

INSPECTION REPORT

NORTHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mansfield

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 132770

Headteacher: Ms Julie Jenkins

Reporting inspector: John Messer
15477

Dates of inspection: 7 – 10 July 2003

Inspection number: 248994

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cox's Lane Mansfield Woodhouse Mansfield Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG19 8PG
Telephone number:	01623 625589
Fax number:	01623 650700
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Neil Woodcock
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15477	John Messer	Registered inspector	Art and design Design and technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) 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?
19743	Ann Taylor	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19765	Pauleen Shannon	Team inspector	English History	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20457	Brian Fletcher	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Religious education	
22274	Vera Rogers	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Geography	
15447	Christine Glenis	Team inspector	English as an additional language Foundation stage Information and communication technology	

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This new community primary school opened in September 2001. It was formed by the amalgamation of an infants' school with a separate junior school on the same site. It has 347 full time pupils on roll aged between 4 and 11 years, as well as a further 45 children who attend the nursery for either the morning or afternoon sessions. The children in one of the two reception classes have only been in the main school since Easter. The school is bigger than most primary schools but is due to decrease in size because of the falling birth rate locally. On entry to the school, the attainment of most children is well below average and it is especially low in communication, language and literacy. A very small number of pupils is from ethnic minority backgrounds and no pupils have English as an additional language. Around 18 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is in line with the national average. An above average proportion of pupils, well over a quarter, are entered on the school's record of special educational needs. Most of these have mild learning difficulties, although a small number have severe learning difficulties. The school has found it extremely difficult to recruit teaching staff but, as the school's reputation has improved, the situation has eased slightly.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This new school is already well established and standards have begun to rise significantly. The effectiveness of the education it provides for its pupils is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory although there are inconsistencies; much of it is good, a small proportion is very good and a smaller proportion is unsatisfactory. By the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6, most pupils attain standards that are below average in English. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average in mathematics and science and by the end of Year 6 below average. The leadership and management of the school are very good and are leading to rapid improvements. Governors are closely involved in the development of the school and make a very good contribution to its effective leadership and management. The uncertainties caused by the falling school population are being managed well. The roles of curriculum co-ordinators are developing satisfactorily and the curriculum is managed effectively. Resources are used satisfactorily and the school provides satisfactory value for money. The school has good capacity to improve further.

What the school does well

- The standards that pupils in Year 6 attained in the national tests in English, mathematics and science have improved significantly this year.
- The leadership and management by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are very good and have promoted rapid improvements, both in behaviour and standards.
- Relationships are good and help to support learning well.
- Teaching in the nursery is good and children are given a good start to their education.
- Provision for moral and social development is good and pupils work and play happily together.
- Parents are pleased with the improvements that have been made and support the school well.

What could be improved

- The quality and consistency of teaching and learning in order to improve standards across the school in all subjects.
- Assessment procedures, so that teachers have a clearer understanding of what pupils have learned and what they need to learn next and so that teachers are able to match tasks more closely to pupils' widely varying stages of development.
- The use of computers to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- The links that are made between subjects in order to provide a curriculum that is more meaningful for pupils.
- The outdoor learning area for children in the nursery and reception classes in order to improve physical and other learning opportunities.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has not been inspected before.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	N/a	N/a	E*	E*
mathematics	N/a	N/a	E*	E*
science	N/a	N/a	E*	E*

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

Last year the school's performance in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 was poor and was among the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. As a result of improved teaching and a more systematic approach to learning, the results this year are much better but there are as yet no comparative national results available. The school set reasonable targets for its performance in this year's national tests for pupils in Year 6. It far exceeded its target in English but, although results improved significantly, failed to meet its target in mathematics. The test results in science also improved significantly. Inspection findings show that pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory although by the end of Year 6 most pupils attain standards that are below average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Standards in the other subjects are satisfactory. The school's assessment data indicates that standards are likely to improve further in forthcoming years.

Pupils achieve well in the nursery and satisfactorily in the reception classes but by the end of the reception year most are unlikely to attain all the early learning goals, specified in national guidance, in all areas of learning. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 2 most pupils attain average standards in most subjects, except English and information and communication technology, which are below average. In the national tests for pupils in Year 2, the school's performance in 2002 was below average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. The school's performance in national tests for pupils in Year 2 had been improving but declined this year, 2003, in reading, writing and mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Most are keen to succeed and willing to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in and around the school but a small minority of older pupils present very challenging behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is satisfactory and relationships are good. Pupils usually work well in pairs and in groups. Many enjoy taking on responsibilities and the good relationships help to promote a willingness to please.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory – below the national average.

There is a great deal of evidence which shows that behaviour among the older pupils in the school was poor at the time of amalgamation. The school has worked hard to improve behaviour and has been largely successful although in several classes a few of the oldest pupils behave badly at times. The school has tried hard to improve attendance and has met with some success, but a small core of pupils still attend irregularly and an increasing number of parents take their children out of school for family holidays during term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 - 6
Quality of teaching	satisfactory	satisfactory	satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good in the nursery. The teaching of English and mathematics, as well as numeracy and literacy, for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good and in Years 3 to 6 it is satisfactory. The teaching of science is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6, mainly because not enough attention is paid to teaching investigative science. Teaching and learning in all the other subjects are satisfactory, except in information and communication technology and geography, where insufficient teaching was seen in order to be able to make a judgement. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning; a significant proportion in Years 1 to 4 is unsatisfactory and this impedes pupils' achievement and the standards that they attain. Although most of the teaching in the Year 1 / 2 classes is at least satisfactory, and much of it is good, the element of unsatisfactory teaching in one of the classes has contributed to a decline in the standards that pupils in Year 2 attained in reading, writing and mathematics in this year's national tests. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and it is good when specially trained teaching assistants teach small groups in literacy and numeracy. Higher attaining pupils are not always provided with tasks that are challenging enough and this impedes their achievement and the standards they attain.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The National Curriculum has been introduced successfully but pupils do not use computers enough and, although a good start has been made in Year 6, opportunities to link the different subjects together are not identified. There is insufficient emphasis on teaching investigative skills in science.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall and it is good in the special support groups.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Provision for moral and social development is good and there are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual and cultural awareness. There are too few opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of the beliefs and customs of other cultures and so they are not well prepared for life in our multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school is a caring community and pupils' safety and welfare are safeguarded. Information about pupils' attainment is not used enough to match work to their particular learning needs.

The school's partnership with parents is good. Parents are pleased with the improvements that have been made. The partnership has improved significantly as the parents' confidence in the school has grown. Parents particularly appreciate the open channels of communication between home and school. The school has, quite rightly, been concentrating as a matter of urgency on ensuring that the teaching and learning of reading, writing and mathematics are fully embedded in its curriculum. It is now in a good position to tackle developments in the other subjects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and her deputy gives strong support. Behaviour is much improved and test results have risen markedly this year. They manage the school very well. The roles of subject co-ordinators are at an early stage of development, mostly as a result of staff changes.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are closely associated with the school. They are well informed, fulfil their responsibilities very well and make a strong contribution to the school's development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school looks critically at each aspect of its work and puts in place effective strategies to address areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are used well. A good number of support staff and voluntary helpers support pupils' learning well.

Accommodation is very good but the outside learning area for the children in the nursery and reception classes is inadequate to support effective learning opportunities for all the children. Staffing levels are satisfactory although half the class teachers are employed in a temporary capacity, due mainly to the sharply declining school roll, which does not permit long-term employment. Resources are good, but computers are not used enough as an aid to learning. The headteacher has taken a strong lead in ensuring that the new school sets appropriate priorities for improvement. A great deal of hard work has been put into establishing the new school so that it is well placed to sustain improvements. The governing body are well aware of the principles of best value and applies them well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school expects their children to work hard. Their children enjoy school. The good teaching that their children receive and the good progress that they make. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of homework that their children receive. The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspection findings indicate that an appropriate amount of homework is set for pupils. The range of activities outside lessons is satisfactory. Parents are rather too approving of the quality of teaching and the progress that their children make; inspection findings show that these aspects of the school are satisfactory rather than good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

'Standards', the judgement of how well pupils are doing compared to others of the same age nationally, may be judged from national test results, or against the levels defined in the National Curriculum or the Early Learning Goals as 'expected' at certain ages. The other judgement, 'achievement', is a judgement made against pupils' starting points. The achievement judgement shows whether, in the longer term, enough progress is being made.

1. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are, for the most part, improving. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 in writing is mostly good and it is satisfactory in reading. Partly because many of the pupils currently in Year 2 entered the school with standards in communication, language and literacy that were well below average, however, they are unlikely to attain average standards by the end of the school year. The higher attaining pupils read confidently and express themselves effectively in writing but many others experience difficulties with reading fluently and writing effectively. This is mainly because many have a very narrow spoken vocabulary. Pupils' skills in numeracy develop well and by the end of Year 2 they have a sound understanding of how to add and subtract simple numbers, count in twos, fives and tens, recognise patterns in number and identify the properties of common two and three-dimensional shapes. They are on course to attain average standards by the end of this school year. In science, pupils in Year 2 know about the appliances that use electricity, have a sound understanding of healthy eating as well as how exercise affects their heart rate and know the conditions needed for plant life to grow effectively solid. They attain average standards. By the end of Year 2 most pupils also attain average standards in all the other subjects, except information and communication technology where standards are below average.
2. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6 but it is inconsistent. Pupils' achievement is directly related to the quality of teaching. Teaching for pupils in Years 3 and 4 is inconsistent and a significant proportion is unsatisfactory. This adversely affects pupils' achievement and the standards they attain. The teaching is somewhat better in Year 5 and pupils' achievement is enhanced; in Year 6 the teaching is much better and pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6, most pupils attain average standards in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, where they are below average.
3. Many pupils in Years 3 to 6 find reading and writing difficult. A minority read fluently and write well. Most pupils have a good understanding of basic number and are good at adding and subtracting. They find problem solving much more difficult and many struggle to remember multiplication facts and have a weak grasp of the principles of division. By the end of Year 6, most have a good understanding of simple fractions and percentages. In science most pupils have a good knowledge of how to make electrical circuits but their ability to organise experiments is under developed because they have too few opportunities to conduct purposeful investigations.
4. In the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 the school's performance improved significantly since the poor results in the previous year in English, mathematics and science. The improvement in English was exceptionally marked. In 2002 fewer than a half of pupils attained the national target of Level 4 in English, whereas in 2003 nearly three quarters of pupils attained this standard. In mathematics in 2002 a half of pupils attained Level 4 whereas in 2003 nearly two thirds of pupils attained this standard. The rate of improvement was similar in science. Although the proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 standards improved, especially in English,

this is still an area for further improvement as the proportions were still low, especially in mathematics and science.

5. In the national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2003 the school's performance declined in reading, writing and mathematics. This is due to inconsistencies in pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 which is directly related to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in the three Year 1 / 2 classes. In two of the classes, the teaching is good and a significant proportion is very good. In these classes pupils achieve well but the quality of teaching in the other class is not so good and this constrains achievement. An analysis of the test results shows that the pupils in two of the classes did much better than pupils in the other class. An analysis of the pupils' prior attainment indicates that there is a broadly similar mix of higher and lower attaining pupils in each class. Very nearly three quarters of pupils in Year 2 attained the national target of Level 2 but the proportion who remained at Level 1 was too high and the proportion who attained the higher Level 3 standard was too low. Similarly in writing, nearly a third of pupils failed to attain Level 2 and very few attained the higher Level 3 standard. In mathematics nearly all pupils attained Level 2 but a much smaller proportion than last year, a third fewer, attained the higher Level 3 standard.
6. The attainment of many children on entry to nursery classes is well below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Children achieve well in the nursery and satisfactorily in the reception classes so that, by the end of the reception year, the standards they attain have improved significantly, although most do not attain the early learning goals specified in national guidance, in all the six areas of learning. Most attain the early learning goals in personal, social, emotional and creative development. They are unlikely to meet the early learning goals in the other areas and achievement in physical development is constrained by the lack of a well-structured outdoor learning environment that is accessible to all children.
7. Throughout the school, the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils who are causing concern are identified early and given extra support within lessons. Those who are placed on the school's register of special educational needs are set targets and make steady progress towards meeting them. The school also provides extra support in mathematics and literacy within small groups away from the classroom. Here the pupils make better progress largely as a result of the well-focused teaching that they receive. Higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. The more able pupils are identified by the school but they are often not provided with tasks that present them with sufficient challenge and teachers' expectations of their performance are not high enough.
8. Across the school there were no significant differences noted in the work produced or the achievement of boys in relation to that of girls. However, in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2003, girls performed much better than boys, especially in English. The school is aware of this difference and has taken steps to encourage boys, such as providing reading material selected specifically to appeal particularly to boys. Pupils from the different ethnic minorities represented in the school achieve at the same rate as most pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and this is a particular strength. Pupils' attitudes towards learning are generally positive. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. It is good in the nursery and reception classes as well as in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 it is mostly satisfactory and there is a wealth of evidence which indicates that it has improved significantly in these classes since the school opened.
10. Pupils' attitudes are generally good and they enjoy coming to school. Parents agree that this is so. They are usually interested in their lessons and are happy to be involved in class activities. Particularly good attitudes are developed where lessons are interesting. This was clearly shown in a very good personal, social and health education lesson for pupils in Year 6, where they were talking about moving to the secondary school. One of the most striking things about this lesson was the very good quality of relationships between the teacher and pupils, demonstrated clearly when she empathised with their feelings of nervousness on their induction day. Pupils were keen

to volunteer their thoughts because they knew they would be valued. In turn, the teacher was able to offer them some good ways of coping, for example by offering to ask the visiting secondary school work experience students talk about secondary school life.

11. In lessons where pupils were not sure what they were expected to do, or where tasks were either too easy or too difficult, a minority of pupils, mostly boys, lost interest quickly and decided they did not want to learn. This was when their behaviour started to deteriorate and they became confrontational and defiant. Several older pupils have been affected by their experiences at their previous school, where governors report that behaviour in some classes had broken down. One Year 6 class faced the additional challenge of a having new temporary teacher, employed during the week of the inspection to cover staff absence. Not surprisingly, some of them found this difficult to cope with. The large majority of pupils is polite and helpful. Most engaged happily in conversations with visitors and discussed their work sensibly. Most understand the school's Golden Rules and adhere to their own classroom codes, which they helped to compile.
12. Although the number of pupils who were excluded from the school due to unacceptable behaviour was high in the school's first academic year, this was a measure introduced to re-establish behaviour boundaries and to send strong messages to pupils and their parents that aggressive behaviour would not be tolerated. This was a turning point in the school's successful work to improve behaviour. The numbers of pupils who have been temporarily excluded is much lower for the current year and none has been excluded permanently.
13. There are few instances of oppressive behaviour and bullying, and pupils explain how much better things are now, compared to when the school first opened. Pupils agree that teachers do sort things out if they are told about problems. The headteacher is very firm about the school's role in promoting racial understanding and tolerance and any reported incidents are dealt with resolutely.
14. Most pupils with special educational needs show positive attitudes to their work, especially in the small group work outside the classroom when they are well supported in group or individual tasks. They try hard and take a pride in their achievements. When the tasks given are not appropriate for their levels of ability, they often lose interest and attitudes to work wane, leading to a slower rate of progress.
15. The good relationships within the school help to promote a happy, friendly learning ethos and most pupils make good progress in developing their social skills. The 'Playground Squad', a task force of specially trained pupils in Year 6, are responsible for helping pupils to play sensibly with each other and for helping to sort out differences. They have helped to improve the quality of relationships and made lunchtime play more purposeful. They particularly enjoy playing with the younger children who, in turn, enjoy the older ones paying them attention.
16. Most pupils contribute enthusiastically to the life of the school and they carry out jobs in the classroom with care and pride. School councillors are proud of their input into decision-making, and point to the choice of paint colours in the classroom as being one of their biggest successes, particularly as they described the classrooms as originally being dark and depressing. Pupils recently completed a review of how the school has changed since it first opened. They perceptively concluded 'There are not as many naughty children, which makes the school friendlier, bullying is reduced, we can concentrate better in class and we are learning more and new children will want to come to our school'. The inspection team wholeheartedly endorsed these views.
17. Attendance has remained stable since the school was established. It is below national averages; part of this is because there are a growing number of parents taking holidays during term time. In addition, a small number of families do not feel their child's regular attendance at school is important and knowingly allow them to be absent without good cause. Unauthorised absence is a little higher than that seen in many schools, mainly because there are a few parents who refuse to, or cannot, give valid reasons why their child has been away. Improving attendance is one of the many challenges that the school continues to face.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but within this general picture there are inconsistencies. The quality of teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory. Teaching was good in the nursery and satisfactory overall in the reception classes where two temporary teachers work. In two of the three mixed Year 1 / 2 classes teaching was good and occasionally very good but in the other class there was a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. In the four mixed Year 3 / 4 classes teaching was mainly good in two of them but unsatisfactory teaching occurred in the other two. Teaching in Year 5 is more consistent and ranges from satisfactory to good. In Year 6 a temporary teacher was employed during the week of the inspection and so the quality of teaching was not representative. In the other Year 6 class nearly all the teaching was good and much of it was very good.
19. The teaching of nearly all subjects is satisfactory; it is good in English for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and unsatisfactory in science for pupils in Years 3 to 6 because lessons are not interesting enough and there is insufficient emphasis on scientific exploration and investigation. There was insufficient evidence available to make judgements about the quality of teaching in geography or information and communication technology. Reading and writing are taught well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies have been implemented successfully. The teaching of numeracy is good in Years 1 to 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
20. The teacher in the nursery deploys the nursery nurses well so that each of the three staff teach three different groups of children. The teaching for each group is good and the small size of each group means that the staff get to know and understand each child extremely well. This results in effective learning for all the children. Part-time trained teaching assistants work with reception children and make a good contribution to the quality of learning although there are occasions when they sit listening passively to the teacher rather than being actively involved in supporting children. Foundation Stage planning does not include specific learning objectives for particular children, even those with special educational needs, although there is a valuable planned programme of support for children who are moving to reception. Staff, particularly in the reception classes, do not always encourage children to be independent; for example, when putting on or removing shoes. The nursery teacher evaluates learning activities but this is usually too general to inform planning for individual's needs.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are generally included in all activities. Where available, they receive good support from the learning support assistants who know the pupils well and enable them to achieve satisfactorily. There are occasions when pupils are withdrawn for additional teaching of basic skills outside the classroom. Within these sessions the pupils receive good, focused teaching of the basic skills based firmly on the pupils' learning needs as outlined in their Individual Education Plans. This is planned to occur at a different time each week so that they are able to enjoy satisfactory access to the subjects that they miss when leave their classes. Although there are no pupils with statements of special educational need, due to local education authority policy, those pupils who have been identified as needing high levels of assistance are given extra support so that they can take part in all lessons. Within lessons, teachers do not always pay sufficient attention to planning work that is clearly based on the pupils' Individual Education Plans. Often all pupils are given the same tasks to complete rather than work that is matched to their particular stages of development. This slows down the rate of learning in these lessons.
22. Across the school teachers prepare lessons carefully and planning is generally satisfactory, although insufficient attention is paid to modifying work enough to meet the widely varying learning needs of pupils in the mixed age classes. Lesson planning is particularly effective where the specific skills and knowledge that the teacher intends to teach are described explicitly. Where lesson intentions are vague, such as 'To use a design sheet to carry out a project', there is often insufficient attention paid to teaching new skills. Also, in the lessons where it was made absolutely clear what the teacher expected the pupils to learn, the teacher's evaluation of the

effectiveness of the learning was more accurate. In the lessons where teachers paid great attention to detail and maintained high expectations of pupils' capacity to learn, the quality of the work produced was better than in those lessons where the teachers' expectations were too low. In several lessons teachers did not expect enough of pupils, especially the higher attaining groups. In a very good English lesson for pupils in Years 1 / 2, for example, the teacher expected that the pupils would be able to understand and identify parts of speech, such as adverbs and adjectives. The higher attaining pupils used these terms accurately and were clearly interested in the technicalities of language. In another good lesson for the same year groups, puppets were used effectively to encourage pupils to ask different types of questions. Here the good quality and quantity of glove puppets added interest and motivated the pupils well to develop their understanding of different types of questions.

23. In most classes pupils' behaviour is managed well. Several of the older pupils are prone to defiant behaviour but most of the teachers maintain a firm, consistent approach so that poor behaviour does not interfere with learning. In one Year 6 lesson the work on demonstrating and testing the electrically powered buggies they had made was so enthralling that behaviour was not an issue. Here the teacher's calm, quiet, deliberate manner promoted serious attitudes to learning. A reasonable amount of homework is set and this helps to consolidate and extend learning effectively.

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

24. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory in all subjects in Years 1 to 6 except information and communication technology, where they are unsatisfactory. Also in science there are too few opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment. The school has worked hard in the two years it has been open to put in place a coherent curriculum. It includes provision for the nursery and reception children, all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, together with provision for personal, social and health education. It is generally broad and relevant to the children's interests and meets statutory requirements. Additional support is provided for pupils who have special aptitudes in music and sports. The school has also put in place a range of programmes to support pupils who are identified as requiring special short courses to enhance their learning. Strategies are also in place, such as providing appropriately stimulating reading material, to ensure that boys' interest in literacy is maintained. These interventions are having a positive impact and consequently the standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 6 are beginning to rise significantly.
25. The curriculum is suitably planned over a two year cycle to ensure that topics are not repeated for pupils in the mixed age classes. The use of the nationally recommended planning frameworks promotes appropriate curricular coverage and the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding. However, whilst covering the agreed curriculum, planning is not always sufficiently adapted to match the learning needs of pupils' at widely differing stages of development. The planning is thorough for lessons in literacy and numeracy. Teachers have received considerable extra training in teaching literacy and numeracy effectively. This has helped to raise standards. Planning is good in the nursery and satisfactory for the children in the reception classes. It is satisfactory for other subjects.
26. The school has two attractive libraries that contain a wide range of good quality books. Most of the older pupils have a good understanding of how to use the library for research purposes. However, the libraries are not used sufficiently for teaching pupils how to search for information. The school has plans to improve their use by providing regular opportunities for research.
27. There is an imbalance in the time allocated for subjects. In order to raise standards in the key skills of reading and writing, the school has allocated a disproportionate amount of time for teaching English. Consequently there is less time for history, geography and music, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The result is that, while there is adequate coverage of the National

Curriculum, work in several subjects is not covered in depth. An appropriate programme of homework is planned, mainly for English and mathematics.

28. The National Curriculum has been introduced successfully but the school is not yet identifying opportunities to link subjects together in order to make the curriculum more meaningful. There are some examples, such as using skills developed in art and design to support work in history; however, generally, such links are not planned systematically. The use of computers is not planned for, and they are not used much, to support teaching and learning across the curriculum. The school has identified this as a priority for improvement.
29. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils' Individual Education Plans state clearly what pupils need to learn to make progress. However, the targets set are often too broad and not staged in sufficiently small steps that are achievable in the short-term. Pupils with special educational needs have access to the whole curriculum and there is good support to enable them to participate fully. Where they are taught within small groups outside the classroom, the school is careful to ensure that they do not always miss the same lessons.
30. The school enriches pupils' learning experiences through a satisfactory range of extra activities. These extend pupils' appreciation of various subjects and add interest. Each class has an entitlement to a visit or visitor each year. Events this year have included a visit from a local poet and a course at an activity centre. The school offers a number of clubs, some of which are open to younger children. Pupils in Year 6 participate in a residential experience, which supports their social development well. The range of sporting events makes a positive contribution to the pupils' physical development.
31. The school's provision for pupils' personal social and health education is based on a nationally recommended scheme. The school's programme has many well thought out features. The philosophy is explicit in the policy statement, 'Children who feel good about themselves and their abilities are the ones that are most likely to succeed'. The school's approach is to increase pupils' self esteem and develop respect for each other. The co-ordinator has devised a programme which covers a range of relevant and interesting topics, with time allocated each week. This gives pupils opportunities to discuss a range of questions that include health education, local affairs and environmental issues. These discussions and debates make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. They also help pupils develop their speaking and listening skills. For example, in a well-led session pupils in Year 6 were encouraged to accept and give constructive criticism as a means of improving their own work and in order to help each other. The debate was mature and sensitively led by the class teacher. Pupils' views are valued in these class sessions and the suggestions offered by the school council are acted upon. Appropriate attention is paid to sex education and drugs awareness for older children through a planned programme. This includes reference to healthy lifestyles.
32. The community contributes well to the pupils' learning. The local minister makes regular visits. The neighbourhood renewal scheme has provided extensive grants to support learning by providing extra resources for information and communication technology. The 'Sure Start' project supports early learning well by involving parents at an early stage in supporting their children's development. Mansfield town football club run an after school project 'playing for success' which pupils in Year 5 attend. This motivates pupils because local football players participate and show interest in their learning. Pupils from the local secondary school work in classes on 'work experience'. During the inspection week they made a positive contribution and the pupils clearly enjoyed having these older boys and girls helping them in lessons. There are good links with the local secondary school to which the majority of pupils transfer. There is regular liaison and specialist staff support aspects of the physical education curriculum. The college has funded some of the school's extra curricular sports activities. Discussions with pupils indicate that they feel well prepared for transfer to the secondary school.
33. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies contribute appropriately to this area of pupils' development. The local minister has a very good relationship with the pupils and he uses

interesting story materials during his regular visits. Music by artists, such as Norah Jones, helps set a special mood, with appropriate hymns and opportunities to participate in a prayer. Sometimes the atmosphere is broken as pupils begin to leave during the singing of the hymn or because some older pupils find it difficult to participate. Opportunities are missed for all teachers to share in collective worship, as not all attend each assembly. The school's religious education programme contributes well by providing opportunities to think about issues such as religious beliefs and concepts of life, death and an after life.

34. The school's curriculum also contributes to the pupils' spiritual development. Nursery children experience special moments of delight and wonder, for example when blowing bubbles in the outside area. Older pupils have opportunities to develop concern and compassion through learning about the experiences of different people. They explore personal issues such as friendship, health, mental health, well being, respect, growing up and loss. They learn about wider issues such as Remembrance Day, war, injustice, child labour and the environment.

35. Pupils' moral development is promoted well. Teaching and support staff give clear moral direction and provide good role models. Pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. They support many charities throughout the year and this encourages pupils to consider moral issues.
36. Provision for pupils' social development is good. The school's approach values the contribution of all pupils. Personal initiative is developed well by encouraging pupils to suggest fund raising events. They contribute to school decision-making by participating in the school and class councils. This is developing well. They have contributed to the school's marking policy and information that goes to parents. However, pupils do not always have enough chances to use their initiative within lessons. A team of older pupils are members of the 'Playtime Squad', who give support to younger pupils in the playground. Pupils are taught to care for the environment through environmental topics and recycling projects. Pupils also have the opportunity to visit and sing carols to elderly members of the community.
37. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn about British, European and non-European cultures through the planned curriculum. A visiting theatre company widens pupils' cultural appreciation. Pupils' awareness of cultural diversity is developed appropriately in English through texts such as 'Kensuke's Kingdom' and there are good examples in the history curriculum where younger pupils learn about the experiences of Anne Frank and Mary Seacole. Older pupils explore issues such as the experiences of the Pamlico Indians. However, these are not planned systematically across the curriculum. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures in religious education but there are no visits to non-Christian places of worship. The school has identified this as an area for development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. There are good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. Child protection procedures are firmly established and staff have a good level of awareness and understanding of their roles. The school provides satisfactory support and advice for its pupils. Health and safety procedures are good and the school's policy is appropriately detailed. Governors make regular checks of the premises and are very clear about their responsibility to ensure that the school is safe.
39. Procedures for ensuring good behaviour have considerably improved since the school amalgamated and they are now good. A detailed behaviour policy clearly outlines firm expectations, based on a positive approach, using praise, encouragement, incentive and inducement. Staff adhere to the policy consistently. Rules are prominently displayed and one rule is the focus for discussion each week.
40. Lunchtime leaders, a new name suggested by pupils for the midday supervisors, fulfil their roles well and help make sure good behaviour is maintained on the playground. They are helped in this because the school provides a good range of playground equipment which helps to keep pupils fully occupied. Teams of pupils from the 'playground squad' initiate games and help sort out squabbles.
41. Instances of unsatisfactory behaviour are carefully monitored and pupils are generally supported well. Each class has its own notes about pupils with particularly challenging behaviour, including advice on the most effective ways to manage particular individuals. The strategies are largely successful in ensuring that poor behaviour rarely disrupts learning.
42. Systems for rewarding good attendance and checking on pupils who are away are satisfactory. The school's attendance figures are generally stable, although below national averages. A growing number of parents are choosing to take holidays during term time. Appropriate procedures to improve the way attendance is monitored, including more regular telephoning of parents as soon as their child is absent, are due to be applied next term. Reward systems largely focus on winning an attendance cup, which has successfully engendered an element of competition between classes. In addition, there are termly awards for full attendance. The school

makes use of the services of the Educational Welfare Officer when appropriate, for the small number of families whose children attend only sporadically.

43. As the inspection took place during the final weeks of the summer term, it gave the inspection team the opportunity to see the good quality 'transfer' programme. This programme, specially designed to help pupils in Year 6 to move comfortably from primary to secondary school, helps to prepare pupils well. During their personal, social and health education lessons, they were encouraged to set themselves targets to achieve at the secondary school, whilst discussing ways they could help prepare for the move, for example, by looking on their new school's web site.
44. The school has adopted a clear policy on race equality. The headteacher is keen to promote good race relations and has attended an awareness-raising training course. The need to address any racial issues within the curriculum has been identified as an area for improvement.
45. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage. With the help of the special educational needs co-ordinators, class teachers write pupils' individual educational plans and set targets for their learning that, although appropriate, are rather too broad. Reviews are carried out appropriately in order to check that pupils are making enough progress towards their targets. Pupils' achievement is reviewed regularly and the plans adjusted accordingly. There is a generous number of learning support assistants who provide good levels of support within lessons.
46. Arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Teachers are mostly aware of and sensitive to the personal and home circumstances of each pupil. In particular, pupils who receive additional literacy support in small teaching groups, taken by skilled teaching assistants, receive good individual assistance and clear guidance.
47. Procedures, for assessing, monitoring and supporting pupils' attainment are satisfactory overall. The headteacher and deputy, in the short time the school has been open, have given this a high priority and have strengthened the existing assessment arrangements. A recent innovation is a more rigorous computerised tracking system that plots pupils' attainment. This helps teachers to set appropriate targets and to assess whether or not pupils have made enough progress. This work is at an early stage and is not fully embedded in the school's practice.
48. Assessment arrangements in nursery and reception classes are good. The school assesses its pupils when they enter reception using the agreed scheme. Ongoing assessment arrangements for reception children reflect the early learning goals. Careful records are maintained and work samples usually have helpful notes attached to indicate the context of the work and give a clear picture of what children know and can do. Staff usually note the dates children achieve particular targets and this forms a helpful record of progress. Records in both year groups are not always used effectively as a basis for planning the next steps in learning.
49. There are good assessment arrangements in place for English and mathematics. The information is used effectively to target groups of pupils for a range of intervention programmes and support. These targeted interventions, for example 'Booster' sessions and additional withdrawal of pupils who are just below the national average, have paid off. They have contributed significantly to the higher standards attained by pupils in Year 6 this year in the national tests.
50. The school analyses and uses data from a range of tests. The results of tests are rigorously analysed and the key areas for improvement are identified and shared with staff. The headteacher is aware of the need to ensure the best use is made of the range of assessment information. The school has made a good start in a short time but the use of assessment information is in its early stages. Currently work is not yet consistently planned to reflect the widely varying stages of development that pupils in each class have reached. In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of what pupils have learned already and therefore what they need to learn next. As a result, teachers do not always match the tasks closely enough to pupils' particular stages of development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents support the school in its endeavours and are pleased with how it has improved since the amalgamation. Parents agree the school expects their children to work hard and they are pleased with the quality of the teaching. They feel their children are making good progress and enjoy school. Inspectors largely agree with parents' positive views. However, they find that parents are rather too approving in some areas, as the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and an area for further improvement. A small number of parents had concerns about homework and the range of activities outside lessons. However, inspection findings show that arrangements for homework are satisfactory and similar to that seen in many primary schools. There is a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities.
52. There is a good relationship between school and parents, which has slowly built up during the two years that the school has been established. This is primarily due to the hard work of headteacher and governors in establishing good lines of communication. The fact that almost all parents attend parent's evenings is a testimony to their success in building up good relationships. Partnership with parents and carers in the nursery and reception classes is good. Home visits are made to all children's homes by nursery staff. These are helpful in gaining knowledge of children and their families. Staff discuss a questionnaire about the children with parents and carers, but they are then left to complete this on their own. This is a missed opportunity for a worthwhile discussion to be recorded by staff. Some answers indicated that parents and carers did not see the point of the questions or what to answer to particular questions. Parents and carers frequently help in the nursery and this enhances children's learning well. Parents and carers make a significant contribution to learning by reading with their children at home.
53. The school tries hard to ensure that the parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted regularly about their children's progress. However a small minority does not always respond to the school's invitations to attend meetings. Parents are made aware of targets set in pupils' Individual Education Plans during parents' consultation sessions.
54. Parents receive regular, interesting newsletters about school life, complemented by the high quality 'Northfield Grapevine', which is the governors' own newsletter. Sending out both these publications ensures that parents receive a balance of information about pupils' achievements, together with views about how the school is improving and where more work is needed. The 'Grapevine' also includes useful, 'parent friendly' tips on how parents can help their child at home. It is very unusual to find pupils sending out letters to parents. School councillors send out a termly overview of what each year group is covering in different subject areas. This is another example of good practice. The school is good at listening to parents' views and taking action. The school responded positively to concerns from parents about lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils, although this is still an area for further improvement.
55. The governors' annual report to parents gives a good, detailed picture of how the school has been managed over the year. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory, and contain an appropriate amount of detail on their progress, especially in English and mathematics. Sometimes, targets for pupils to improve upon are not precise enough to be useful. For example, comments such as 'Maintain your excellent attitude to the subject' are less helpful than, 'Think more carefully how you are reading and begin to develop skills such as deduction and inference'.
56. Staff welcome and appreciate parental help and parents provide a good level of involvement in school life. A good number are involved in helping in classes, or with decorating, gardening and sporting activities. The parents' association works hard to help organise fundraising events. They are currently using money raised to improve the internal courtyard areas. The school works closely with parents on homework, and if any is not completed, parents are contacted, either by a word at the end of the school day, or by letter. The headteacher has identified a group of parents who are not responding to the school's approaches and who provide little help for their child's learning at home. To try and overcome this, they have provided a community room for the support group 'Sure Start' whom they hope will explore ways of helping parents to help their child.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The headteacher provides very good leadership. The school faced many challenges when it was established nearly two years ago. There is a great deal of testimony from governors, parents, pupils and the local education authority that behaviour in the junior school was poor and that standards were low. The headteacher of the newly formed school called parents to a meeting and made it perfectly clear that poor behaviour would no longer be tolerated and that the standards pupils attained had to improve significantly. A clear behaviour policy was agreed and adopted. After several pupils had been excluded from the school for contravening the school's policy, behaviour improved. Pupils currently in Year 6 state that it came as a great relief to them when behaviour started to improve and that, prior to amalgamation, poor behaviour impeded their learning. Under the strong and determined leadership of the new headteacher, the school has begun to successfully tackle the challenges it faces and standards are beginning to rise. In most classes a calm, orderly learning environment has been established. A clear teaching and learning policy that gives teachers clear guidance on how to teach effectively has been agreed. The headteacher is supported very well by the deputy headteacher. Together they have established a programme of systematically monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics. They have trained and prepared subject co-ordinators so that they are now ready to extend this monitoring and evaluation and identify areas for improvement in each subject. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology report termly to the governing body on achievements in their subjects. This helps to keep the governing body well informed. Governors also visit the school regularly and maintain a monitoring file.
58. The headteacher has taken a strong lead in producing a good school improvement plan. Quite rightly the main priorities were to improve behaviour, the quality of teaching and the standards that pupils attained in English and mathematics. The plan highlights the success of many new initiatives in the school's first year of operation and gives a clear direction to subsequent improvements. It incorporates a strong vision of the high quality education that the headteacher, teaching staff, governors and support staff are working towards achieving. They have made a very good start. A large number of policy documents have been written, agreed and ratified by the governing body. These give clear direction to the work of the school. There is a good summary sheet that shows how the school plans to extend improvements methodically over the next three years. All staff and governors are closely involved in development planning. The caretaker, for example, is a governor and takes a lead in organising the development of the premises. The governing body has its own section in the plan aimed at increasing their involvement, support and expertise. There are many references to initiatives designed to promote greater involvement of parents in their children's learning. Subject co-ordinators write action plans for their particular areas of responsibility but these often focus on developing resources and ensuring that curricular plans are followed rather than on how standards will be improved.
59. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and has good potential for further development. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, experienced and works hard to ensure the learning in classes is effective. She does a significant part of the planning for both the reception and nursery classes. The co-ordinator does not formally monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning by classroom observations, although she has many informal discussions with staff. The monitoring of the curriculum is underdeveloped and has not identified the unnecessary repetition of some learning tasks that limits children's progress. The nursery and reception classes are not yet working together as a unit. Reception staff plan and work very much with the Year 1 / 2 classes rather than the nursery and attend assemblies and share playtimes with the older pupils. While this may be acceptable at this stage of the year, it does not encourage cohesion and the development of a coherent Foundation Stage curriculum.
60. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There are two co-ordinators; one responsible for the infants and one for the juniors. They work well together and have opportunities to discuss and liaise with each other about aspects of provision. Due regard has been given to the nationally agreed code of practice for these pupils and the school's policy reflects this. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs supports the

school well and is developing her involvement. Procedures for managing special educational needs are systematic, the organisation is thorough and records are carefully maintained. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs as it is not local education authority practice. However, the school has identified a number of pupils who require a great amount of extra assistance in their learning and has provided additional support to meet their needs.

61. The overall staffing levels and range of teaching skills satisfactorily meet the current circumstances of the school. The school has found it very difficult to recruit teachers since it opened. Governors report that this is due mainly to the reputation that had been established in the junior school. Signs are that this is changing for the better, as the new school's reputation improves and pupils' behaviour is better. However, half the classes are taught by temporary teachers because of the uncertainty about future employment associated with the sharply falling school population. This is constraining the schools' ability to allocate responsibilities on a long-term basis. Already in its short history, the new school has had a high turnover of staff. This has impeded the rate of improvement. There are a good number of well qualified and experienced support staff who make a very valuable contribution to the quality of education the school provides.
62. The office manager plays a key role in ensuring that day-to-day office procedures run smoothly and efficiently. All school accounts are kept meticulously and audited regularly. The last local authority auditor's report confirmed that the school was operating good practices. The caretaking and cleaning staff also fulfil their duties well and make a strong contribution to the school's tidiness and cleanliness. Another stalwart is a local lady who has, for over a quarter of a century, visited the school on three afternoons each week to voluntarily complete any routine administrative or clerical tasks. The headteacher ensures that everybody on the school's team understands that, whatever their roles, they all play a vital part in the school's smooth functioning.
63. The very high quality accommodation is a particular strength, and provides a stimulating and exciting learning environment. The spacious building includes a library, a food technology area and two good computer suites. Ventilation in the computer suites and in the infant hall is inadequate. Inner courtyards between classrooms are currently being improved to serve as outdoor classrooms. The large grounds are attractively landscaped, and include two sports fields and impressive outdoor play equipment. Nursery children have easy access to an outdoor area but this is rather bare and includes a walkway to the infant building that inhibits the full development of the area. Reception children do not have easy access to an outdoor area. However, the outdoor learning area for the foundation stage is to be re-developed soon.
64. Resources are good in most subject areas and allow all aspects of the curriculum to be taught in full. Resources for mathematics and English have been improved recently with new reference books and sets of books for group reading. Resources for information and communications technology are particularly good, and include computerised whiteboards which were installed in eight classrooms just prior to the inspection.
65. The governing body provide very good and well informed support. Governors are ably led by the chair and all are highly committed to improving the new school. Finances are managed wisely. Several successful bids have been made to various organisations for specific grants to supplement the school's resources, including a grant from the lottery fund for sports equipment. All such grants are properly spent on the designated areas. A very large financial surplus accrued last year for a number of reasons such as the aggregation of surpluses accumulated in both schools prior to amalgamation, extra money provided to assist the school to implement its amalgamation plans successfully and the need to conserve finances to maintain staffing at reasonable levels against a background of a sharp drop in the school's roll and the consequent fall in income. The surplus is due to reduce this year and in subsequent years. Budgetary planning is incorporated satisfactorily in the school improvement plan. Governors are acutely aware of the principles of best value, including the need to consult with all stakeholders, and apply them well. There is no complacency in the school. Staff and governors fully appreciate that there is still a great deal of work to do to improve standards further. Taking into account the improvement that

has been made over the past two years and the satisfactory quality of teaching, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to improve standards further the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- (1) * Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning by:
 - implementing a rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluation in order to identify weaknesses in teaching and learning;
 - providing support to eradicate the weaknesses identified;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop skills of investigation and exploration in science;
 - improving the quality of lesson planning so that work is more closely matched to the learning needs of all groups, especially in the mixed age classes, and key vocabulary is included in lesson plans and clearly explained to pupils;
 - making the targets in pupils' individual education plans more precise;
 - refining lesson evaluations so that a clear picture is developed about how successful learning has been and that evaluations are used to inform future planning for the next lessons;
 - helping teachers to develop a clearer understanding of what constitutes high quality teaching;
 - raising teachers' expectations of the quality of work that pupils are capable of producing.
(*paragraphs 2,3,5,7,18,21,22,25,54,89,90,94,95,96,103,108,111,112,114,115,146.*)
- (2) *Develop assessment procedures by:
 - giving teachers a clearer picture of what stage in their learning pupils have reached in each subject and what the next steps in learning should be;
 - using assessment data to match work more closely to the learning needs of all pupils, especially the higher and lower attaining pupils in the mixed age classes. (*paragraphs 7,21,22,47,50,98,131,166.*)
- (3) *Develop the use of computers to support teaching and learning across the curriculum. (*paragraphs 1,80,91,97,106,109,116,118,125,130,138,142,155,166.*)
- (4) Develop links between the subjects of the National Curriculum so that learning becomes more purposeful and relevant to pupils' learning needs. (*paragraphs 28,112,121,124.*)
- (5) * Develop the use of the outdoor learning area for children in the nursery and reception classes so that a more stimulating learning environment is established for all the children in these classes. (*paragraphs 6,63,82,83.*)

Other less significant issues for improvement.

- Improve the quality of multi-cultural education so that pupils are better prepared for life in our multi-cultural society. (*paragraphs 37,167.*)
- Extend the use of the libraries so that pupils are taught how to research for information. (*paragraphs 26,89.*)
- Develop pupils' speaking skills by fully implementing the school's speaking and listening policy. (*paragraphs 20,88,92,94.*)
- Improve attendance by discouraging parents from taking children out of school during term time for family holidays, by implementing the planned programme of contacting parents as soon as their child is absent and by extending the reward system for good attendance so that it benefits more pupils individually as well as the whole class. (*paragraphs 17,42.*)

* These areas for improvement have already been identified by the school and feature in its development planning.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	93
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	35	46	5	0	0
Percentage	0	8	38	49	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	22.5	347
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	58

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11	89

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	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2003	26	20	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	15	24
	Girls	17	17	20
	Total	34	32	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (86)	70(81)	96 (95)
	National	[*] (84)	[*] (86)	[*] (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	24	24
	Girls	17	20	20
	Total	34	44	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (86)	96 (88)	96 (93)
	National	[*] (85)	[*] (89)	[*] (89)

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

* The national results are not yet available for 2003.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2003	32	32	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	23
	Girls	27	21	29
	Total	46	40	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (47)	63 (50)	83 (69)
	National	[*] (75)	[*] (73)	[*] (86)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	18	24
	Girls	25	24	29
	Total	40	42	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (46)	66 (46)	83 (55)
	National	[*] (73)	[*] (74)	[*] (82)

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

* The national results are not yet available for 2003.

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	325	14	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.3
Average class size	28.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	250

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Total number of education support staff	1.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28

Financial information

Financial year	2002-2003
	£
Total income	1,067,542
Total expenditure	901, 884
Expenditure per pupil	2,541
Balance brought forward from previous year	173, 873
Balance carried forward to next year	165,657

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	360
Number of questionnaires returned	84

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	46	0	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	39	59	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	57	10	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	54	16	1	0
The teaching is good.	49	46	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	51	13	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	34	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	34	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	33	54	10	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	45	49	2	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	50	0	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	41	7	0	7

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

A revised curriculum that follows national guidance has been introduced for children in nursery and reception classes. National guidance recommends six areas of learning and these are:

- *personal, social and emotional development;*
- *communication, language and literacy;*
- *mathematical development;*
- *knowledge and understanding of the world;*
- *physical development;*
- *creative development.*

The curriculum details 'stepping stones' in each area of learning that lead to 'Early Learning Goals' for each area.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. Teaching is good and children achieve well so that, by the end of the reception year, most children attain the early learning goals. Children's attitudes and behaviour are good and often very good. On occasions children in the nursery show good levels of independence; for example, they place their paintings to dry independently, behave very sensibly at snack-time, take turns to give out snacks, eat properly and tidy away afterwards. Snack time is a particularly valuable session where staff reinforce good eating and social habits such as washing hands before eating. However, there are occasions when staff do not ensure that children who disrupt the learning of others by, for example, knocking over apparatus, make amends by picking up the equipment and apologising.
68. Adults are caring and provide effective role models as well as good opportunities for children to relate to others. Nearly all children settle to their activities readily and routines are very clear and well-established. On arrival, many parents of children in the nursery share an activity where children choose cards that provide a menu of the tasks that they want to complete during the session. This activity contributes towards children settling in comfortably and in making decisions for themselves.
69. Children in the reception classes usually concentrate well. In one very good lesson they showed great excitement at the prospect of performing a drama based on the story 'Nine Ducks Nine'. This dramatisation in front of the class helped to foster confidence and self-esteem. Occasionally, staff do too much for children, such as tidying away for them or not encouraging them to do as much as they can for themselves, as for example when tying their shoelaces.
70. Throughout the Foundation Stage relationships are good and children develop a clear understanding of the standards of behaviour required.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Teaching is satisfactory; it is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. Staff provide good opportunities for children to improve their communication and language skills. Children achieve well but most are unlikely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Staff encourage children to listen carefully and follow instructions and in many cases children respond well to this. Most children listen intently to stories. On several occasions children demonstrated poorly developed speaking skills. When filling in the daily weather chart, for example, the teacher asked what was the morning job that they always had to complete first. One child replied, 'Um – sunny'. When urged to explain, none could explain that

they always filled in the weather chart with symbols to indicate the type of weather that they were experiencing.

72. Staff tell a range of stories and children take books home to reinforce early reading skills. Nursery staff teach children to say letter names and sounds through a range of activities; for example, children were learning to recognise 'w' and 'j' through playing a game that required them to memorise items beginning with these letters. A significant number of children take time to recognise letters and sounds. Some were not able to name items such as a jug, which makes it difficult for them to hear and to identify letters and sounds in these words. Staff provide good guidance to help children learn the names of letters and the sounds they represent. A small group of children who read 'Owl Babies' with an adult followed the story with enjoyment. They identified features in the pictures, joined in reading the refrains and turned pages appropriately. One older child could tell the story from the pictures and another child, a very good reader, read simple sentences accurately and recognised the words out of context.
73. The good emphasis on language development continues in the reception classes. Reception teachers use the format of the National Literacy Strategy. Occasionally introductory sessions are too long, leaving little time for children to develop skills independently. Drama was used effectively in one class to reinforce literacy skills. Children handle books well and most read simple books accurately as well as individual words from memory. Most enjoy reading. One older, higher attaining child, who read accurately and fluently, was very confident in talking about reading and books. Generally children are not expressive readers. Few used sounds to build up the words they did not know.
74. Children have access to a good range of books. They take books home each day and many parents contribute significantly to pupils' achievement by reading with them at home. Staff keep good records which monitor children's progress well, although these do not always indicate ways forward.
75. Children's writing skills are not developed to the same degree as their reading skills, although regular opportunities for writing practice are provided. There is an informal writing corner in the nursery and staff plan writing opportunities as part of role play as, for example, when children 'write' appointments in the vet's clinic. It was interesting to note that when writing was set up outdoors, children tended not to choose this activity unless an adult was involved. Children experience a range of writing opportunities such as labelling, retelling stories or writing rhymes which help them to improve letter formation and develop personal writing. When learning to write the sounds that animals make, higher attaining children made good attempts at 'moo', 'baa' and one could spell 'grunt' accurately. However, staff did not take the opportunity to discuss how sounds do not always indicate how some words are written, even though children were at the stage where this was appropriate. Some activities for lower attaining children focused on copying the sounds that animals make but this did little to reinforce language and literacy skills.

Mathematical development

76. Teaching is satisfactory; it is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. Children's achievement is satisfactory but most are unlikely to attain all the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Staff make the most of every opportunity to reinforce number skills; for example, counting numbers for the register. Nursery staff usually set up an outdoor number task although children do not choose these freely unless adults are involved. Staff make activities relevant to other work; for example, children take an active role in changing the date and working out what number comes after yesterday's date. Nursery children counted to 10 with adult help and were learning to place carpet tiles in order from 1 to 10. Many were uncertain about the sequence after 5.
77. Reception staff continue to use regular opportunities to develop children's mathematical understanding. Most children count confidently to 10 but need a lot of help to count back from 9 to 1 and to place numbers in order from lowest to highest. Most match numbers to items accurately when playing games. Several children were inattentive and misbehaved with one teaching assistant and, even though they knew the numbers 1 to 3, they pretended not to recognise them. Children estimated and checked numbers although individual children had difficulty writing numerals such as 7. They do not recognise numbers well and only half of one

class recognised numbers after 5. Individual children put the correct number of counters on ladybird's wings to make numbers totalling up to 10. They successfully matched numerals to the appropriate number of objects but most are still at the stage where they have to touch each object, one by one, in order to count accurately.

78. Work in books in reception classes shows that children have had good opportunities to develop basic number skills. They have also learnt about shapes such as squares, circles and the length of objects. Planning is often the same for nursery and reception classes; for example, both years have made houses out of shapes made from sticky paper; this restricts progress. Water and sand measuring activities are very similar in both year groups, rather than being graded so that the older children are provided with more challenging tasks.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79. Teaching is satisfactory; it is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. Children's achievement is satisfactory but most are unlikely to meet the early learning goals. Nursery children talk about the weather and take responsibility for changing the weather board daily, they know what 'sunny', 'cloudy' and 'rainy' means. They are learning about the properties of water and sand. They have successfully used a computer program to produce pictures of different transport using paint, fill and stamp tools. They are learning about birds through observing them feeding outside and through stories such as 'Owl Babies'. They have appropriate opportunities to use construction equipment. In one lesson they were feeling jelly and noting its texture, 'it's gooey'. They are learning through role play what a vet does and what a stethoscope is for. This activity is also planned for reception classes and there are few extended activities for the older children.
80. There was very little evidence of the use of computers during lessons although the computers were switched on and programs relevant to learning were available. A program about flamingos to support children's work on the study of birds and animals was available in the nursery, whilst in the reception classes a program to support work on identifying initial letters was loaded.
81. Work in books shows that reception children have followed instructions to make jelly, learnt about different types of weather in different places such as rainforests, and have learned about growth through planting seeds. Children have made visits to a farm and, in one class, were labelling the various features of a farm. They needed a lot of help to write the labels and several still labelled the pond as 'water' even after the word 'pond' had been discussed with them. A range of visitors, such as a nurse, road safety officer and the school's caretaker, has met the children who developed questions to ask their visitors. This made a good contribution to developing speaking skills as well as to extending their understanding of the different jobs people do. They drew good pictures to record these events.

Physical development

82. Teaching is unsatisfactory because children are not presented with enough challenge. Children have too few opportunities, particularly in reception classes, to achieve well in this area of learning. Most children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year although children in the nursery show an appropriate level of skill. Nursery children take part in a range of activities outdoors which link well to various areas of learning, however there are few which require children to run, jump, use wheeled vehicles and develop co-ordination skills. There is climbing equipment but it is unchallenging, particularly for children in the reception classes. The outdoor play area is small in size and contains structures, such as walled plant areas and a walkway, which inhibit children's movements. Teachers use the hall to teach skills using beanbags and large balls and in one good lesson children demonstrated a good range of such skills. A number do not use pencils and scissors with good control.
83. Children in the reception class have fewer opportunities to develop physical skills. The time allocated for outdoor play is too short and children do the same activities as nursery children. A

few children were learning to throw large balls outdoors but the confined space meant they interfered with other activities. They could not aim or receive balls accurately. Few kick a football with the degree of skill usually found in this age group. In one short physical education lesson – the only one on the timetable – children were learning to improve their running and jumping skills and to balance a small ball on a bat. The teacher expected them to bounce the balls with the bats but they did not have sufficient control of either bat or ball to do this and much time was wasted when balls went out of the playground area and children had to retrieve them. The planned activities were too advanced for this age group and children made very little progress.

Creative development

84. Teaching is satisfactory; it is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. Many children have limited speech and a narrow range of vocabulary, which restricts their attainment in the creative use of language in role play. However, in aspects of creative development, such as art and music, most are likely to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Children in the nursery play imaginatively with the wide range of equipment in the role play areas. However, those who do not communicate easily benefit most when there is adult support. Children enjoy these activities. Some girls used the iron and microwave expertly. Another girl was 'writing' messages as the vet's receptionist; however, the boy who was the vet tended to regard cutting incisions as a cure for all ailments. Two boys in the home corner made meals for visitors. Children in a reception class enjoyed performing a drama based on a story they had read but their confidence in acting out the story was not as advanced as usually seen in this age group. Nevertheless, they demonstrated that, with adult support, they could perform a short dramatic sequence.
85. Children in the nursery use paint well to make colourful pictures of animals, their families and friends. They have been introduced to a good range of skills. Displays show they have used sewing skills to make eggs, using felt with bead decorations, and they have used simple printing methods. Several techniques for creating collages have been used, such as hanging decorations made from felt and net materials, textured stripes using wool and different types of paper including film. Other activities completed in both nursery and reception classes include boat pictures using table painting and sponge printing and the creation of sock puppets. While these are attractive, they show little progressive development of skills. Children in the reception classes have made good pictures and models of animals using drawing skills, pastels and clay. They have painted a beautiful series of paintings based on Kandinsky's 'Concentric Circles'.
86. Children in the nursery and reception enjoy singing and demonstrate appropriate skills. In one lesson children in the nursery showed good co-ordination when singing at the same time as performing actions.

ENGLISH

87. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, but it is uneven. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is broadly satisfactory but they come from a low starting point so that by the end of Year 2 most are likely to attain standards that are well below average in reading, and below average in writing, speaking and listening. Most pupils in Year 1 and 2, including pupils with special educational needs, achieve well in speaking, listening and writing. Achievement in reading is satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils read fluently with good expression and recognise many words on sight. Most pupils use a reasonable range of strategies to attempt new words. Lower attaining pupils often find it difficult to apply their knowledge of the link between letters and the sounds to help them with unfamiliar words. Pupils' achievement is better in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4. There are gaps in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding and there is a great deal of evidence to indicate that their learning has been interrupted in the past by poor behaviour. Many pupils still find reading and writing a struggle. There is a wide span of reading competence; there are several avid readers but by the end of Year 6 most attain standards that are below average in

reading as well as in writing, speaking and listening. However, there has been a significant improvement in the national test results between 2002 and 2003 in both reading and writing.

88. By the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average. The majority of pupils listen sensibly to the class teacher although some need a lot of encouragement to join in discussions. Teachers work hard to include reluctant talkers and encourage them to respond in sentences. Strategies, such as talking in very small groups, using puppets to ask and give answers and having listening partners, help build pupils' confidence. There is a large group of pupils in Years 3 to 6 who are reluctant to share their ideas. Often more able pupils lead the conversations. Pupils' listening skills are better than their speaking skills. Teachers do not always explain the meaning of the words that they are using in lessons. In an unsatisfactory science lesson, for example, the teacher used words that the pupils did not fully understand. The teacher did not introduce the key words or explain the new vocabulary at the start of the lesson. This impeded learning.
89. Fluent readers in Year 6 make sensible deductions when studying texts and many scan text rapidly in order to identify the main points that the author is making. The higher attaining pupils have good comprehension skills. Most pupils are able to read silently and make sensible predictions. There remain a significant number of lower attaining pupils who lack confidence. They have a limited range of strategies to decipher unfamiliar words. The school is participating in a project where trained parents will work with particular groups of pupils in Year 5 who need extra support with reading. The newly introduced reading journals make a good link between reading and writing. One pupil in Year 4 wrote, 'When I am bored I read the new Horrible History books, because they are extremely funny and gruesome! I also like the Harry Potter books because they are long with interesting twists in the plot'. The school has improved the quality and range of books in the junior library. However, its use is not timetabled and few pupils use it regularly. This impedes the development of research skills. The school has separated group reading sessions from the literacy hour and this initiative is proving successful in providing uninterrupted reading time. However, books are not always matched closely enough to pupils' particular stage of development in reading. This impedes progress.
90. By the end of Year 2, pupils' writing skills are below average. Many pupils lack confidence in writing. Most can use simple word lists and dictionaries. They are beginning to use punctuation appropriately and can form their words and letters reasonably accurately. There are regular opportunities to write for extended periods and this promotes good progress. By the end of Year 2, many pupils can write at least half a page, retell familiar stories and attempt simple poems. Some lower attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 struggle with their writing because the work is not always sufficiently adapted to match the stage they have reached in their learning.
91. By the end of Year 6, most pupils attain standards that are below average in writing. However, a range of initiatives has been introduced that are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. Pupils have regular opportunities to write for a purpose, such as designing posters or responding to issues that interest them. There are opportunities for pupils to edit, redraft and correct their work, although there are too few opportunities to practise these skills. Computers are not used to teach word processing skills systematically. The school has successfully extended pupils' range of writing opportunities and the time they have for writing. There are some good links between history and English to encourage pupils' imaginative writing. For example, a pupil in Year 4 used a diary entry to describe the war, 'The horror! Bombers, machine guns, planes, soldiers everywhere! When will it stop? I can't bear it any more'. Several pupils in Year 6 are good at writing poetry,

'On a joyful July day,
A smell of fresh cut grass,
A sea of pupils in the hall,
A buzz of chattering children,
Shouts of delight'.

However, in several classes opportunities for pupils to develop their own creative style are too infrequent.

92. Pupils' attitudes are good. Most pupils behave well in lessons, although there are a small number, especially the older ones, who have negative attitudes to work. The majority of pupils are attentive, concentrate well and work hard. Although pupils enjoy their work, there is a significant minority of pupils in every class who are passive in lessons. They lack the confidence to initiate discussions and need a lot of persuasion to join in. Pupils' attitudes to reading are positive. Pupils in Year 6 have favourite authors such as Colin McNaughton, Paul Shipton, J. K. Rowling, Jacqueline Wilson and Roald Dahl. Several enjoy the non-fiction 'Horrible History' series.
93. The school's focus on handwriting and spelling is resulting in improved standards. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use a legible, joined, cursive style. Spelling is generally accurate. A recently introduced spelling system that identifies particular areas of weakness in pupils' individual spelling is proving effective. In several classes the dictionaries are too difficult for lower attaining pupils.
94. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The mixed age classes present teachers with particular challenges. Higher attaining younger pupils tend to benefit more from these arrangements as they often work with older, more able pupils and enjoy the greater challenges presented. However, some younger, lower attaining pupils struggle when the work is not pitched at a level which matches their stage of development. The school is aware of the need to develop a systematic programme of teaching and learning designed to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills. There is insufficient guidance for teachers about how to develop these skills in all subjects. Pupils have too few opportunities to use their reading and writing skills effectively in other subjects.
95. Teaching is generally good in Years 1 and 2 and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the three mixed age classes. Teachers teach basic skills systematically and use a good range of interesting materials. Attention is paid to developing pupils' knowledge of sounds and words. Teachers use a range of interesting books and word games that stimulate pupils' interest. Many pupils make good progress from a low base. Pupils who have additional help with their sounds are given good support. Planning is thorough. In one very well taught lesson the teacher really captured the pupils' imagination through the use of an interesting text, 'The Longest Litter in the World'. His high expectations particularly extended more able writers. However, the teacher's expectations are not always high enough in one of the three classes. As a result, pupils do not always achieve as well as they should or attain the standards of which they are capable. This factor adversely affected pupils' performance in this year's national tests; a significant proportion of pupils who should have attained the national target of Level 2 just missed attaining this standard and similarly fewer pupils attained the higher Level 3 standards than should have done.
96. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is satisfactory overall and at times it is good. Examples of good teaching were seen in every year group. While there are some good strategies in place to challenge higher attaining pupils, there remain some inconsistencies in teaching. For example in one lesson for pupils in Year 5, the teacher worked with more able pupils, who then produced some carefully thought out verses based on 'The Sound Collector' poem. In the other class, none of the pupils reached the extension activity planned. Where teachers do not have high enough expectations of what all pupils can achieve, many pupils, especially higher attaining pupils, do not attain the standards that they could and should attain. In most classes there are usually activities planned for different ability groups but there are times when pupils are required to undertake the same task regardless of their widely varying stages of development. Teaching in Year 6 is consistently good and this has contributed significantly to the school's improved performance this year in national tests. Both teachers in Year 6 demonstrated good questioning skills and high expectations of behaviour and the standard of work they required to be produced. They dealt well with a few pupils in each class who were reluctant to learn. In the best lessons, teachers have a thorough knowledge of how to teach the National Literacy Strategy effectively.
97. In the short time the school has been open, the headteacher and staff have worked hard to raise standards. The focus is currently on writing and improving boys' attitudes to literacy because the school's analysis of assessments showed that boys were not performing as well as the girls. The introduction of a range of intervention strategies, such as the additional literacy strategy, is having

a favourable impact on standards. In the carefully designed extra learning sessions, pupils receive good assistance from specially trained teaching assistants. Additional time has been allocated to give pupils greater opportunities to write at length. Resources are good and are for the most part used well. The school has invested heavily in reading materials. However, computers are not used enough to support the development of literacy skills. Care has been taken to provide books and materials that appeal to all pupils. 'Story Sacks' and 'Curiosity Bags' are really popular with boys and girls. These contain a book and associated

material such as games and puzzles. These initiatives are having a positive impact on standards. An appropriate amount of homework is set each week and this helps to consolidate learning.

98. A range of assessment materials is used well to determine which pupils would benefit from additional support. However, reading and writing records are not detailed enough to highlight particular areas of weakness in order to fill gaps in pupils' learning. Marking of work is satisfactory and where it gives clear advice on how work can be improved it is good. However, the marking policy is not always applied consistently. Teachers discuss work with pupils and in several lessons pupils received good advice on how to improve their work.
99. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural development. Participation in special events, such as National Book Day, and visitors to school, such as the local poet Andy Tooze, as well as visiting theatre companies, all bring the subject to life.
100. The management of the subject is good. The newly appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear idea of how to take the subject forward. She monitors teaching and learning and analyses pupils' work, feeding back issues to the staff. The school's priorities are appropriate and there is a clear focus on improving standards.

MATHEMATICS

101. The new school is well established and the teachers are now in a strong position to set plans to raise standards. A good start has been made in Year 2, where results in the national tests in 2002 were above the national average. The provisional results for 2003 indicate a slight decline, primarily because fewer pupils reached the higher grades than previously. In spite of the unsettling effect on older pupils of recent changes in their teachers, the results of the 2003 national tests taken by Year 6 pupils showed a marked improvement upon the previous year, although they fell short of the school's target.
102. By the end of the reception year most children attain standards that are below average but because of good teaching they achieve well in Years 1 and Year 2. Most attain average standards by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is mostly satisfactory but it is uneven because many pupils have gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding – a legacy from the time before amalgamation. Consequently most pupils in Year 6 attain standards that are below average. Teachers acknowledge that standards in Year 6 are not good enough and they are working hard to bring about an improvement.
103. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by teaching assistants in the classroom and in extra sessions they develop the confidence to enable them to progress satisfactorily. Conversely, high attaining pupils are not always set work that is exciting and challenging enough and, consequently, do not achieve as much as they should. Pupils have too few opportunities to practise problem solving and organise investigative tasks where they can work independently. This impedes their achievement and constrains the standards they attain.
104. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress in counting and calculating. They add and subtract numbers up to twenty with confidence. They know how to halve and double numbers and are quick to spot patterns, such as odd and even numbers. Pupils know the number tables for 2, 5 and 10 and many apply what they know to adding up shopping bills and finding the right change from a

pound. Pupils tell the time on the hour and the half hour, but have more difficulty with a quarter to and a quarter past. Most pupils know the names of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and accurately count corners, edges and sides. In Year 2, some pupils have a chance to explore more exciting mathematics. For example, they collect information about the number of letters in pupils' first names and illustrate it on a bar chart or pictogram. Some pupils know how shapes reflect and use a mirror to draw the 'other half'.

105. As the work becomes more difficult and gaps in earlier learning are exposed, pupils in Years 4 to 6 progress at a slower rate. Most are numerate and are able to apply the four rules of number to solving simple problems, although they are uncertain about which method to use and how to set out the working. They have too few opportunities to practise selecting the important information from number sentences and in setting out their solutions in logical order. Pupils also experience difficulty in estimating answers so that they know whether the answer they arrive at makes sense. Pupils tend to believe what they see on the calculator without checking. Pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables is not secure and this limits progress and leads to frustration in problem solving. For example, pupils are familiar with the metric system of numbers but have difficulty converting from one unit to another. Pupils know about equivalent fractions and most are able to find percentages of simple quantities.
106. Pupils apply their number skills to other subjects satisfactorily. For example, in history they place historical events on a time line and measure out quantities for scientific experiments. Lessons in the computer room enable pupils to practise and confirm skills when using a database, but computers are not used enough as a planned part of everyday lessons in mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 know that two co-ordinates fix points and that this information can be used to read maps. They know also about probability and chance and are able to predict the fall of a coin, whether heads or tails. Many are able to make correct judgements about where events should be placed on a probability line.
107. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory; it is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teaching was good or better in half the lessons seen and satisfactory in the remainder. Teaching has several good features. All classes are managed well. Relationships are good and are based upon mutual respect. Some older pupils occasionally exhibit very challenging behaviour and this is dealt with firmly but fairly. Pupils respond well to correction. Basic number skills are taught well and pupils are encouraged to learn and use multiplication tables. Planning is based on the National Numeracy Strategy and takes pupils forward at a steady pace. Teachers and their assistants work well together to provide good learning support for most groups of pupils. Praise is plentiful and all pupils are encouraged to do their best work. Teachers make good use of questions to confirm learning and to find out what pupils do not know. Pupils need to be given longer to give their answers so that they can learn from their own mistakes.
108. In the best lessons, teaching is clear, precise and sequential and offers a stimulating environment for learning. Mental work is crisp and demanding and related directly to the main lesson. Lesson aims are carefully shared with the pupils so that they know exactly what they have to do. All work set is matched to the needs of the pupils so that they have the best possible chance of making progress. Teaching is less effective where tasks are not well matched to pupils widely varying stages of development in the mixed age classes. This particularly constrains the achievement of higher attaining pupils.
109. Mathematics is well organised and well led. The co-ordinator is well aware of what needs to be done to improve standards and is setting about doing it with great enthusiasm. A good programme for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning has been devised. Assessment of pupils' progress is good and it is being used well in lesson planning to ensure that pupils' knowledge is built up systematically. Resources are adequate and are for the most part used well although computers are not used enough to support teaching and learning. Overall, the environment for teaching and learning is good and the subject is on an upward path.

SCIENCE

110. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 are average; they are below average at the end of Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 2 reflect the attainment of pupils in the statutory teacher assessments in 2002. The teacher assessments for 2003 indicate that average standards are likely to have been maintained.
111. Although standards at the end of Year 6 are below average, there are clear indications of improvement. This is seen in the improved results in National Curriculum tests in 2003 from 2002 when standards were well below the national average. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in their acquisition of scientific knowledge but their achievements in investigative science are unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make slower progress in relation to their prior attainment, largely because the work that they are expected to do is not sufficiently matched to their ability levels and their low level of literacy and numeracy skills makes it difficult for them to record information.
112. There are several reasons for the below average attainment by the end of Year 6. Until recently there was no specific guidance on what should be taught each year and how the scientific skills, knowledge and understanding should be developed from year to year. Recently the school has adopted national planning guidance as the basis for its work across the school. Although this ensures that pupils follow a specific programme of work, there is an inconsistent approach to teaching. This is reflected in the opportunities that the pupils have to carry out practical work, with too much emphasis placed on copied material in some classes. This restricts pupils' capacity to think and work things out for themselves. Much of the work is based on pupils acquiring knowledge; opportunities for pupils to learn through carrying out their own investigations are less well planned. Consequently, pupils' learning is slowed as they are unable to apply what they have learned. There are few opportunities for pupils to explore science through mathematics or in the use of computers. A further factor that contributes to the element of unsatisfactory achievement is that pupils carry out the same tasks whatever their ability. This means that the work is usually planned to match the needs of the average pupils. Teachers do not generally match work closely enough to meet the needs of the higher attaining or the lower attaining pupils. Tasks set are usually the same for everyone. Consequently, the higher attaining pupils do not always learn as well as they should and the lower attaining pupils find the work too difficult.
113. As both Years 1 and 2 are taught in the same classes, the pupils cover the same units of work. By the end of Year 2, pupils know what conditions are needed for plants to grow healthily and show through discussion that they understand the life cycle of a plant from seed to fruit and seed. Analysis of previous work shows that pupils know some of the distinguishing features of living and non-living objects and compare the habitats of some familiar animals. They name and sort materials according to their type. In their study of electricity they are aware of safety issues and know which appliances use electricity and how to make a simple electrical circuit so that a bulb will light.
114. Throughout Years 3 to 6, the pupils' scientific understanding lacks depth. Previous work shows that teachers provide a range of activities that help the pupils to develop scientific knowledge but not enough attention is paid to developing the skills of investigation and there are too few opportunities for pupils to record their findings individually. Most work is the same for all ability levels. By the end of Year 6, most pupils know how to control variables in order to conduct a fair test. They build on their knowledge of plant life and revisit some of the work from Years 1 and 2 when they carry out tests to find out the conditions for growth. They further develop their knowledge when naming the parts of a plant and the purpose of the different parts. Pupils extend their knowledge of electric circuits and learn the universal systems for labelling the component parts in their diagrams. They extend their knowledge of forces and carry out experiments such as finding out how the surfaces affect the bounce of a ball. Although pupils have carried out some experiments, there is limited evidence of a clear progression in pupils' skills in carrying out investigations as they move from Year 3 to Year 6. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to devise their own experiments to test out their theories.

115. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, although in one lesson seen during the inspection, teaching was unsatisfactory. In Years 3 to 6 teaching ranged from good to unsatisfactory and it is unsatisfactory overall. However, teaching varies considerably from year to year and, in some cases, from class to class, so that the progress that the pupils make is uneven. In the more effective lesson, the teacher used a range of strategies, which quickly engaged the interest of the pupils, and they worked with interest and enthusiasm. In most lessons, teachers expect too little of pupils. Activities are not sufficiently well thought out to excite pupils' curiosity. For example, a potentially interesting activity involving identifying the constellations became dull because the element of finding out and then using books and computers was missing. Instead the pupils were required to write an imaginative story. Consequently, the pupils lost their early enthusiasm and showed a passing, rather than a burning, interest. In the less effective lessons, the strategies used by the teachers did not engage pupils' interest or provide sufficient challenge. The teachers' subject knowledge was insecure and the pace of the lessons was slow and as a result opportunities to develop pupils' learning were lost. The teaching sometimes relies too heavily on demonstrating to pupils rather than giving pupils greater independence to work together in groups.
116. Teachers have good management skills and positive relationships with the pupils. They plan their lessons with broad learning objectives. These are not always as specific as they could be or sufficiently based on what the pupils already know and can do. There are satisfactory procedures in place for assessing the achievements of the pupils but this is not used as well as it should be to plan work that matches the needs of pupils of all abilities; the tasks set are usually the same for everyone. Pupils do not make use of CD-ROMs or the Internet to assist individual research and do not use computer accessories, such as sensor equipment, nor do they record the results of investigations in graphs or charts. There is insufficient software to enable computers to be used effectively for teaching or to promote independent research to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils' numeracy skills are developed in some lessons through, for example, practical measuring activities. Literacy skills are used to record what the pupils have learned although this work is often copied work.
117. The subject is managed well and the co-ordinator has received good training in how to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear view of what needs to be done to improve standards. He has carried out a good analysis of work from across the school that has highlighted strengths and weaknesses in provision. Resources for teaching and learning are good and are organised well. The school has recognised the need to develop the teaching of the subject across the school and this is included in the school improvement plan for next year.

ART AND DESIGN

118. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 most pupils attain average standards. Within this overall picture there are examples of good work in design, drawing, painting and the use of fabrics. In most classes there is very little evidence of three-dimensional work, the study of work from different cultures or of work using computers to generate designs.
119. Throughout the school, pupils draw and paint bold self-portraits. An excellent calendar has been produced that features every child's signed self-portrait. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have used a good range of printing techniques. They have also studied natural forms, such as a snail's spiral shape, and have used these well to create sewn designs, using a running stitch and appropriately coloured threads, as well as appliqué work on hessian backgrounds. They use pastel crayons sensitively to create delicately coloured landscapes, as in Year 6 where Monet's 'Poppy Field in Argenteuil' was used for inspiration. In one Year 6 class, good abstract sculptures, based on natural objects, had been produced. In this class a good link was made with literacy as pupils wrote pieces entitled 'If Only Pictures Could Speak.' Here they considered Gainsborough's 'Lady Caroline Collins and her Spaniel', as well as Leonardo's 'Lady with a Ferret' and discussed what

the characters might be thinking and saying. This proved a good stimulus that inspired good pieces of creative writing. Pupils study the work of a range of artists from different periods, such as Leonardo Da Vinci, Turner, Paul Klee and Andy Warhol. Modigliani's 'Girl with Pigtails' inspired some good portraits and pupils in Year 3 produced a good range of portraits linked with work in history on the Tudors. A portrait of Anne of Cleves was of particularly good quality but work of such quality is uncommon. Pupils in Year 4 have produced persuasive posters urging the recycling of rubbish to create a more environmentally friendly world.

120. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The clarity of the teacher's explanations and his probing questioning strategies contributed to effective learning in a lesson for pupils in a Year 1 / 2 class. The word 'evaluate' was explained clearly and the teacher's questions helped him to assess whether all pupils had understood the lesson objectives. The pupils were engrossed in the sewing task and several started singing softly together as they sewed. In this lesson work of good quality was produced. However, teachers' expectations of the quality of work that pupils are capable of producing are not always high enough. In a lesson for pupils in a Year 3 / 4 class the quality of work produced was mediocre because the teacher's introduction was unclear, the lesson objective was vague and there was no focus on teaching specific skills. A good lesson was seen in one of the Year 6 classes. Here the teacher had high expectations of pupils' ability to design and make hats that Kensuke, a character in Michael Morpurgo's book 'Kensuke's Kingdom', may have seen on his island. The good link with the story the class was studying made the project more interesting. In this class the teacher promoted a very serious approach to the work in hand and the quality of the hats that pupils made was reasonable. In a parallel class the teacher's expectations were lower and the hats produced were of poorer quality.
121. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The school follows a nationally recommended planning framework designed to promote full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. The after-school art club run by the co-ordinator extends learning opportunities. The subject features in the school improvement plan but there is no clear focus on raising standards or improving the quality of work that pupils produce. Resources are adequate and are for the most part used well but there are occasions when the materials used do not result in work of high enough quality. Opportunities are missed to link work in this subject with other areas of the curriculum. As a result, the topics studied tend to stand alone, in isolation, rather than being integrated into other areas of the curriculum. Consequently many lessons lack any clear rationale and are not as meaningful as they could be. The school's planning framework is due to be reviewed so that there is a tighter focus on developing skills, knowledge and understanding cumulatively. The school has introduced sketchbooks that are used to record and assess pupils' attainment and progress. However, assessment records are only just evolving and it is not possible to identify with any precision what stage of development individuals have reached. A series of good paintings of sporting activities, painted directly onto large sheets of wood, have been displayed well in the school hall.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 most pupils attain average standards. In the classes for pupils in Years 1 / 2, work on making fire engines from recycled cardboard boxes linked well with work on vehicles that included a visit to a local garage to examine cars and engines. Pupils in these year groups understand the principle of creating a design before making a product based on their designs. They complete designs according to proforma that encourage them to think about the materials they will need and the methods they will use. They understand terms such as 'dowel' and know that sections of dowel make good axles. They disassemble cardboard boxes and reassemble them inside out because they understand that the paint will adhere more successfully to the plain unprinted card surfaces. Good links are made with art and design, as when pupils carefully drew and labelled pictures of bicycles. This made them think hard about exactly how the various components worked.
123. An example of good work was seen in Year 6 where pupils were evaluating the carefully constructed, electrically powered buggies they had made. The joints on the chassis were

strengthened with triangular pieces of card and short elastic bands were used to transmit the power from the motor to the axle. The designs on the wheels and bodywork were carefully coloured. Pairs of pupils took turns to demonstrate their buggies whilst the rest of the class filled in evaluation sheets, which encouraged pupils to evaluate each buggy against principles such as aesthetics and the extent to which the design criteria had been met. The designs were displayed and showed good attention to detail which included drawings from different perspectives, such as side-view, front view, with clear specifications and measurements. The buggies worked well. Pupils judged each piece of work seriously and understood the need for constructive criticism.

124. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In Year 6 there was an example of very good teaching. Teaching was particularly effective where teachers maintained high expectations of pupils' performance and behaviour. The quality of work produced was far better where teachers taught skills systematically and paid great attention to detail. Teaching was less effective where the learning intentions were unclear and there was insufficient focus on precisely what skills the teacher expected the pupils to learn during the course of each lesson. In one lesson for pupils in a Year 3 / 4 class, for example, the pupils were given too little guidance on how to construct a burglar alarm and therefore did not learn any new skills during the course of the lesson. Pupils are very honest when evaluating their work. One group responded to the question 'What would you change to improve your work?' by writing, 'We would change everything because it was a complete disaster'. Good links were made with science when pupils used their knowledge of electrical circuits to make electric motors work and when incorporating buzzers and switches into circuits when making burglar alarms. However, such good links are not always made and certain projects, such as designing and making fairground games, stand alone and have no particular rationale. Consequently such projects are not as purposeful as they might otherwise be. There is evidence of food technology being taught, as for example when pupils in Year 5 made biscuits. There is a well equipped food technology area but this is not used enough.
125. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The subject features in the school's improvement plan but the focus is on ensuring coverage of National Curriculum and the provision of resources, rather than on the action needed to improve standards. Assessment procedures are at an early stage of development but a good start has been made to keeping photographs of pupils' work. The activities that pupils have experienced are recorded but there is little evaluation of the skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils have gained. There was no evidence of computers being used to extend learning opportunities. The curriculum is enriched by a good visit to a designing and making exhibition where pupils select a design, such as one to make a kaleidoscope, follow the design and make the product to bring back to school.

GEOGRAPHY

126. Due to timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to observe many lessons across the school although two were seen in Years 3 / 4. As a result it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, evidence from analysing pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that throughout the school, pupils attain average standards. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall but the programme of work that the school provides is narrow. Pupils' achievement in developing mapping skills is satisfactory but achievement in acquiring knowledge and understanding in the remaining elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study lack sufficient depth. Pupils with special educational needs make slower progress. This is largely because all pupils are given the same tasks which are not matched to their ability levels and the pupils with special educational needs find difficulty in recording some of their work.
127. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound basic knowledge of the area in which they live. They invent their own symbols to indicate features around school. They learn about the effects of the weather on the clothes that we wear and are beginning to understand the essential features of a weather report. Pupils identify countries that they have visited on holiday on a world map and compare their lifestyle with that of people living in a Mexican village. They also identify the key features of a seaside area and compare a resort in Devon with other resorts. Pupils follow the

adventures of 'Barnaby Bear' and identify the methods of transport used when visiting a number of areas of the world.

128. In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to develop their mapping skills satisfactorily. Younger pupils extend their knowledge of the symbols used on Ordnance Survey maps and are beginning to understand how to use four-figure grid references to locate places. In Year 5, pupils continue to develop their understanding of symbols used on maps and use local maps to identify key features in their study of the local area. Pupils in Year 6 drew the route taken on their visit to a nearby river and plotted the river walk onto an Ordnance Survey map, identifying the key features seen. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have also acquired a sound knowledge of their own and contrasting localities. For example, pupils in Years 3/4 described the differences and similarities between their own area and Chembokali, whilst pupils in Year 5 carried out a study of their local area. Pupils in Year 6 develop soundly their knowledge of physical features such as rivers, river systems and mountains and study the factors, which contribute to the water cycle.
129. It is not possible to give a definitive judgement on teaching as only two lessons were observed. In these lessons the pupils were learning how to use four-figure grid references to locate a place on the Ordnance Survey maps and how places are connected. The resources used were good and pupils tried hard to understand how the different routeways were symbolised. In one lesson the teacher's explanations were inadequate and the pace of the lesson was slow. In both lessons seen, several pupils lost interest in the task and made little progress. In one lesson, the teacher managed the pupils appropriately so that they concentrated on the task in hand; in the other, several pupils were inattentive and misbehaved and the teacher had few strategies to handle their behaviour or engage their interest.
130. From the examination of pupils' work produced over the past year, it is apparent that all pupils cover the same work regardless of their widely differing stages of development. There is little evidence of numeracy skills or of computers being used to extend and enhance pupils' geographical understanding.
131. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has monitored pupils' work and teachers' planning and updated the development needed for inclusion in the school improvement plan. The school has adopted national guidance for planning the teaching of the subject. Provision for assessment is based on recording the coverage of the units of work. This is not yet used effectively to improve planning and to ensure that work is matched to pupils' varying stages of development. Resources are adequate; however, there is a shortage of computer software to enable pupils to use information and communication skills in their work. Good use is made of the local environment and some places further afield to enrich pupils' learning.

HISTORY

132. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6 most pupils attain average standards. Across the school teaching and learning are satisfactory.
133. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have some understanding of differences between the past and the present. They know that Queen Elizabeth and David Beckham are famous people in the present. They know that Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale are famous people from the past. Most have some understanding of important events in the past such as the Great Fire of London.
134. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have adequate knowledge of times past. They understand the differences between the lives of rich and poor people in Victorian times. They have some understanding of the differences between historical fact and opinions. They talk knowledgeably about the religion, sport and culture of Ancient Greece. They contrast the education of boys and girls today with education in Ancient Greece.

135. Teachers' planning is based on a nationally recommended scheme that is designed to teach the National Curriculum programmes of study in a systematic manner. There is an appropriate balance between developing pupils' knowledge and skills. However, the allocation of time for teaching the subject is low. This means that, although the National Curriculum is covered adequately, there are few opportunities to cover aspects in depth.
136. The mixed age classes present particular challenges, as in these classes there is a particularly wide spread of attainment. Scrutiny of work shows that some lower attaining pupils have difficulty recording their written work when it is not sufficiently modified to enable them to tackle it successfully. Higher attaining pupils are capable of more challenging work.
137. In most lessons there are pupils who are reluctant to communicate their ideas. Teachers have few strategies to encourage these pupils' speaking skills. For example, in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were learning about the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen, although the teacher worked hard to encourage participation, providing interesting resources, many pupils were passive during the discussion. The teacher was not able to involve them all in taking an interest.
138. Pupils' research skills are developed progressively. From an early age, pupils are taught to think as historians. In a well-taught lesson, pupils were given time to formulate their own questions about aeroplanes from different periods. Pupils are taught to use books and objects to interpret information, but opportunities to use the Internet are too infrequent. In several lessons teachers used computerised whiteboards well to capture pupils' interest. For example in a mixed Y1 / 2 lesson, children, who previously had some difficulty concentrating, were really excited when they saw images of Concord appear on the screen. Pupils have too few opportunities for independent research into topics.
139. Across the school, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the lives and experiences of people from the past. Pupils in Year 2 wrote expressively about the Great Fire of London as eyewitnesses, 'The fire made the sky black. Lots of people were escaping from their houses'. Pupils in Year 5 wrote about what it might feel like to be a Roman soldier. There are good examples of expressive writing by younger pupils, 'In Victorian times hospitals were smelly, tatty, with few beds and broken windows'. Pupils are given regular opportunities to use their drawing skills to illustrate their work and there are examples of carefully painted portraits of Tudor monarchs that help to promote a deeper understanding of Elizabethan times.
140. Each class has the opportunity to make an annual visit to places of interest but these are not always related to history. When they are, as for example when pupils in Years 3 and 4 visited the local war memorial, it considerably enriches the curriculum. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' appreciation of people from different times and cultures. Younger pupils learn about the achievements of Mary Seacole and the life of Anne Frank. Older pupils reflect on the impact of Tudor exploration from the perspective of the Pamlico Indians, who fought hard to regain their land from invaders.
141. The subject is managed satisfactorily. Although the co-ordinator has only had responsibility for a short period she has an overview of planning. She does not have the opportunity to observe teaching. This limits her ability to influence teaching and standards. Resources are satisfactory and a new assessment system is in place.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

142. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, most attain standards that are below average, mainly because there are too few opportunities for them to use computers to support their learning in the different subjects of the curriculum. Throughout the school there was very little evidence of much work being produced. Opportunities are missed in all subjects to use computers to support teaching and enhance learning.

143. All classes have a timetabled session in the computer suites in both the infant and junior buildings. Only a very small number of these lessons were observed so no overall judgement about the quality of teaching can be made. In the majority of these lessons, the standards that pupils attained were broadly average. Teaching was satisfactory overall in these lessons and it was good in one lesson in Year 5.
144. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 used a program about musical instruments called, 'Decisions', where they answered 'yes/no' questions to identify particular instruments. Many pupils manage to log on and off successfully, however a number need a lot of help. Most are confident in using the mouse and clicking the correct answers to questions such as 'Do you blow this instrument?' if they can read the text. They are not confident in writing questions for the program to identify other instruments; for example, they are not certain which questions to ask to identify particular features and cannot spell words such as 'does' accurately. In both the lessons seen, teachers used the computerised whiteboard well to model a game but pupils were mainly observers during this part of the lesson rather than enjoying 'hands-on' experience. In one lesson pupils used computers for less than half the time available because the teacher's introduction and explanations used up most of the time. Another lesson was too long for some pupils and they lost interest in the work. Pupils show little independence and ask for help immediately they have a difficulty. When several pupils do this, they have to wait in a queue while teachers attend to others; this further limits learning opportunities.
145. The computer suites are well equipped with a good number of machines but ventilation is poor. Although there is a good number of computers, there were time consuming problems with some of them in each lesson. This further restricted learning opportunities.
146. In one lesson for pupils in Years 3 / 4, the program 'Roamer World' was used well to give repeated instructions to make square patterns. Pupils followed the instructions carefully but needed much support and were not yet working independently. A small minority were able to program the computer to repeat the pattern automatically. All clicked and dragged confidently and could save and print their work, although few could save work to their folders without help. In the mixed-year classes there is no difference in planning for the different year groups. This limits progress because further work is too hard for many younger pupils.
147. There are examples of good teaching. A lesson in Year 5 began with pupils practising their keyboard skills. One pupil used only one finger to type while most used both hands. None used traditional fingers for letters or the space bar. However, some could type a short pattern of letters and spaces very quickly and accurately. Earlier in the week the teacher had used the 'Log-It' device to register temperature, light and sound in the classroom over a period of a day and had produced graphs using this data. In the lesson they read the graphs, finding information and answering simple questions accurately using the data. The lesson built well on earlier work, it was planned well and the data was relevant and meaningful to pupils. A teaching assistant gave good support to a pupil with special educational needs enabling him to take part in the paired work and have equal access to the computers.
148. Despite the very good facilities, pupils do not always show interest and enthusiasm in lessons and a number fail to concentrate and do not listen. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils are listening and sharing resources appropriately. The school has recently purchased eight computerised whiteboards, which were used to good effect in a small number of lessons. Assessment procedures are at an early stage of development.
149. The management of the subject is satisfactory and the role of the co-ordinator is developing well. The co-ordinator has monitored planning and given appropriate feedback to staff on areas for improvement but there has been no monitoring of teaching and learning.

MUSIC

150. It was not possible to observe many lessons during the inspection week, so judgements are based upon listening to pupils' singing in assemblies, lesson planning, work on display and conversations with pupils. By the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6, most pupils attain average standards. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in all elements of the music curriculum. Pupils' achievement is often good in the performance of music, although not so strong in musical composition.
151. In all year groups, performance is the strongest part of the pupils' musical experience. In the classroom and in assembly, pupils sing with great enthusiasm, although not always strictly in tune. They perform action songs with flair and panache. 'If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands' was sung with great spirit and enjoyment by Years 1 / 2, accompanied on the piano by the local Church minister and was a treat for all those who heard it. Singing in assembly in Years 3 / 6 is good. It is energetic and uninhibited but loses its unifying effect as pupils begin to leave the hall before the song is complete.
152. Expert tuition is provided by visiting teachers for pupils who wish to learn to play the guitar, violin or brass instruments. The school recorder group, although small in number, plays to a very good standard and during the inspection was practising vigorously for a public performance. The school regularly produces concerts that are well supported by parents, which give all pupils a chance to experience the excitement of performing in public.
153. In Years 1 / 2, pupils sing songs and clap the rhythm. They recognise the beat of the music and respond enthusiastically. They learn the difference between rhythm and beat and sing 'Hot Potato-Pass it on' to confirm their understanding. In Years 3 / 4, pupils worked in small groups to compose an action song. Pupils found it difficult to match words to the rhythm of the music but in performance were able to see how it could be improved and happily accepted the constructive comments of other pupils. Pupils in Year 5 learned how to select percussion instruments to achieve a desired effect and learned that music is used to create a mood and an atmosphere. Their compositions, based on a simple score, are attractively on display in the main corridor. Pupils in Year 6 listened to a Beethoven symphony and revised their knowledge of the effect of repeated patterns in music.
154. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils are managed well. The balance between creativity and control is just right, allowing pupils to experiment with sound and to discover patterns in music. Several teachers lack confidence in their knowledge of the subject and in their ability to teach skills effectively. However, lessons are planned and prepared well. In the mixed-age classes, work matches the learning needs of the younger pupils but is not challenging enough for older pupils. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and this promotes a good response from pupils. Pupils do very little writing in music and have an incomplete record of the work they have completed. Although teachers are aware of what pupils know, understand and can do, there is no formal record of individual progress or the standards pupils attain.
155. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator is very enthusiastic. She checks planning and ensures that good teaching practice is shared. Resources are plentiful and are generally used well but opportunities are not grasped to use computers to support learning, as for example in the development of composition.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

156. All strands of the subject are taught and learning is supported well by after-school activities in football, athletics and dance. The County Cricket Club provides expert tuition in cricket skills and there is a good link with the local secondary sports college that extends physical activities well, as for example, in water sports.
157. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6 most pupils attain average standards in all aspects of the subject. In the first two terms, weekly

swimming sessions are provided for pupils in Years 3 and 4. By the end of Year 6, most pupils attain the national target of swimming at least 25 metres in good style.

158. Pupils in Years 1 / 2 warm up thoroughly before practising the basic skills of football. Most show a good awareness of space. They pass and dribble balls with reasonable fluency. In a dance class, pupils imitated the movements of a polar bear and a penguin well and then performed a good sequence of ballet movements to show what happens when the two creatures meet. Well-chosen music adds an element of authenticity to the dance.
159. In Years 3 / 4, pupils continue to practise and refine ball skills and put them to the test in games, such as handball and rounders. Pupils are agile and their co-ordination is often good, although catching skills are often weak. Pupils play well together and observe the rules of different games. In Year 6, pupils learn the discipline of small team games and separate groups play both rounders and cricket. Several pupils show good leadership qualities in organising teams, although any dispute about the rules or the score requires the intervention of the teacher.
160. Teaching is mostly satisfactory although unsatisfactory teaching was seen in one lesson where the introductory activity was too brief to warm up muscles and where the teacher left too little time for the football game to be played properly. Usually teachers plan lessons well, although too little account is taken of the range and type of activity required to meet the needs of the mixed-age classes. Higher attaining pupils rarely receive the level of challenge and stimulus they need. Teachers manage classes well and relationships are good. Most pupils are enthusiastic and responsive. They want to do well. They enjoy games and are pleased with the progress they make. Although teachers are aware of what pupils know, understand and can do there is no written record of the progress individual pupils make. An exception is the excellent photographic record of the Year 6 excursion to Matlock on an adventure holiday.

161. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has been in post for one term and is assessing the priorities for the subject's development. The forward plan recognises the need for good teaching practice to be shared. Resources are good and used well. Accommodation is very good. The outside area, including grass and hard surfaces, is an excellent facility for a wide range of ball games and athletics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

162. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment matches the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are taught about different world faiths. This helps them to know more about the way people live in other parts of the world and of the importance religion plays in their lives. The insight that pupils gain into different cultures and religions contributes significantly to pupils' personal and cultural development. For most pupils, knowledge and understanding of religious customs and practices grows satisfactorily. Few pupils have any first hand knowledge of religion and this often makes learning difficult. However, pupils are usually willing to learn and they participate enthusiastically in lessons.
163. The special relationship that the school has with the local Minister promotes a good understanding of the Christian Church. The friendliness and directness of the Minister's approach is well received by the pupils and from this they learn that religion makes a difference to the way people live.
164. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 talk about their recent visit to the local Church and recall the location and the purpose of the altar and font, for example. They remember that the font contains holy water and that it is used for baptism. They marvel at the beauty of stained glass windows and are reminded that each window tells a story. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about the Hindu religion and how symbols and practices differ from those of the Christian church. They develop good knowledge and understanding about how Hindus use holy water and why Hindus take off their shoes before they enter the temple.
165. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop a good understanding of different religious practices. Pupils in Year 5 learn the meanings of different kinds of celebrations, including Christmas and Easter and the Muslim festival of Eid. Pupils are encouraged to write their own prayers and one pupil wrote, 'Thank you God for rainbows. They cheer me up on a rainy day. They make me feel warm and good inside.' Pupils know the story of the Good Samaritan and understand that anyone who needs help is your neighbour. Pupils in Year 6 study classic Islamic art that inspires them to design colourful, symmetrical prayer mats.
166. Teaching is satisfactory overall and has several good features. Pupils are managed well and encouraged to contribute what they know. Questions are used well as a stimulus to discussion. Relationships are good. Although teachers plan their lessons satisfactorily, they do not always use the resources that are available to them and pupils sometimes lose concentration because they find it hard to concentrate for long periods on the spoken word. There is very little evidence of computers being used to support teaching and learning. Teachers' expectations of work and behaviour are satisfactory, although more should be expected of the older pupils in the mixed-age classes. Teachers make a note of what pupils know and can do on the class planning sheets but there is insufficient detail to enable teachers to determine what the next stages in learning should be.
167. The subject is satisfactorily co-ordinated, but there is insufficient time allocated for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching to ensure that good practice is shared. Pupils visit places of Christian worship and the school has good plans in place to extend visits to other faith communities to improve the quality of multi-cultural education so that pupils are better prepared for life in our diverse society.

