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. All members of staff consistently implement the school's positive code of conduct and pupils know that they are expected to behave well. They develop a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong and know and apply the rules regarding acceptable behaviour at lunchtime, playtimes, and in lessons. They learn about moral issues in subjects such as geography, when they study life in poor countries and consider how humans affect their environment. Staff set a good example for pupils of care and consideration for others and pupils reflect this in their own actions. Teachers give pupils opportunities to take on responsibility as they grow older, and they accept these happily. For example, Year 6 pupils act as reading partners to the youngest pupils and undertake a good variety of tasks around school, such as re-arranging their classroom for dinners. Pupils show a good level of responsibility to the wider community by their involvement in village events, such as Best Kept Village activities and by contributing to such charities as Operation Christmas Child. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own work and to work collaboratively in many lessons. A satisfactory range of visits linked to the curriculum and well-supported clubs provide social opportunities for pupils. Lessons in personal, social, health and citizenship education provide good opportunities for learning and a school council gives pupils real responsibility for making decisions about their school. Pupils develop an understanding of their part in the village Christian family by attending church festival services.

29. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good and they develop a particularly good understanding of the culture of their local area, through their involvement in traditional Well Dressing and Maypole dancing and visits to the Black Country Museum. Pupils learn about the lives of people in countries such as India and Jamaica and this work is occasionally brought to life by expert visitors. For example, a parent demonstrated saris and bindis to pupils. Pupils focus on less fortunate countries at Harvest time, which deepens their understanding of life there and there are visits from cultural specialists, such as a storyteller and African musician who enhance this work well. There are occasional visits to cultural centres such as art galleries but there are no clubs or tuition for those pupils who may be interested or talented in music or art.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school cares well for its pupils. The head teacher is temporarily responsible for child protection due to staff changes but her excellent knowledge of pupils and their backgrounds, together with clear open communication between the small staff provide a good level of protection. The guidance on child protection received by class teachers does not extend sufficiently to other adults on the school staff. Record keeping and communication within the school is satisfactory and contact is maintained with outside specialists and their services are effectively used when required. First aid provision is good and the children know what to do should the need arise. A high level of cleanliness is expected and any aspect of maintenance is attended to promptly. This helps create a safe learning environment and also instils high values in the pupils that are reflected in their respect for property and learning resources.

31. The school has few rules in number but pupils know what is expected of them. Effective procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and there were no incidents of aggressive behaviour or bullying during the inspection. Arrangements for the personal and social development of pupils are very good and a strong feature of the school, including those to meet the particular needs of any looked after or vulnerable children. Access control to the premises and buildings is good. There are good procedures at the start and end of the teaching day concerning the collection of younger pupils by parents. A good level of midday supervision is provided when the children are at play and a very good range of sports equipment available, but there is no structured or guided play led by the supervisors. The standard of midday supervision provided maintains a consistent approach to behaviour management. The school has an appropriate policy for restricted access to the Internet and for racial equality.

32. Registers are maintained correctly using a manual system and are held in each classroom throughout the week and not held centrally in the office for security. Attendance and punctuality are very high and parents usually notify the school of any absence and there are set procedures for early contact with parents if an absence is not notified. If a pupil is withdrawn from school by a parent before the end of the teaching day, this is noted. Monitoring of absence is satisfactory.

33. The previous inspection found that assessment procedures were not consistent, and lacked rigour. The improvement of procedures became a key issue. The school now has satisfactory procedures for finding out what pupils know and can do. Regular checks are made on pupils' attainment during the school year to track and monitor their progress. Systems are largely based on nationally used tests and assessment of children soon after they enter the Reception Year. Better monitoring procedures during the year specifically for this age group would ensure they make the progress of which they are capable. In English and mathematics, assessments are made against the expected levels in the National Curriculum. In all other subjects, assessments are made following guidelines at the end of each unit of work, about every half term. However, these record the whole year group, and the monitoring of each individual pupil's progress is less detailed than in English or mathematics. Systems have been refined since the previous inspection to make them more informative. A computerised system for recording teachers' assessments of their pupils and national test results has been implemented, but no other use has been made of the system as yet, for example in monitoring the progress of different groups of pupils. Those with special educational needs are, however, assessed regularly and the pupils' progress towards their targets monitored closely. Better use is made of assessment information in Years 4 to 6. Pupils are set individual targets to achieve in English, and there are targets for year groups. Pupil progress is recorded frequently in both literacy and numeracy. Teachers' marking varies from subject to subject. It is most useful in English, where marking is particularly helpful to the pupils, showing them how to improve their work and referring to their targets.

34. Assessment and progress tracking information is used well to target particular pupils who need extra support to improve their performance. Analysis of assessment information led to the provision of a structured programme of work to help particular pupils make better progress, for example those with special educational needs, or who have difficulties with their spelling. While good use is made of teachers' assessment or monitoring information when planning lessons or programmes of work in English, it is not as evident in other subjects, such as history.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Parents' views as expressed in the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting were positive. Parents particularly appreciated that their children liked school, that behaviour was good and there was an expectation of hard work. Parents also thought the teaching was good and that the school was well led and managed. Inspectors support these positive views. Areas of concern to approximately one fifth of parents responding to the questionnaire centred on the school's partnership with parents and how well informed they were about their child's progress, and a quarter of parents thought there was too much homework. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good, but the school's perception is that links with parents are very good, with very few complaints.

36. Parents of younger pupils enter the school at the start and end of the school day and access to classroom staff is informal. The school offers parents two opportunities each year to meet class teachers and discuss the progress of their children, with more frequent discussions with parents of pupils with special educational needs who are kept well informed. Parents are welcome to discuss any concerns at other times. This is similar to the arrangements found in most schools, although the first meeting is not held until half way through the school year, which is a long time if there are any difficulties. The quality of written information provided for parents is very good. A weekly school newsletter informs of general events and includes details of any topic work that will be undertaken by each class. The annual report to parents on pupils' progress is very good; it is personal to the pupil, comprehensive and contains details of progress particularly in English, mathematics and science. Progress in other curriculum subjects is also separately detailed. Targets for improvement are agreed with both parent and pupil at each consultation evening. The school prospectus is a helpful, factual document containing all the necessary information parents require.

37. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home and their impact on the life of the school is very good even though parents are not invited to assist in the classroom as a matter of school policy. The school's homework policy actively encourages family involvement in project work and also encourages pupils to join such organisations as scouts or guides and to partake in other activities outside school. Most parents confirm work undertaken at home and the inspection found that the amount of homework is appropriate to the age of the pupil and is well managed. Parents are welcome to accompany pupils on trips and help on special occasions and many parents take advantage of these opportunities. Parents have previously and some still do run after school clubs. The Parent Teacher Association is very active and organises social events that include staff, parents and children and events that raise valuable funds for the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. The school is well led and managed and successfully pursues its aims. The school benefits from the purposeful and effective leadership of the headteacher supported by the senior teacher who provide clear direction for the school, concentrating on raising standards, improving teaching and meeting pupils' personal needs within a Christian, caring environment. The headteacher carries a heavy workload with responsibility for several subjects and aspects of the school, such as special educational needs. She leads by example in her classroom practice, has high expectations of others and is highly regarded by many parents for her commitment and the standards the school achieves.

39. Because the headteacher has a heavy class teaching commitment, the time for integrating new members of staff is limited, but this has been managed successfully, as has the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The governors' strategic plan to ease the headteacher out of the classroom, prior to her retirement at Easter 2003, ran into difficulties when a part-time teacher resigned mid contract. Consequently help was sought from the local education authority; and the governors asked the headteacher to stay for another term. The school was well supported by local authority inspectors who monitored the teaching in all

classes and provided guidance in how to bring about improvements where necessary. This has ensured the pupils in Years 4 to 6 have not experienced unnecessary disruption from changes of teacher, while helping the school to continue to improve. The professional development of staff is a high priority, but is balanced against the level of disruption when so few staff are involved.

40. The governing body has an effective committee structure for carrying out its work, making good use of the expertise available. When the first advertisement for a new headteacher only drew a small number of applicants, very few of the calibre the governors were seeking, they did not proceed with the appointment. At the second attempt, an intense day of presentations, discussions and formal interviews was arranged to ensure they selected the most suitable candidate. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and challenge decisions made by the headteacher and staff where appropriate to do so. Because there is no deputy headteacher, the governors give support wherever they can, for example by overseeing the building project to extend the accommodation. Before spending a large sum of money on computers, the governors took advice and considered the options carefully to ensure they got the best value for money in terms of developing pupils' skills. The governors fulfil all their statutory obligations, with the exception of the financial information contained in their latest annual report to parents.

41. This year's planned programme for monitoring the teaching and learning by the headteacher has been affected by the staffing difficulties, but alternative arrangements have been satisfactory. The school is well aware of the need to develop this aspect of its work by implementing procedures for self-evaluation. Targets for development have been set for all the teachers and progress towards these has been checked. These procedures are having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and standards. The procedures for assessing pupils' performance have improved since the previous inspection, enabling the school to set challenging targets based on more reliable data and to amend the curriculum to meet the pupils' needs. The school is not yet collating all the data in a coherent way so as to track the performance of individual pupils from year to year.

42. The senior teacher has played a significant role in the drive to raise standards in English, particularly at the end of Year 2 and is currently focusing on improving standards in ICT through maximising the use of the laptop computers and increasing the range of software and other resources. In such a small school, where all members of staff carry several areas of responsibility, the roles of curriculum leaders have developed satisfactorily and the school acknowledges the need for further development.

43. The issues identified for improvement in this inspection are mostly contained in the framework of the school improvement plan for 2003-4. The only exception is standards in history, which have been partially affected by the disruption in teaching over the course of this school year and some weaker teaching early in the year. The procedures for identifying and agreeing the key priorities are good, with governors actively involved in the process and the views of parents and pupils sought on a regular basis. Because the school is in a transition stage the strategic plan for future development is not in detail, but the governors have a clear view of where it is heading.

44. Financial planning procedures are good and clearly linked to the school improvement plan. The day to day management of the budget is very efficient, with clear delegation of responsibilities. The recommendations contained in the most recent auditor's report have been remedied. All income is used efficiently for the intended purposes and in the best interests of the pupils. The principles of best value are applied rigorously, for example when purchasing expensive items of equipment, or deciding whether to buy back into local authority services.

45. There are sufficient teachers and teaching assistants for the number of pupils on roll. Most teaching assistants have received training in the use of additional national literacy resources and this is helping selected pupils to make better progress. However, no teaching assistants have received training in the Foundation Stage curriculum and this limits the level of support

they can give at times. The administrative and teaching assistants, most of whom are also midday supervisors, all provide good support for the teachers, enabling them to focus on teaching the pupils in their care. The resources for learning are good, in particular the school has a good range and quantity of both fiction and non-fiction books available to support pupils' learning and the development of research skills. However, the resources for children in the Reception Year, particularly for outdoor learning and physical development are inadequate.

46. The accommodation has been extended recently to provide additional office and cloakroom space. As the school has grown in size, the hall has had to be used as a classroom and this necessitates frequent moving of furniture, which is not desirable. The space available for children in the Reception Year is inadequate and restricts the number of activities that can be planned each session. While the accommodation has access for disabled pupils, the internal steps would make movement around the building more difficult. Consideration is being given as to how best to overcome the problem, but overall accommodation affects the quality of education the school can provide and is unsatisfactory.

47. The leadership and management of the school have been maintained through a period of significant change with the retirement of a long standing member of staff in July 2002 and the increasing size of the school. Although the school is in a stage of transition, it is continuing to move forward by seeking ways in which further improvement can be made.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to build on the good improvement made since the previous inspection and raise standards further, the headteacher and staff supported by the governors should:

(1) Increase the emphasis on developing pupils' writing skills through other subjects by:

- reducing the reliance on the use of worksheets and encouraging pupils to record independently what they know and understand;
- discussed in paragraphs: 5, 6, 16, 17, 72, 77, 94.

(2) Raise standards in history by the end of Year 6 by:

- providing a more rigorous focus to pupils' research;
 - employing a wider range of teaching methods so that pupils can learn at first hand, such as by investigating artefacts;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to discuss the causes and impact of events, eras and people in the past;
 - improving the range of ways in which work is recorded, with less reliance on worksheets and colouring;
- discussed in paragraphs: 8, 91, 93, 95.

(3) Improve the provision for pupils in the Reception class by:

- providing more challenge for higher attaining pupils;
 - improving the access to outdoor learning;
 - providing training for teaching assistants;
- discussed in paragraphs: 15, 45, 49, 50, 54, 55, 56.

In addition to the key issues given above, the governors should consider including the following minor issue in their action plan:

1. Include more detailed financial information in the governors' annual report to parents.
discussed in paragraph 40.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

27

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	12	12	0	0	0
Percentage	0	11	44.5	44.5	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	75
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	9

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is not included because there were fewer than 10 pupils in both year groups.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	73		
White – Irish	0		
White – any other White background	1		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0		
Mixed – White and Black African	0		
Mixed – White and Asian	0		
Mixed – any other mixed background	1		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0		
Black or Black British – African	0		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0		
Chinese	0		
Any other ethnic group	0		
No ethnic group recorded	0		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25:1
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
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Financial information

Financial year	2002/3
	£
Total income	202,100
Total expenditure	191,499
Expenditure per pupil	2,587
Balance brought forward from previous year	1,694
Balance carried forward to next year	1,055

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.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.3
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	75
Number of questionnaires returned	57

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	40	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	49	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	35	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	51	22	0	2
The teaching is good.	63	32	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	46	14	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	14	0	9	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	26	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	44	35	12	5	4
The school is well led and managed.	68	25	0	0	7

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

54	39	7	0	0
23	47	19	5	6

Other issues raised by parents

Eight letters were received from parents, no other issues were raised by a significant number of parents.

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

Strengths:

- the children's personal development, their knowledge of the world and their physical development exceeds the level expected by the end of their year in Reception.
- good behaviour and attitudes have a positive influence on children's learning;
- good displays celebrate children's achievements and support learning well;

Areas for development:

- provision of a designated area for outdoor learning;
- the teaching of reading, to ensure children make better progress;
- assessment procedures to ensure children make the progress of which they are capable in all areas of learning;
- more emphasis on children writing independently, and less reliance on worksheets;

49. The school makes satisfactory provision for the children in the Foundation Stage, and teaching is satisfactory in all the areas of learning. Children enter the school at the beginning of the Autumn Term of the school year in which they become five. A few have attended playgroup or a nursery before this. In their first term, children attend on a part-time basis. During the inspection, there were 12 children in the Reception group, taught in a mixed-age class with a similar number of Year 1 children. This means the children spend a significant proportion of lesson time working with a teaching assistant, whilst the class teacher works with Year 1 pupils. The classroom is rather small for the provision of the full range of activities and learning areas that would normally be seen in a Reception class. Parents are very supportive, hearing their children read at home and helping them to learn new words and this supports their progress in school.

50. When children enter the school, their attainment is broadly average. No children currently have special educational needs. The children enjoy school, and are ready and willing to learn. Their progress is satisfactory in the six areas of learning in the curriculum specially designed for the youngest children and is supported by experiences at home. However, they make slower progress in acquiring and developing the skills they need to become fluent readers because the teaching of this aspect of language is not sufficiently focused. They spend time learning letter sounds, but are not shown how to build sounds into words. By the time they move into Year 1, the great majority of children have reached the early learning goals, and some are working into the next level in all areas except communication, language and literacy.

51. Since the previous inspection, there has been satisfactory improvement in provision for the youngest children, although a suitable outdoor learning area has yet to be established. New national procedures for assessing the children's attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage have recently been implemented. Current assessment procedures are appropriate, but the way progress is monitored could be better to ensure children make the progress of which they are clearly capable.

Personal, emotional and social development

52. The staff know the children well, and provide a welcoming and caring environment. Good displays in the classroom celebrate children's work and achievements, for example their pictures of their visit to Rosliston Forestry Centre. Children quickly learn good routines to tidy up, and look after the classroom equipment well. They take turns at different activities, visiting the flower shop or the sand tray, and share the toys amicably and progress in these aspects is good. However, there are no clear routines for moving from one activity to another, and

sometimes children become frustrated if they have a long wait. The children are able to change into the correct kit without help for physical education lessons. Children behave well, have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and show positive attitudes to their work. They are sensible, and work well together in teams. In a physical education lesson, they organised an 'egg and spoon' race, started the race fairly and declared the winner without adult help. Their confidence grows rapidly, and by the end of the year, they happily stand up and sing a short solo in front of the class during a music lesson. Most children are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the academic year.

Communication, language and literacy

53. Speaking and listening skills are good, and the children meet the early learning goals in this area. The children speak aloud clearly and well, use full sentences such as "We had pineapple on our barbecue at the weekend" and have a wide vocabulary. They are used to talking with adults and with each other, expressing their ideas and opinions confidently. They participated well in a group discussion about the seeds, pips and stones of different fruit. Their listening skills are good, and they listened attentively when the teacher read the story of 'The Very Busy Ladybird' during a literacy lesson. Their good listening skills help them to remember the main events in each story, and they showed good recall of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', a story they heard in a previous lesson.

54. The classroom is well stocked with books. Children read regularly together in small groups. Reading books from the scheme adopted by the school go home with the home-school reading record, although few entries were seen in the records. Most children know the sound made by each letter, but a significant number have yet to develop the strategy of blending two or three letter sounds together to help them read an unfamiliar word. A few of the words the children meet frequently are displayed in class, and parents may help their child to learn them. A more able reader knew the word 'dentist', but she had *memorised* it rather than utilising her knowledge of letters and sounds to *read* it. Many children are unsure what to do when they meet a new word, as they do not know the strategies to use, such as breaking the word into small parts, or looking at the pictures for a clue. They are eager to read their books, but do not discuss the story, say what might happen or talk about books generally. Some children have the same book for too long, and lose interest in it. Progress in reading is slow, but most children are close to meeting the early learning goals.

55. The majority of children read and write their own name legibly, but none were seen to write their surnames. Some children are not yet able to group letters into words. Most children write words of four or five letters when working with the teacher, and their words show they are beginning to develop some knowledge of sounds, for example, 'zpidyer' for spider. Although they are encouraged to try, few children have the confidence or skill to write independently. Even the higher attaining children write very little when working on their own. Children get few opportunities to write for different purposes. Most work is done on worksheets; for example, the children complete a worksheet for every letter of the alphabet. Children of all abilities are given the same sheet and other work is copied. This does not encourage those capable of beginning to write independently to do so. There was no writing table available during the inspection, with a range of different pencils, pens and paper, to provide the children with regular opportunities to practise mark-making and writing, and which could form part of the continuous provision of learning activities in the room. There were, however, opportunities for writing during role-play in the flower shop. Assessment of children's attainment lacks rigour and is not being used to ensure activities are closely matched to each child's learning needs. Few children are securely meeting the early learning goals for writing by the time they move to Year 1.

Mathematical development

56. The children usually begin their mathematics activities with counting games and rhymes. They counted eleven spots on one child's ladybird purse. This activity was not sufficiently challenging because they are all competent when counting to ten and beyond. They all recognise the number digits up to nine, and most children know more, but there is some

incorrect formation of numbers when recording their work. They understand that addition is combining two groups of objects together, but no subtraction activities were observed. Working with the teaching assistant, the children investigated different ways to make six and eight. All children wrote the number sentence on their whiteboard, and used the appropriate vocabulary, saying 'equals' and putting + and = in the right place. When counting, they show good understanding of touching and counting each object. A variety of activities support mathematical development, and the classroom is well equipped with counters, threading equipment, bricks, sand and water trays for capacity and measuring. However, activities do not always have a clear learning purpose, such as building containers and filling them with model fruit. They can compare sizes and use the correct vocabulary, saying 'largest' or 'smallest' and are able to name squares, rectangles, circles and triangles and some children recognise a diamond shape. All children are on course to meet the early learning goals in mathematical development by the end of the year, but none are likely to exceed them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

57. By the end of their year in reception, the children meet, and many exceed the early learning goals in this area, due to the wide range of experiences they bring to school. Overall attainment exceeds the level expected. The children have good general knowledge with which to build on the activities they meet in school. They enjoyed their recent visit to a forestry centre, and made brief records of the plants, trees and small creatures they observed, including snails and worms. They moved on to learn about food chains. This linked well to the stories being studied in literacy lessons about caterpillars, ladybirds and spiders. Each child is growing a marigold plant in school. They carefully observed the roots and shoots that sprouted from beans grown on damp paper. The role-play area is currently equipped as a flower shop, and parents have contributed items for this, including silk flowers, and the children buy and sell seeds and gardening tools. In a science activity on growing, the teacher cut open various fruits and the children showed a good range of vocabulary and named the melon, kiwi fruit and papaya. They know that each fruit can reproduce itself, and were thrilled by the pattern of the seeds in the melon and the kiwi fruit. They used their senses well to taste and smell the fruits, but this activity took a long time, and some lost interest. Rather than encouraging the children to learn about using tools safely to chop the fruit when making a fruit salad, the classroom assistant did it for them.

58. Many children have learnt to use a computer at home, but were not observed using a computer during the inspection. They developed early geographical skills as they followed a route round the Rosliston Forestry Centre. Observing the changes in the plants as they grow prepared the children for early science and history, as they became aware of growth and change over time. They have begun to look at design by making 'moving pictures', using card and paper, with simple levers. In music, they listen attentively to the work of great composers, including 'The Carnival of the Animals' by Saint-Saens.

Physical development

59. The provision of an outdoor area specifically designated for Reception Year children has been outstanding since the previous inspection. There are no wheeled toys, but the children do have sole use of the school playground and grassed area each afternoon, and use the climbing apparatus. In a good physical education lesson, the teacher and classroom assistant acted as good role models by changing into the correct kit, and by joining in with all the children's activities. All the children can change themselves, put on their plimsolls and look after their own clothes. They warmed up in preparation for using a variety of small equipment, including tennis bats and balls, hoops and beanbags, and skipping ropes. Both staff gave good support and taught skills that enabled the children to progress well in their control and co-ordination. Fine motor skills are well developed through the use of scissors, pencils, paintbrushes, or when threading beads and manipulating small construction equipment. All the children are on course to meet, and a significant number to exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning, often due to experiences outside school, and attainment exceeds the level expected.

Creative development

60. By the time they move into Year 1, all children are likely to meet the early learning goals for creative development, although none are on course to exceed them. The classroom does not have enough space for the continuous provision of activities normally available to Reception children, including a wet area or a painting area. They enjoy shopping and working in the role-play area currently equipped as a flower shop. They express their imaginative ideas well, cutting, shaping and sticking different materials, including grass, buttercups and leaves to make collages. They have opportunities to paint and draw, and their work is displayed well, making the room bright and attractive. Each week, the children have a music lesson with a specialist teacher. They showed good understanding of pitch by standing up or sitting down as the music changed from high to low. They progressed to varying the pitch of their voices by reading simple symbols, an early introduction to musical notation. In some lessons, they use small percussion instruments.

ENGLISH

Strengths:

- well above average standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2;
- pupils' speaking and listening skills are good;
- the overall good quality of teaching and learning;
- very good marking of pupils' writing;
- the range and quantity of good quality fiction and non-fiction books available.

Areas for development:

- increasing the proportion of pupils exceeding the level expected in writing to bring standards closer to those in reading;
- reducing the reliance on worksheets in Year 1.

61. The results of National Curriculum tests in Year 2 in 2002 showed standards in reading and writing to be well above the national average and the average for similar schools. This inspection shows these standards to have been maintained. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection. At the end of Year 6, National Curriculum test results in 2002 were in line with the national average, but fell well below the average for similar schools. Current standards show improvement and are above average, despite being affected by the fairly recent mobility of pupils. Raising standards in writing has been a priority for the school and there is evidence to show the action taken has been successful. Teachers have undertaken further training, procedures for setting targets for improvement for individual pupils implemented, further national materials to support pupils needing a boost to their performance adopted, and classes provided to help pupils prepare for national tests. These measures and the overall good quality of teaching and learning have led to the good improvement since the previous inspection, although there is some variation between the year groups and room for further improvement in standards in writing to bring them closer to those in reading.

62. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well considering the mixed age classes. However, the teaching strategies work better in classes from Year 2 upwards, where the teachers are skilled in teaching different aspects to different year groups and are well supported by the teaching assistants. This ensures all pupils receive some direct teaching by their class teachers as well as support from teaching assistants while engaged in their tasks. Pupils achieve well over time in the school, although those in Year 1 are currently making a slower start, as the teaching is mostly satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and receiving support from external agencies make good progress, particularly when withdrawn from lessons for specific teaching, for example in spelling patterns. Pupils requiring a boost to their performance and following the Additional Literacy Strategy also make good progress in improving their skills in reading and spelling, which also helps to improve their self-confidence.

63. Standards in speaking and listening are currently above average for pupils' ages in both

Years 2 and 6. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers, evident in their answers to questions. Even when other pupils are working and noise can be distracting, the younger pupils do their best to listen carefully. There is effective use of talking to a partner, and working in small groups, which provide pupils with further opportunities for listening to each other and expressing their ideas. Teachers are skilful in drawing those not participating into class discussions, to ensure all pupils develop their ability to express their views and opinions more clearly. By the end of Year 6, pupils are confident speakers, who engage adults in conversation, express their views and ideas clearly, using a wide range of vocabulary, and show a willingness to listen to the opinions of others. In discussions with Year 6 pupils they spoke in a mature manner about their perceptions of the school and work they had enjoyed doing. They are also confident in speaking to larger audiences and often use subject specific vocabulary accurately. Pupils can adapt their speech successfully for different purposes or audiences.

64. In reading, standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. However, pupils' skills are slower to develop in Year 1, where pupils do not develop strategies for reading unfamiliar words as well as they could, particularly higher attaining pupils. Progress improves in Year 2 where the teaching assistant provides good support as she has been trained to use the additional national materials. Parents do much to support their children by hearing them read at home and this helps their rate of progress. By the end of Year 2, those with special educational needs sometimes struggle to read unfamiliar words accurately, for example when reading 'reservoir'. When encouraged to look at the letters and begin to build the word up, they were successful, but too often they guess at words. Other pupils read fluently, accurately and with confidence. By Year 6, most pupils are fluent readers, follow punctuation when reading and correct errors for themselves, usually by rereading the sentence. Higher and average attaining pupils discuss books they have read by different authors, for example, J.R.Tolkien, J.K.Rowling or Jacqueline Wilson, and give reasons for their choices. These pupils show good understanding of what they have read and of the author's intentions. Lower attaining pupils can discuss characters and the significance of events in stories, for example, by Michael Morpurgo. Pupils of all abilities can locate information in the library and use their skills to find specific information to answer questions asked. Pupils' reading skills develop well through research work in other subjects.

65. Standards in writing are well above average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. However, progress is slower in Year 1, where pupils are given worksheets to complete in many lessons, some of which are not appropriate to the next stage in their learning, for example where they are expected to write stories before they clearly understand story structure. Higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged by some of the worksheets and do not make the progress they could. Too much work is not dated to show progress over time and all subjects are stored in one file, which makes it virtually impossible to track progress over the year. There was evidence of pupils forming letters incorrectly, which went unchecked. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in developing their skills in different aspects of writing in Year 2. After one term in Year 2, pupils have a secure understanding of story structure and different ways of starting stories, for example with direct speech. Their stories begin to include the use of adjectives to make them more interesting for the reader, with higher attaining pupils using repetition effectively. Pupils begin to join their handwriting and by the end of the year most do so successfully, but some of their writing is untidy, partly because pencils are blunt. Lower attaining pupils can write stories with good ideas and a logical sequence of events, but struggle with spelling and do not include as much detail. There is a good system to help pupils improve their spelling by recording words they need to learn on a sheet, which is retained in their book, and practising the words until they can spell them correctly. This continues through to Year 6.

66. The good progress in developing writing skills continues in Years 3 to 6 as pupils improve their accuracy in using punctuation and grammar and, in their spelling. By the end of Year 6, pupils can write for a range of purposes, understanding that the way they structure their writing changes in different situations, for example when writing a newspaper article, a letter of complaint, or producing a fact file or holiday brochure. Pupils are taught to plan their stories carefully and to think about how characters are to be introduced. They redraft their work in order to improve it, but most tend to correct punctuation or spelling rather than improve the content of

what they have written, which is where there is room for improvement. Pupils successfully wrote accounts of the Christmas story from the donkey's perspective, giving the reader a clear impression of the importance of carrying Mary. They think of good opening sentences to engage the reader, for example when writing about 'What's the point of clocks?' one pupil used 'Throughout the ages in every continent, rich and poor have developed ways to tell the time'. Most pupils show good understanding of tenses in their writing. Pupils' handwriting is joined and fluent, but not always as neat as it should be, particularly when planning their writing or producing first drafts.

67. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good, but is better from Year 2 upwards where teachers are more secure in their understanding of the National Literacy Strategy, basic skills are taught effectively and lessons are planned well to meet the needs of the different age groups. However, in occasional lessons they are not so well planned to meet the needs of those with special educational needs and these pupils struggle to complete a satisfactory amount of work in the time available. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, who in turn rise to the challenge, for instance when Year 5 and 6 pupils had to produce a group fact file about animals, finding the information and presenting it in an attractive way. They had to make decisions about the finished piece of work, about the animals to be included and the style of presentation. Pupils enjoyed the task and the finished work was well presented. A particular strength in the teaching is in the quality of the marking, which sets targets for improvement, which are followed through and when completed further targets are set. Consequently pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve their work or reach the next stage in their learning. The use of resources, such as small white boards, library books and computers and the deployment of support staff are other key strengths in the teaching.

68. The leadership and management of the subject are good and have influenced the rise in standards, particularly at the end of Year 2. Good support from the local education authority's inspectors, by way of monitoring teaching and giving feedback, has helped to develop the teaching. Use of assessment information and an analysis of pupils' performance in tests have helped the school to pinpoint where further improvement could be made and action taken has been successful. This has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

Literacy across the curriculum

69. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted through work in many other subjects, but not as well as they could be. For instance in history and geography pupils use their reading skills to research information, make notes and write about life in other localities and in different periods in history. However, the amount of writing in history is insufficient for pupils, particularly in Year 6. In science, the use of worksheets prevents pupils in most years recording their experiments independently. Pupils record their answers to written problems satisfactorily in mathematics; their lists of materials and methods for producing models in design and technology. In religious education pupils record their work, for instance, about different leaders and how they inspire and motivate others. Computers are used frequently for pupils to present their work and practise spelling in order to improve their accuracy. There are examples of too much colouring in of pictures at the expense of promoting writing skills, for example in history.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths:

- The standards that pupils achieve;
- The quality of teaching;
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning;
- Pupils have good opportunities for personal investigation and decision-making.

Areas for development:

- There is an overuse of worksheets with younger pupils;
- Marking is very basic and does not help pupils to improve their work;
- Computers are used insufficiently in mathematics lessons.

70. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average. This reflects a good improvement on the standards reported in the previous inspection, which were average and maintains the high standards reflected in the Year 2 results in 2002 and in the Year 6 test results of the previous three years, which were well above average overall. This is difficult to achieve in such a small school as each pupil has such a significant impact on overall standards. In 2002, all pupils gained the level expected at both Years 2 and 6 but whilst an average proportion exceeded it in Year 2, very few did so in Year 6. However, overall progress for those pupils in Year 6 from their tests at Year 2 was good. The current Year 6 pupils have also made good progress over time and more pupils are working beyond the level expected for their age. The school sets itself high but appropriate targets for national tests and is successful in achieving them. There have been good improvements in standards, the curriculum and the assessment procedures since the last inspection.

71. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in learning the basic skills of numeracy because these are taught effectively. All pupils in Year 2 work confidently with numbers to 100 and higher attainers work with larger numbers. They recognise sequences such as odd and even numbers and begin to use the four rules of number¹ in solving problems. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6 and by Year 6, most are very competent in the four rules of number and use them successfully to solve problems. They understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages and convert numbers between them. Pupils have secure mental recall skills and explain their strategies for working out answers. They check the reasonableness of an answer with or without a calculator. Higher attaining pupils use and interpret quadrant co-ordinates and use all four methods of calculation to two decimal places. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs, or who are lower attainers, make good progress as they have effective support in lessons.

72. The quality of teaching is good and pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. These important factors help pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and use it well to set challenging work for pupils of different ages and abilities. They organise their lessons well and use support staff effectively to support the different groups within the class. Good use of time ensures that pupils maintain a high work rate and learn well. Lessons are interesting and usually make good use of resources, such as a range of measuring resources when Years 4 to 6 worked on an investigation comparing their own body measurements, looking for patterns and relationships between them. For example, they compared the length of their cubit with the circumference of their head to see if there was any correlation between them. However, lessons for younger pupils frequently rely far too heavily on worksheets, with all working at the same level. Teachers give clear explanations and demonstrate techniques well, so that the pupils are clear about what they are to learn and how to set about their activities. Pupils listen attentively, behave very well and show interest and enjoyment in their work. Teachers often ask pupils to explain how they have arrived at their answers, to make them think carefully about their work and develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding. The independence that pupils are given in deciding how to set criteria for their mathematical investigations, organise their work

¹ The four rules of number are addition, subtraction, multiplication and division

and set out their findings promotes their interest and personal development well. There is a satisfactory focus on teaching the mathematical vocabulary to help pupils' understanding. Teachers give sound oral feedback to pupils as they work but marking is basic, mainly ticks or crosses and with few comments and no targets set to help pupils improve their work. Although teachers display some graphs of pupils' findings in classrooms, there are too few displays to celebrate pupils' achievements or act as an inspirational model for others.

73. The subject is led well and the introductions of the National Numeracy Strategy and sound assessment procedures have been effectively managed. Management procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning are very limited because of the small size of the school and the headteacher's very heavy class commitment.

Numeracy across the curriculum

74. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in other subjects, such as in design and technology when they measure out their materials, in science when they collect data and in history when using timelines. Although some good use is made of computers in presenting numerical data, they are not used sufficiently in numeracy and mathematics lessons.

SCIENCE

Strengths:

- pupils attain well above average standards in science;
- they make good progress and achieve well;
- teachers use resources well to help their pupils learn.

Areas for development:

- too many worksheets are used;
- higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently;
- pupils have limited experience in planning their investigations and experiments;
- there is too little variation in the way pupils record their scientific investigations.

75. Current standards are well above average for pupils in Year 2, and their achievement is good. In 2002, pupils' attainments were assessed as very high in comparison to the national average. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards were in line with national averages, and progress was sound.

76. Standards for Year 6 pupils are currently also well above average. In the national tests for 2002, pupils' results were well above average, as they have been over the past four years. They were above the average for similar schools. The achievement of the present Year 6 pupils is good, and all are predicted to reach the nationally expected level this year, and some the higher level. Achievement is good over time in relation to their attainment when they were in Year 2 and very good for a small number of pupils. At the previous inspection, standards were in line with the national average, and pupils made sound progress. There has been good improvement since then. The pupils who have special educational needs also make good progress.

77. It was possible to observe just two science lessons during the current inspection, both for younger pupils. Examples of pupils' work were scrutinised. The quality of teaching is good overall, with the stronger teaching found in Years 2 to 6. Better teaching has raised standards and improved pupils' rate of progress. All pupils know the importance of making their scientific tests 'fair', and of predicting what they think will happen. Year 2 pupils predicted which foods were good for growth and which would provide energy, then investigated the ingredients. When teaching is good, there is suitable emphasis on investigations through fair tests and lessons

move along at a good pace, keeping pupils involved. Teachers use their subject knowledge well, and give pupils vital reminders about working safely when dealing with different materials. Lessons are generally well planned. Teachers sometimes use their marking to pose further questions for their pupils about what they have learnt, in order to check their progress. However, the overuse of worksheets limits opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations and fair tests and to record their work for themselves, deciding on the most suitable format. Higher attaining pupils are not frequently challenged to extend and use their knowledge and skills to take their investigations further. Too often, pupils of different abilities and ages are given the same tasks, and this does not promote good learning or progress.

78. By Year 6 pupils have studied sound, looking at how the different lengths of strings affect the pitch of the instrument. Higher attaining pupils clearly understand that the longer the string, the lower the sound, and the shorter the string, the higher the sound. Although they know how to plan and carry out an investigation, the format of the scheme of work adopted in the school does not give them enough opportunities to do so. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of the impact of food on their health, and know they should drink water rather than sweet, fizzy drinks. A higher attaining pupil in Year 1 told his class that they should eat five pieces of fresh fruit or vegetable every day for good health.

79. The curriculum is fully covered in all aspects of science. An on-going rolling programme of work is designed to ensure pupils in the mixed age classes do not repeat work. All learning is supported well with a range of resources. Year 1 pupils studied 'Growing plants', and enjoyed looking at a variety of fruit to investigate different seeds, pips and stones. They had previously grown (and eaten) cress from seed, and one pupil had gone on to grow her own cress at home. However, the teacher missed opportunities to extend the pupils' knowledge and experience by allowing them to touch, feel and smell the fruits, even though they had been talking about their senses in literacy earlier that day. Parents support their children well with the work and activities they are given to complete at home. Year 4 pupils had to find examples of how friction is used, and Year 6 pupils learn scientific symbols or draw diagrams.

80. Pupils enjoy their science lessons. They behave sensibly, remembering to work safely, with good regard for others. Their learning occasionally excites them, when for example Year 1 pupils were amazed to see the pattern of the seeds in apples, melons and papaya fruit. They work co-operatively in groups, and share equipment and materials sensibly. Older pupils are able to test themselves by using the assessments built into the commercial scheme of work. Teachers assess their progress at the end of each unit of learning. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers include helpful comments in their marking of pupils' work, which relate closely to the subject matter, correct mistakes and ensure pupils understand concepts. For older pupils, marking relates to National Curriculum levels attained. Pupils use their literacy skills well when they do have opportunities to write reports or research for information. They draw diagrams and illustrate their work carefully, making use of their art skills, and use their mathematical knowledge to produce graphs, for example when Year 2 recorded their favourite foods on a bar graph. No evidence of pupils using the computer to record charts or data was observed during the inspection.

81. The co-ordination of science is one of the many responsibilities of the head teacher. There has been little monitoring of teaching and learning because of the head's heavy teaching load. Assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding are made at the end of each topic, and procedures are satisfactory. Older pupils have targets to work towards. The improvements in standards and teaching since the last inspection show that the subject is well led and managed. The school is well resourced, although space is limited in some classrooms.

ART AND DESIGN

Strengths:

- pupils cover all aspects of the National Curriculum for art and design;
- they use a wide range of media;

Areas for development:

- they do not observe carefully when drawing;
- further coverage of the work of great artists and craftspeople.

82. At the time of the previous inspection, standards of work were average at the end of Year 2 and were above average at the end of Year 6. Art and design alternates with design and technology each half term, and during the current inspection no art lessons were on the timetable. It is not possible, therefore, to make secure judgements about teaching and learning. Evidence from pupils' art books, folders and work on display was scrutinised, and would suggest that teaching and pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make the same rate of progress as their classmates. Overall standards of work seen are average, which indicates some decline in Year 6 since the previous inspection. This is because less time has been allocated to teaching since the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Wall space is very limited, and art displays must share the space with other subjects.

83. Year 2 and 3 pupils studied sculpture. They used materials to make satisfactory three-dimensional models of figures. They produced wiry stick men, in a range of stances, similar in style to the work of Alberto Giacometto. The display of their work was well supplemented by sculptures the pupils had brought from home. They developed the style of their sculptures by using single colours to create linear patterns that resembled tree bark.

84. By Year 6, pupils have a portfolio of their work, showing they have used a wide variety of media. They have used the neighbouring church building for observational drawing. However, they have not been taught to look closely and judge proportions, and their pencils lines are not very confident. They do add shading to give greater depth to their subjects. Their figure drawing is rather immature for their age, and many pupils resort to a cartoon-like style when drawing faces, showing a lack of skills development in previous years. Their use of colour is satisfactory, but they are not confident when using brush strokes to add texture. Insufficient emphasis has been placed on studying the different techniques used by famous artists and incorporating them into their own work. Pupils make preparatory sketches when planning landscapes or seascapes, which help them in completing their pictures successfully. A higher attaining pupil made a very detailed and sensitive portrait painting of a lady wearing Tudor costume, and used gold to add a rich effect to her clothes. Whilst their work is average for their age, much of it is rather basic and pupils show limited imagination when expressing their ideas. There is little evidence of the use of ICT in lessons.

85. Pupils use art and design to enrich their work in other curriculum areas. They broadened their knowledge of pattern making to embellish prayers written in religious education lessons with delicate repeated motifs. In science, Year 5 pupils used bright colours to emphasise the health message 'drink more water'. Models of Viking ships were completed in detail, down to the oars. A potter has visited the school, and motivated pupils to use clay to make small pots that were well finished, and embellished with brightly coloured flowers.

86. Resources are adequate, but space is limited, particularly for the display of pupils' larger or collaborative work. As no lessons were seen, behaviour and attitudes cannot be judged, but the work seen was completed and finished with care. All aspects of the National Curriculum are fully covered. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory; are part of the head teacher's many responsibilities and the subject has not been a priority for development recently.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths:

- design projects are interesting and purposeful;
- pupils undertake the full design process.

Areas for development:

- pupils do not always record evaluations of their work.

87. Standards are average for pupils in Years 2 and 6, and throughout the school. Design and technology was not on the timetable during the previous inspection, so no judgements were made. All pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve satisfactorily, including those who have special educational needs. Two design and technology lessons were observed during the current inspection, and pupils were busily engaged with their tasks and working co-operatively with each other. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The completed products, an interesting range of projects and pupils' design books show that the curriculum is fully covered, and pupils have sound understanding of all aspects of the design and making process. However, few written evaluations of products were seen. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

88. In Year 1, pupils have designed and made a picture with a moving part. Their next design brief was to investigate how to incorporate a lever. They made satisfactory progress in their ability to use tools safely, including scissors, and found it hard to open the split pins, but persisted and worked hard to finish their work. By the end of the lesson, they produced a variety of solutions, including a dog wagging its tail and a man kicking a football. Year 4 pupils were working on a project in which they had to design and make a money holder. Their designs showed a variety of ideas for decoration, including futuristic cars. They were less sure how to add these decorative features to their products, or what material they would use. These pupils used a computer to record materials and explain their plans for making a snake puppet.

89. By Year 6, pupils have carried out a wider range of design projects, including making models that use cogs, gears and motors. They successfully included control technology in a fairground model, and persist in seeking solutions when the gears do not move various parts as planned. One pupil developed this at home by making a working model of the London Eye. When planning their design for a bag, pupils carefully researched commercial products. They looked at shoulder bags; shopping bags and camera bags to see what materials were used, how they were fastened and how they were suited to their particular purpose. They had previously practised different methods of joining materials, including sewing, gluing and stapling. Pupils were engaged in testing handles for the bag, working co-operatively to plait or twist wool. Pupils consider quality and know that it is important to make a paper pattern for a product, or a working model to test controls. In a previous project, older pupils designed and made slippers and their imaginative ideas included slippers shaped like snails. To test the suitability of their designs, pupils had to walk along a bench wearing their slippers.

90. Design and technology is often used to supplement other curriculum areas. Year 2 pupils designed multi-coloured coats when they studied Joseph in religious education lessons. Pupils made Tudor houses as a homework project, some choosing to use balsa wood as the frame. Pupils show good attitudes to their design and technology products, and work hard to produce a suitable design because they can see that all projects have a useful purpose. Co-ordination of design and technology is part of the head teacher's wide-ranging responsibilities and has not been a priority for improvement. The pupils experience the full design process, use all tools safely and complete interesting projects, based on a nationally recognised scheme of work that provides a basis for teachers' planning, and ensures that the pupils build up their skills, knowledge and understanding of design in a progressive way. There are sufficient resources

and equipment to support teaching and learning, and homework projects add an extra dimension to pupils' work. The management of the subject is satisfactory.

HISTORY and GEOGRAPHY

Strengths:

- there is a good focus on environmental issues in geography;
- pupils have good opportunities for personal research;
- pupils have very good attitudes to both subjects.

Areas for development:

- standards in history in Year 6;
- there is an overuse of worksheets in some lessons in both subjects;
- assessment systems are not fully developed;
- the quality of teaching for older pupils has been inconsistent, particularly in history.

91. During the inspection, two geography lessons were observed but no history was being taught. Judgements in geography are supported by examination of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. In history, they are based wholly on this evidence. In geography, pupils make satisfactory progress through the school, achieve satisfactorily and standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6, as at the time of the previous inspection. In history, pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory in Years 1 to 3 and standards at the end of Year 2 are average. Progress and achievement in Years 4 to 6 have been unsatisfactory over time because teaching has not been consistently good enough due to staff changes. Standards are below average in Year 6, which represents a decline since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in geography in Years 1 to 6 and in history in Years 1 to 3; their progress in Years 4 to 6 is unsatisfactory.

92. Year 2 pupils have sound geographical knowledge and skills. They draw simple plans and maps of their area, using appropriate symbols, and locate Newborough on world, European and British maps. They understand the key features of where they live, and compare them with life in a nearby town and in a village in India. They begin to consider how humans affect the areas in which they live, such as the pollution caused by building new motorways, and they conduct traffic surveys at different points in their village. Pupils consider how the environment can be spoilt by, for example, and how it can be improved. They build satisfactorily on their skills and knowledge in Years 3 to 6. They learn about the water cycle and weather and about significant geographical features, such as rivers and mountains, but do not carry out in-depth first hand studies of local features, such as rivers, to deepen their understanding. Pupils have good skills in using maps and a clear understanding of symbols. They apply these skills confidently to locate places, using co-ordinates and grid references. They learn the appropriate vocabulary related to their topics and carry out research in books and on computer. Recorded work observed in Year 6 books is very limited but in discussions, pupils demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of places and their particular characteristics. They have good knowledge of the effect of humans on the environment and present the case for and against certain developments. Whilst their knowledge, skills and understanding are satisfactory, pupils' recording of their learning is not good enough, either in quantity or quality and too much time is spent drawing and colouring in. This is particularly so when commercial worksheets are used.

93. In history, Year 2 pupils have satisfactory knowledge of life and events in the past. For example, they know of the life and work of Florence Nightingale and the effect she had on hospital treatment. They know about the Romans, understanding the differences between their lifestyles and life today. Pupils learn about changes over recent times when they study their own lives and those of their parents. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to handle items from the past to deepen their understanding but have sound opportunities to carry out their own research in books and on computer. Progress in Years 4 to 6 has been affected by changes to

teaching staff and has not been consistent. By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge of some of the eras they have studied is shallow and their skills in making decisions about what happened in the past from first hand evidence, such as artefacts, are limited. They have had opportunities to carry out their own research in books and on computers but they do not focus sufficiently on the key features of the past that have had a significant effect on how we live today. Their research and recording tends to focus on what they enjoy. For example, one pupil talked about how he liked drawing battle scenes but he found it difficult to talk about the causes and results of the battles. Whilst pupils enjoyed learning about Henry VIII, their real interest was in his wives. They find it difficult to recall other aspects of his reign or say how he changed life in England and they have insufficient knowledge of the lives of others in Tudor times. Pupils develop a sound sense of the order of eras and events in time through using timelines.

94. Teaching in geography is satisfactory overall and was good in the lessons observed. No overall judgement can be made in history, as no teaching was observed. However, evidence from pupils' work and discussions show that it is satisfactory in Years 1 to 3 but has been unsatisfactory over time in Years 4 to 6, where it has not promoted enough progress in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Planning for the different year groups in each class is complex and whilst teachers plan appropriate subject coverage, there is not enough attention paid in history to building on what older pupils already know and can do; expectations of them are not high enough. Whilst opportunities are provided for individual research these are often not sufficiently guided to ensure that pupils focus on the key historical facts for the era they are studying, at appropriate depth for their age. Recording of work provides some opportunities for pupils to express their own ideas in both subjects but in some classes, there is too much use of commercial worksheets and drawing and colouring tasks. Whilst pupils report that they enjoy the colouring, it does not make them think sufficiently about what they are learning. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to apply literacy skills in research and writing but there is sometimes an overemphasis on literacy at the expense of geographical and historical learning. For example, when Year 6 pupils write a diary about an imaginary experience of a hurricane, some make little reference to the features of hurricanes. Some teachers in Year 6 have accepted too little written work from pupils. For example, pupils sometimes write only two or three sentences on a subject and leave work unfinished, such as when a higher attaining pupil wrote only three lines on an A4 page on the findings at Sutton Hoo. Teachers provide a few opportunities for pupils to undertake visits to places of historical and geographical interest and pupils enjoy these very much. The visit to a museum brought pupils' learning about Victorians to life as they took part in role-play in a Victorian classroom and their recall of conditions in Victorian schoolrooms is a stronger aspect of their knowledge. In the geography lessons seen, the classes were well organised and managed effectively. Classroom assistants are used well to support learning in the different year groups and lessons are conducted at a lively pace. Computers and a good range of books support pupils' research well. Good use is made of homework in history, when pupils work on long-term projects connected to their lesson topics.

95. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory in geography, but unsatisfactory in history. The development of a policy and the adoption of a national scheme of work for both subjects have been satisfactory. However, the revised planning in history has not been followed closely by all teachers, and this has resulted in a decline in standards. The lack of management procedures in checking the quality of teaching and learning in history is unsatisfactory, resulting in a decline in standards since the previous inspection. Assessment systems are in place but do not give a clear picture of progress through the National Curriculum and information is not used sufficiently to build on pupils' knowledge and skills. Leadership and management of geography are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths:

- staff have secure knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject;
- pupils' show enthusiasm and confidence in using computers independently;
- assessment procedures are good.

Areas for development:

- increase resources available to support learning in other subjects, such as music;
- make better use of the resources available to support pupils' learning in other subjects;

96. Standards of work are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and have improved since the previous inspection when they were below average. This is because staff have undertaken further training to increase their knowledge and improve their skills and confidence in teaching the subject. In addition, the resources have been improved, with the help of funds raised by parents, and so pupils have more opportunities to use computers to support their learning in several other subjects, but with further development planned. The lack of assessment procedures, a weakness at the time of the previous inspection has been remedied and each pupil's progress is now being tracked from year to year.

97. All groups of pupils are achieving satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs, as the laptop computers purchased recently are being used often in lessons. The school is now in a stronger position to teach all aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study and pupils are interested and enjoy using the laptops.

98. By the end of Year 2, pupils can use a keyboard to type in their work and produce an attractive finished copy; and were seen devising questions with 'yes' or 'no' answers leading towards creating a branching database. The good discussion on the difficulty of devising such questions enabled pupils to get started on the task quickly and successfully. They can collate data, for example the colour of pupils' eyes, and present it in a simple pictogram, bar graph or pie chart.

99. By the end of Year 6, pupils' word processing skills are good. Pupils often choose to record their work using computers, storing it on disk for future use. They are aware that it is easier to edit their work using computers, for example, a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils producing a fact file decided it would look better if all used the same size, style and colour of font for their title. This was soon achieved. Pupils understand how to use sensors to control lights or the movement of objects, how to put information into spreadsheets and how to create multi-media presentations combining moving objects and text. Pupils have also used a program to help them design a bedroom, placing the furniture in the most suitable places given the space available, before printing off a three-dimensional plan. Many use the Internet as a source of information for homework projects and understand how information can be sent quickly using email. Pupils have a sound understanding of the use of ICT in the wider world.

100. No secure judgement can be made on the quality of teaching as only one lesson was observed. However, the enthusiasm of the pupils for the subject, the progress evident from the range of work stored on computers indicate some good features in teaching and learning, and that the limitations in teaching identified in the previous report have been overcome. Pupils use computers to support learning in most subjects. In English, pupils in Years 1 to 6 use a program to help them improve their spelling, trying to increase the speed and accuracy compared with their previous best performance. The results of investigations in mathematics and science are presented in charts and graphs and calculators are used to check answers to calculations. Research work in history and geography is promoted well through the use of CD roms or the Internet. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 have recorded their design and technology projects on computers, for example the materials and stages in making a puppet. There is no evidence of the use of computers in art and design or music and insufficient use in mathematics lessons. Until very recently, much work was done on computers at home or on the limited number available in school. Pupils' confidence in the use of computers has increased and their progress has improved since the laptops were purchased, but they are still not in use often enough in lessons.

101. The development of the subject has been well led and managed, which much consideration given to the best way to give pupils as much access to the computers as possible, within the confined space available. The recent purchase of an interactive whiteboard has further enhanced the resources, staff have undertaken training in its use and this has the

potential to improve the provision further. Taken overall, improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

MUSIC

Strengths:

- secure subject knowledge;
- good range and number of instruments available;

Areas for development:

- ensure sufficient variety in the range of activities planned in all lessons;

102. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory, including that of pupils with special educational needs. No pupils have been identified as being potentially talented, although several have private tuition outside of school and show some promise. Since the previous inspection standards have been maintained at the end of Year 2, but have declined at the end of Year 6, owing to less time being given to teaching the subject. All lessons continue to be taught by a subject specialist and lessons are well prepared, with good coverage of the National Curriculum programme of study. However, the level of involvement for all pupils was insufficient at times and a few pupils lost interest and their concentration lapsed. There are no regular extra-curricular activities available for those pupils interested or showing talent in music.

103. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing a good sense of rhythm and sing in tune. They show an ability to express the mood of the song, such as anger or sorrow, through their singing. They sing songs they like with enthusiasm. Pupils have sound knowledge of a range of percussion instruments. By Year 6, pupils understand the need for good posture and breathing when singing, but their singing lacks enthusiasm both in lessons and some assemblies. Pupils can sing with clear diction and good pitch, and can maintain their part in a two-part song satisfactorily. They are more interested in composing, for example, melodic phrases and fitting their own words to them and then performing them. They use both graphical and musical notation and are beginning to show good understanding when reading notation. Pupils demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of famous composers, such as Beethoven, Tchaikowsky, Mozart and Greig and talked of events in Beethoven's life.

104. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some good features, such as the secure subject knowledge and use of technical vocabulary. The planning in some lessons, however, does not contain sufficient variety in the activities or a high level of participation for all pupils, for example in a lesson with Year 2 and 3 pupils, which was mostly devoted to singing. As a result some pupils lost interest. The time taken for pupils to perform their compositions was too long and temporarily slowed the pace of the lesson. Time is given to pupils' self-evaluation of their performances and this helps them to understand where improvement can be made. The quantity and range of good quality instruments are used well, for example, pupils in Years 4 to 6 used the glockenspiels and the good number available enabled all pupils to be involved in composing musical phrases and performing them within their group.

105. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. A scheme of work based on national guidelines has been implemented which takes account of the mixed age classes; and the progress of individual pupils is recorded at appropriate intervals. The co-ordinator teaches all classes and so has a good overview of standards. Pupils talked with interest about visiting musicians, who introduced them to music from other countries, so promoting their awareness of other cultures. Taken overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

106. It is not possible to make overall judgements about standards, pupils' progress or teaching in physical education because it was only possible to observe two games lessons and other than the swimming records, there is no supporting evidence available. No games lessons could be observed in Year 2 and no judgement can be made about pupils' skills but lessons observed show Year 6 pupils' skills in games are above average. Standards in swimming are above average, with all pupils swimming the required distance of 25 metres by Year 4.

107. Pupils make good progress in developing games skills. In the lesson seen in Year 1, pupils improved their skipping technique and hand and eye co-ordination in throwing and catching. By the end of Year 6, most pupils throw with good accuracy, both over and underarm and apply this well and as appropriate to their position in a rounders team. They follow instructions correctly and understand and apply the rules for small side games. They organise themselves well in team games, such as in a game of rounders, when the fourth base fielder had to leave his post to collect a ball. Without any instruction, another fielder stepped into the gap to ensure that this vital position was filled. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all activities and also make good progress.

108. The specialist teaching observed was good, as it was at the time of the previous inspection and the attitudes of pupils are very good, with most displaying a very good standard of sportsmanship. The planning of lessons is thorough, with clear learning targets linked to an interesting range of activities. The teacher has secure subject knowledge that enables her to explain to pupils how to set about their activities and improve their performance. She sets a good example by dressing appropriately for lessons and ensuring that lessons begin with reminders about important safety issues and warm up activities. Lessons are conducted at a good pace and pupils are encouraged to be aware of the effects of exercise on the body. Pupils display enjoyment and enthusiasm in their activities and are very well behaved. They actively support the good range of sports clubs and activities, such as football, netball and local competitions. Out-of-school clubs are led well by the teacher, classroom support staff, parents and the local community, as at the time of the previous inspection.

109. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and there is a good emphasis on swimming. Parents provide good support for swimming lessons for the pupils in Years 1 to 4. Leadership of the subject is secure and the use of the subject specialist with all classes means that she has a clear overview of standards and progress throughout the school. The school has a programme of work that is successful in ensuring that pupils build up their skills progressively. There are sound links with other schools in the locality, which provide pupils with opportunities to take part in competitive events. As at the time of the previous inspection, the accommodation provides difficulties but the school plans very well to overcome these and provide a full range of activities for pupils. An annual activity week provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to take part in adventurous outdoor pursuits.