

INSPECTION REPORT

BORROW WOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Spondon

LEA area: Derby City

Unique reference number: 112975

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Helen Hough

Lead inspector: Mr Terry Elston

Dates of inspection: March 29th – 31st 2004

Inspection number: 255560

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	237
School address:	Arundel Drive Spondon Derby
Postcode:	DE21 7QW
Telephone number:	01332 662826
Fax number:	01332 664929
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sheena Ratcliffe
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is average sized junior school with 237 pupils on roll. There are 20 more boys than girls. Numbers have fallen steadily over recent years. This is an advantaged area in social and economic terms and most families own their own homes. Pupils' standards on entry to the school are currently above average, although they have been well above average in previous years. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and none speaks English as an additional language. Just under ten per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is a lower percentage than is found nationally. Around ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs, mostly with moderate learning difficulties, and one has a statement of special educational needs. These figures are below those of most schools. The school has been supported by the Derby Education Action Zone to raise standards of teaching and learning. After the long-serving headteacher left in 2002, there was an acting headteacher who accepted the permanent job in September of that year. He left after a short time and was replaced by the current acting headteacher in September 2003. She has now been appointed to the permanent post.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20704	Terry Elston	Lead inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology, provision for pupils with special educational needs.
19693	Sally Hall	Lay inspector	
19897	Arthur Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, music, physical education.
32306	Simon Molony	Team inspector	English, history, geography, religious education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a sound school that has recovered well from a period of decline when standards fell. Very good leadership and good management are the keys to this improvement. The good teaching ensures that pupils have made up previous lost ground and now achieve satisfactorily in nearly all subjects. Standards by Year 6 are well above the national average in English and mathematics. The very good care and support make this a very happy school where pupils behave very well and enjoy learning. Parents speak highly of the recent good quality of education. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Standards have improved greatly this year
- The headteacher and deputy have worked very well together to create a very good team of staff, committed to high standards
- New, innovative, teaching methods are proving to be a huge success in terms of pupils' learning and enjoyment of school
- Standards in science are not high enough
- Pupils love school and behave very well
- The school's improvement plan says too little about how to measure developments and how much they will cost
- The governors' report to parents omits important information

Recent improvements mean that the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection because of recent very good leadership. Before that it was poor. The main weaknesses have been rectified, but while standards have improved in English and mathematics they have declined in science and information and communication technology (ICT).

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	C	D	E*
Mathematics	D	A	C	E
Science	E	D	C	E

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - very low and in the bottom five per cent nationally. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

These results were poor, and pupils underachieved badly in all subjects compared with their high standards on entry to the school. The results in English were in the bottom five per cent nationally when compared with similar schools. Boys have consistently performed worse than girls for some years. While the school achieved its targets in both English and mathematics, these were set far too low. Things have now changed. Expectations are higher and targets are more challenging in English and mathematics. As a result, standards by Year 6 are well above the national average in both English and mathematics and **pupils' achievements are now satisfactory**. Standards in science are average but they should be higher. The new teaching methods suit boys and they now achieve as well as girls. Standards are above average in religious education, art and design, design and technology, history, geography and music and pupils achieve well in all these subjects. Standards are average in ICT. There is not enough evidence to judge standards in physical education. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good** and is illustrated by their concern for the feelings of others, very good behaviour and very good attitudes to work. Pupils attend regularly and are punctual to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is good, and is very successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn.

The teaching and learning are good. New ways of teaching involve pupils far more in their own learning and make lessons fun. The pace of lessons is very brisk, and pupils learn quickly by exchanging views, questioning each other about their work and sharing their findings with the whole class. Expectations of pupils are high and they respond enthusiastically. The support of pupils with special educational needs is good, both from teachers and skilled teaching assistants, and they make good progress towards their targets. The curriculum is planned well to provide teachers with a good basis for their lessons. The curricular planning for science, however, does not include sufficient challenge for more able pupils and, as a result, they rarely achieve as well as they could. A very good range of activities after school and at lunchtime does much to enrich the curriculum. The school has a good range of resources but some shortages in ICT. The accommodation is sound. Good care and very good guidance and support keep pupils safe and feeling secure. There is a good partnership with parents and good links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are good, overall, and the school's progress this year has been remarkable. The headteacher has been here a short time but has inspired pupils and teachers with her determination to raise standards and the ideas about how this will be achieved. The deputy headteacher has provided very good support and sets an excellent example by her own teaching. Leadership by other key staff is good. The management is good. The temporary improvement plan sets good targets but lacks detail about how improvements will be measured and what the costs will be. The governance is sound by a mainly new governing body, but their annual report does not include all of the required information.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views are very positive. They are particularly pleased with the improvements made over the last year and the headteacher's leadership. They are concerned about the many changes in staff over recent years but are pleased that there is more stability now. The pupils love the new style of teaching and feel that they do well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve still further are

- Raise standards in science
- Sharpen up the school improvement plan

and, to meet statutory requirements

- Include all the required information in the governing body's annual report to parents

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Pupils' achievements are **satisfactory**. Standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in most other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English and mathematics have improved significantly this year
- Pupils' achievements are good in religious education, history, geography, design and technology, art and design and music
- Achievement in science by Year 6 is not good enough
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (27.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.4 (28.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.8 (28.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. These results were not good enough. While standards in mathematics and science reached the national average and were in line with those of similar schools, they were below average in English. Since 2000, standards in English have declined but have improved in mathematics and science, and the overall upward trend is similar to the national picture. However, when matched to pupils' well above average standards in English and mathematics in Year 2, last year's results show poor progress overall and very poor progress in English. Boys have consistently underperformed in all three subjects in the national tests. Expectations of all pupils have been too low, and the targets set each year have lacked the challenge necessary to raise standards and enable pupils to achieve as well as they should. The many changes in staff and problems in the recruitment and retention of a headteacher have contributed to this decline.

2. The current situation is very different. Very determined leadership and management and new, very effective, teaching methods have raised standards significantly in a short time and introduced excitement into learning. As a result, pupils are now working at least at the levels expected of them in nearly all subjects. This year's very challenging targets for English and mathematics are realistic and show the high level of improvement since last year. Achievement in both subjects is now satisfactory. Boys are now achieving as well as girls, and relish the new approaches to teaching and learning adopted by the school.

3. In English, standards are well above average, overall. Pupils speak very confidently and read fluently and with very good expression. Their writing is lively and well punctuated, but not all produce the extended pieces of work expected of pupils this age.

4. In mathematics, standards are well above average. Nearly all pupils have a very good grasp of number and are quick to solve problems.

5. In science, standards are average, but pupils should be achieving more. While most are working at nationally expected levels by Year 6, few pupils have moved on to the higher standards of which they are capable. The subject has not benefited from the rigorous monitoring and evaluation

of teaching that was provided for English and mathematics and expectations of more able pupils are too low.

6. Standards are above average in religious education, art and design, design and technology, history, geography and music and pupils achieve well in all these subjects. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in ICT, but problems with equipment and some shortages in software prevent them attaining higher standards. There is not enough evidence to judge standards in physical education.

7. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in English and mathematics but declined in science and ICT. In all other subjects, they are similar.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets and achieve well. They are supported well in lessons by teachers and well-prepared teaching assistants, and take a full part in all activities. These pupils gain much from the new teaching strategies because they have lots of opportunities to discuss their work and learn from other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is **good**. Pupils' punctuality is **good**, and their attendance is **satisfactory**. The school has maintained the high standards found at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths

- Pupils are very keen to learn because lessons are exciting
- There is a high level of mutual respect between pupils and staff, and relationships are very good
- Pupils respond very well to the staff's high expectations of good behaviour
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, show initiative and take responsibility

Commentary

9. In nearly all lessons pupils are enthusiastic learners which has a positive impact on their achievements. Teachers are very successful in stimulating the pupils' desire to learn. In their responses to the questionnaire before the inspection, pupils wrote that lessons were '*fun*', '*cool*' and '*amazing*'. They are totally involved in listening, discussing, writing and carrying out practical activities throughout the lessons so it is rare to see any pupil gazing into space or fidgeting. This enthusiasm spills over into other activities outside lessons. Pupils enjoy participating in the very good range of after school clubs and school productions.

10. There is a strong feeling of community amongst staff and pupils and all are proud of their school. As a result of the school's success in supporting and respecting all its members, relationships are very good and make for a very happy place in which to work. In lessons, pupils confidently share their opinions and bounce their ideas off each other, either in pairs, groups or whole class discussions. This is because most teachers are skilled at developing the pupils' self-esteem. They create an atmosphere where all pupils are willing to contribute their ideas without fear of failure or ridicule and this makes a positive contribution to their achievements.

11. The school is successful in promoting pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies are often very moving occasions when pupils have good opportunities to think deeply about important issues and reflect on the way they live their lives. Pupils gain a good awareness of other cultures through assemblies, visitors and lessons such as religious education and geography. Their work on Ghana, for example, gave pupils a good knowledge of people's lives in that country.

12. The school's strong moral code works very well as nearly all staff have consistent and high expectations of good behaviour. The headteacher has successfully focussed on creating a culture to promote good behaviour and pupils and parents value the weekly award assemblies. Nearly all the pupils respond very well to the system of rewards and sanctions and understand the

consequences of their actions if they misbehave. Pupils say that rare incidents of bullying and anti-social behaviour are dealt with effectively. There was one, fixed-term exclusion, last year.

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	237	1	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

13. The school’s very good provision for social development helps pupils to become more confident and mature members of the school community. They enjoy taking responsibility. For example, older pupils have recently volunteered as members of the Playground Squad and provide valuable support for pupils who have no one to play with at lunchtime and breaks. The members of the school council take their duties very seriously and are keen to improve their environment. Through assemblies, staff do much to encourage pupils to share their successes. Musical and dramatic performances and residential visits enable pupils to develop their social and personal skills very well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.4	School data :	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

14. Pupils love coming to school and there are no unauthorised absences. Attendance rates are in line with those of similar schools. Absences are mainly due to illness, although over a quarter of them are because parents take their children on holiday during term time. Registers are marked correctly and staff follow up any unexplained absences rigorously. Punctuality is good and lessons begin promptly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. The good teaching and assessment are firmly based on a good, interesting curriculum. The school’s care is good and the support and guidance are very good. Parents are well informed about the school’s work and links with them and the community are good. Links with other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**. Good assessment procedures help teachers plan the next steps in pupils’ learning well.

Main strengths

- The successful introduction of new and exciting teaching methods is the main reason why pupils are now achieving as well as they should be
- Pupils learn quickly because they enjoy the work
- Teachers’ planning is outstanding
- Assessment is used well to set targets for improvement

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (15%)	14 (41%)	11 (32%)	4 (12%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

15. A significant proportion of lessons seen during the inspection was of high quality. The school has revolutionised the way lessons are planned and taught to very good effect. Standards had slipped because expectations of pupils were too low, but with strong leadership, very effective training and very good teamwork the teachers have turned things around. All groups of pupils are now achieving at least satisfactorily.

16. The main improvements have been achieved by introducing the Active Learning Programme¹, and most lessons now benefit from pupils discussing their theories with each other and using the knowledge gained from different groups to accelerate their learning. This approach makes lessons fizz with excitement and energy. Pupils have grasped the new ideas with relish, and the teacher only has to say, "Paired talk for twenty seconds" and they instantly turn to their partner and swap ideas. This works very well, and makes effective use of each other's previous learning. The next stage, when groups create 'thought showers', enables the pairs to share their findings with others in their group. By this time, the fund of ideas has grown significantly. As individuals known as 'envoys' move around the groups with large sheets of paper, the combined knowledge of the whole class is collated. This takes place at a breathtaking pace because teachers set rigorous time limits for every activity. It is clear when presentations are made of their findings, that pupils have learned very quickly and have had great fun. The activities that follow build well on this fact-finding session and are geared carefully to suit pupils' individual needs and capabilities. These methods work equally well in all subjects. Outstanding lessons were seen in English, mathematics, personal, social and health education and music.

17. For this system to work at its best, teachers' planning has to be very good, and it is. Every activity is planned meticulously with specific goals to extend pupils of different ability. This enables all groups to learn quickly, with more able pupils moving at their own pace and less able pupils being swept along. In science, however, the teaching and learning are unsatisfactory because the planning is not sufficiently detailed to make the most of these methods and the more able pupils lack the opportunities to move ahead of other pupils.

18. Pupils with special educational needs gain much from the new teaching methods because they are fully involved in every operation, with the teachers and teaching assistants making quite sure that they are keeping pace with the others.

19. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good overall, and very good in English and mathematics. Pupils' results in the national tests in English and mathematics are monitored carefully to see where more work needs to be done and the school uses this information very well to plan lessons and adapt the curriculum. Rigorous tracking of every pupil's progress through the school enables teachers to set challenging targets for improvement. Pupils are very skilled at assessing their own progress because teachers provide many opportunities for them to say whether they have understood the work. In science, while some good analysis has been done that has identified weaknesses in the planning of experimental work, the school has not used this information well enough yet to raise standards.

¹ A way of teaching that involves pupils very much in their own learning, giving them many opportunities to talk to each other about their ideas, act as 'envoys' to gain further information from other groups and give presentations about their findings to the whole class.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. It is imaginative and ensures that pupils build well on their earlier learning. The curriculum is enriched through a very good programme of extracurricular activities and good resources. The staff has a sound number of adequately qualified staff. The accommodation is sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very well for literacy and numeracy
- The planning for science does not challenge more able pupils sufficiently
- There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- The school provides a very wide range of activities out of school time
- The school ensures that all pupils are included in all activities

Commentary

20. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and is planned well to meet the needs of all pupils. The school has worked hard on the literacy and numeracy strategies and provision for both is very good. Teachers are good at developing literacy skills further through subjects such as history and geography and there are good examples of mathematics being used in science experiments and in ICT. Subjects generally have good long term planning through the effective use of national guidelines to make sure that all areas are taught. In science, however, there is not enough in the planning to make the best of the skills of more able pupils.

21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' individual targets are challenging and achievable. Their progress is checked regularly and teachers make sure that their lesson planning shows clearly how these pupils are to be supported.

22. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. The school works closely with the school nurse in teaching sex education in Years 5 and 6. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about healthy living and drugs and alcohol misuse in science and from visiting speakers.

23. The school has good links with the infant school next door and the local secondary school to which the majority of pupils transfer. A good range of visits ensures that pupils are prepared well for the move.

24. The school has a very full programme of activities for pupils to enjoy at lunchtime and after school. Specialist teachers of music visit the school to give very popular lessons on violin, guitar and other orchestral instruments. Provision for music is enhanced further by pupils' enthusiastic participation in the orchestra and choir, both of which enjoy a high reputation for the quality of performances. Many clubs, including those for sport, spelling (to which parents are invited), French, German, drama, archaeology and sign language enrich the curriculum very well.

25. The school has a satisfactory number of teachers and a good team of teaching assistants who are well trained and support learning in the classroom well. The accommodation is satisfactory. The refurbished library contributes considerably to pupils' learning and there is a good, if cramped, computer suite. Resources are generally in good supply, but there are some shortcomings in ICT that affect pupils' achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Care, welfare, health and safety are **very good**. Support and guidance for pupils are **very good**. Pupils' involvement in the school's work is **very good**.

Main strengths

- The school values the views of the pupils highly
- Staff know and support the pupils very well
- There are very good procedures for the care of pupils

Commentary

26. Teachers value pupils' comments highly and are very good at encouraging them to express their feelings and ideas. Many pupils say that the best thing about school is that the teachers are kind and helpful. Nearly all of them feel that they could turn to adults working in school if they were upset or worried. The members of the school council are keen to bring about improvements to school life and their opinions are taken seriously. For example, pupils were successful in their request to erect curtains in a girls' changing area to give extra privacy.

27. The school is very effective in giving all pupils equal opportunities to learn and take part in all activities. The school works closely with the infant school and this enables the new pupils to settle quickly into school routines. The 'Playground Squad' works well and does much to help pupils who are hurt or lonely. Teachers are careful to emphasise the importance of treating each other with kindness and pupils respond very well to this approach. Teachers track the progress of pupils' personal development rigorously, celebrate their successes enthusiastically and make valuable comments in the pupils' annual reports about their progress. In lessons, the teachers and teaching assistants offer pupils valuable guidance on how to improve their work. These targets are regularly discussed and reviewed with pupils and their parents. As a result, pupils are confident to assess their own learning and know what they need to do next. This has a positive impact on their achievements.

28. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. They have clear guidance on what they need to improve and their progress is checked carefully.

29. Pupils are cared for well. Staff ensure that pupils work in a healthy and secure environment. Risk assessments have been undertaken regularly and the school has very good arrangements for testing electrical equipment and emergency evacuations. The procedures for first aid are good and the pupils are given good care and attention by qualified first aiders. Child protection procedures are sound, and all procedures are well known by all adults working in school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and other schools are **good**.

Main strengths

- The school provides parents with good information about the school
- There are good links with the adjacent infant school
- The school's good partnership with the local community enriches the curriculum

Commentary

30. The vast majority of parents are interested in their children's education and very supportive of the school. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting were delighted by the way in which the school is being transformed by the new methods of teaching and learning. The school provides parents with good information and this helps them to become involved in their children's learning. The school send parents timely and relevant information about school events through fortnightly newsletters, and each term gives parents useful written information about which topics their children

will be studying. The school provides parents with good information about how their children are getting on. The termly consultation meetings provide good opportunities for parents to meet with staff and review their children's targets. The prospectus is informative. There are some omissions from the governors' annual report to parents in relation to staff training, the school action plan and arrangements for disabled pupils.

31. The school makes parents very welcome, and works hard to invite them to occasions such as the weekly reward assembly and sessions on numeracy and literacy. In addition, staff provide good informal opportunities for parents to talk with them at the end of the day. A good number of parents help in school regularly and the Parent/Teachers' association works hard to raise funds and organise social events. The school is good at seeking parents' views through annual questionnaires and a suggestion box, and responds well to their concerns. For example, some parents were unhappy about how the school dealt with bullying, so the school brought in an advisor to talk with staff and is now reviewing its anti-bullying policy.

32. The school has done much to improve its links with the adjacent infant school over the last two years. This has resulted in better arrangements for the transition of infant pupils, and good opportunities for teachers from both schools meeting to share ideas and observe each other's lessons. Pupils are prepared well for moving on to the secondary school.

33. The school has developed beneficial links with local businesses. For example, pupils visit a local restaurant and learn about marketing, health and safety requirements and the needs of the disabled, and have great fun preparing pizzas under commercial conditions. These experiences deepen their understanding of the world of work and develop their skills in food technology. Local employers have generously provided funding to enhance the premises and provide equipment. Members of the clergy provide valuable guidance to pupils in assemblies.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**, overall, and are key reasons for the rapid improvement in standards over the last year. The headteacher's leadership is very good. Governance is sound. Staffing turbulence over the last two years has been a barrier to improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has very high expectations for the school, and has put in place initiatives that are raising standards significantly
- Team spirit in the school is very good
- Senior staff are very well involved in school improvement
- Strategic planning has improved since the previous inspection, but lacks clarity about how improvements will be measured and paid for
- The headteacher has made very effective use of expertise outside the school to raise standards of teaching and learning
- The governing body's annual report does not contain all of the required information

Commentary

34. The headteacher leads very well. She has a very clear sense of purpose and very high expectations of what pupils and teachers can achieve. She recognises that standards had fallen since the previous inspection and she has put in place excellent initiatives to improve pupils' achievement. The introduction of innovative teaching methods last year, and the very effective use of the local Education Action Zone to train teachers on these methods, have been important ways that the school has raised standards, especially in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher has also made very good use of expertise from the local education authority to evaluate the teaching and learning and set very demanding targets. For the first time in years, pupils are now attaining the standards of which they are capable and parents are delighted with the way this new style of leadership has improved the rate of their children's learning in a short time.

35. There is a very strong commitment to ensuring that all groups of pupils have equally good opportunities to learn. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and ensures that they make rapid progress. Following five years when boys underachieved in the national tests compared with girls, they are now on par. Boys have profited greatly from the quick-fire discussions that now characterise nearly all lessons. They thrive on these challenges and their progress this year has been dramatic.

36. After a period of significant turbulence over recent years, the headteacher has quickly developed an effective team, all pulling in the same direction. Senior staff support very effectively. The deputy headteacher, who has the main responsibility for the development of teaching and learning, has done much to develop new initiatives and she offers an excellent example to staff by her own teaching. Co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy have led the staff very well in the drive for higher standards, and have made excellent use of expert teachers to show the best practice in these subjects.

37. Strategic planning has been weak since the last inspection, with too little direction to school improvement and low expectations of pupils and staff. After providing staff, parents and governors with good opportunities to contribute, the present headteacher drafted a plan for improvement as soon as she came in September 2003 with very challenging targets. These were very challenging and had a very good focus on teaching and learning. The plan had a very good focus on teaching and learning. Particularly in English and mathematics. However, the plan did not clarify how improvements would be measured or how much they would cost.

38. School management is good. The school has very recently developed a clear, whole school approach to checking the quality of the curriculum and teaching and this is already improving achievement. The headteacher has developed rigorous procedures for setting teachers targets for improvement and for identifying training for all staff. The school evaluates its performance against other schools very effectively, and this helps to set demanding but achievable targets.

39. There are very good procedures for helping new staff settle quickly into the school. There is a strong commitment to the training of new teachers and very good links with Derby University. There is now much greater stability in staffing, following a very high turnover of teachers over the past two years that was disruptive to the pupils' learning.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	582046	Balance from previous year	71416
Total expenditure	577695	Balance carried forward to the next	75768
Expenditure per pupil	2437		

40. Financial management is good. A large underspend in the budget is earmarked usefully to maintain existing staffing levels at a time of falling rolls. There are sound procedures for ensuring that the school secures satisfactory value from its funds. The school monitors the budget carefully, and makes good use of the funds available for special educational needs provision.

41. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Many governors are new to their role and they are committed to making the Governing Body more effective. They have developed sub-committees for the first time and these are working well. Governors ensure that the school meets all its statutory obligations except for some information that is required in its annual report for parents. The governors have begun to observe lessons and to look at samples of pupils' work. They are now more aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very supportive of the school, whilst at the same time questioning policy and practice where necessary.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen rapidly since last year
- Exciting lessons help pupils learn very quickly
- Teachers' planning is very detailed
- Pupils are very much involved in their own learning
- Some pupils' writing is untidy
- The leadership and management of English are outstanding

Commentary

42. Over the past four years, pupils' achievements have been unsatisfactory. National test results show that pupils made very poor progress last year from their standards at Year 2. Expectations have been too low and the targets set have lacked challenge. The evaluation of teaching and learning has been weak. This year, things have changed for the better. Inspired leadership, high expectations and regular helpful evaluation of the teaching and learning have raised standards dramatically so that pupils are now achieving the high standards of which they are capable.

43. Teachers now know the levels that pupils are attaining and where they should be. They keep very clear records of pupils' standards and progress that enable them to see clearly where they need to improve. The innovative teaching methods involve pupils very much in their own learning and show them very clearly how to achieve high standards. Pupils with special educational needs do well because teachers plan carefully to improve their reading and writing and make sure that they can take a full part in all lessons. More able pupils thrive on the many opportunities to discuss their findings and to work independently.

44. By Year 6, pupils' achievements are much better and are now line with their abilities, showing that they have maintained their high standards in the national tests at Year 2. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to share their responses to teachers' questions in pairs and groups in every lesson. They talk animatedly to each other and listen very carefully to each other's ideas. The teacher just has to say, "Snap in!" and they swing around to their partner and swap ideas. At the end of lessons, pupils often provide excellent summaries of their learning to the rest of the class with great aplomb.

45. Standards in reading are well above average. Nearly all pupils read fluently with very good expression. They skim and scan texts quickly to gain information. They are very good at working out unfamiliar words and quickly see how a story is developing. The school has a good range of books that reflects the reading tastes of all the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to read in school and at home and often complete a comprehensive written review of books read. The school has a newly refurbished central library stocked with a good range of non-fiction as well as fiction books.

46. Standards in writing are above average. Pupils are good at drafting pieces of writing and then producing a final, improved version to meet their own requirements. Nearly all pupils write exciting poems, plays and information texts. They do not, however, produce enough extended writing to make the most of their skills. Pupils' achievement in handwriting is generally satisfactory, but some of their work in Year 6 is scruffy.

47. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The new teaching methods work very well in this subject because pupils gain much from speaking and listening to others. Teachers' planning is excellent. It shows very precisely what all groups of pupils are to achieve and has high expectations of everyone. The role of the teaching assistants is identified very clearly and ensures

that all pupils who need support get it. Assessment is very good. Pupils' progress is tracked systematically and teachers know precisely where pupils are and what they need to do next. Their marking is consistently very good. It focuses clearly on the progress the pupils have made in the piece of work and shows precisely how they can improve. Teachers are very skilled at using the summing-up sessions at the end of lessons to allow pupils to review their progress, assess their own learning and report back on their findings. Teachers use ICT well to extend pupils' knowledge and use of paragraphs and punctuation.

48. The leadership and the management by the subject leader are excellent. Her impact on the recent improvements in the standards of teaching and learning in all classes has been considerable. She has been the key figure in showing by example how to inspire pupils and make them want to learn.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Teachers make good use of language and literacy in other subjects. In history, geography and ICT, for example, pupils are asked to discuss their findings before writing about the topics, applying the same degree of rigour they would to a piece of work in English. This supports learning effectively.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **very good** and is leading to rising standards after a period of decline.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- After a period of decline, standards in the current Year 6 are well above average
- Very good teaching is having a positive impact on learning
- Very good subject leadership is a significant factor in improving standards

Commentary

50. In recent years, pupils have underachieved. Standards have improved very significantly this year. Achievement is satisfactory and standards by pupils in Year 6 are now well above average. Standards have improved since the previous inspection and are much better than results in the 2003 national tests. The pupils are on track to achieve very ambitious targets that have been set for this year. Achievement is good in Years 3 and 4. This recent improvement is the result of very good teaching and very good subject leadership. Girls have consistently outperformed boys in recent years but boys now achieve as well as girls. They are stimulated by the new teaching methods and enjoy taking more responsibility for their own learning.

51. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. They take a full part in lessons and benefit from very good support by skilled teaching assistants.

52. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. There is a very strong focus on developing the pupils' mental calculations and problem solving skills. As a result, pupils are very quick to work out complex sums and apply their skills very well in solving real life problems involving money, ratio and proportion. The teachers use very effective strategies such as number games and quick-fire question and answer sessions. These make learning fun and help pupils learn very quickly. All teachers are very good at encouraging the pupils to explain their methods, and this helps them to understand that there is often more than one way of solving a calculation. The teachers often make a point of emphasising key mathematical words and this helps pupils develop a deeper understanding of the subject. In a Year 5 lesson for example, the teacher's very clear explanation of terms such as 'generalisation' and 'formula' helped pupils solve a complex real-life problem concerning perimeter. Teachers make excellent use of methods that require pupils to discuss their work and share their knowledge. These help pupils develop a clear understanding of how numbers work and make the most of each other's knowledge. The teachers use ICT well to enhance learning, especially when collecting data and producing graphs.

53. Subject leadership is very good and has enabled the school to raise standards a lot in a short time. The co-ordinator has led very useful training for colleagues and she looks carefully at teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work to see where improvements need to be made. There are very good procedures for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress. The teachers use information gained from assessment and from a careful analysis of national test results very effectively to set challenging targets for the pupils and to plan the next steps in their learning. They match work well to pupils' varying needs, even within ability groups, and this ensures that all pupils learn quickly. The teachers use summing-up sessions very effectively to consolidate learning and to assess pupils' progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. There are many good opportunities for the pupils to make use of their mathematical skills in other subjects. In design and technology, for example, pupils in Year 6 made careful measurements in designing and making animal shelters. In science, pupils recorded how the number of paper clips affected the time it took for a roto-copter to fall using accurate, computer-generated line graphs. In science, pupils in Year 4 made accurate measurements of shadows made by objects at varying distances from a light source.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- More able pupils underachieve by Year 6 because the work is not hard enough
- Teachers make good use of ICT
- Younger pupils achieve well

Commentary

55. Standards in science are average by Year 6 but pupils should be achieving better given their abilities. The subject has not benefited from the rigorous evaluation of teaching and learning applied to English and mathematics, consequently, standards have not risen to the same extent. The main problem is the underachievement of more able pupils. While nearly all pupils attain the national standard by Year 6, few go beyond this. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. They make good progress in their scientific knowledge because teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to talk to each other about their work, and this helps them learn from other pupils.

56. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Teachers have a sound scientific knowledge, and this ensures that nearly all pupils by Year 6 develop a reasonable grasp of the human body, how forces work and the characteristics of different materials. Teachers do not, however, provide sufficiently challenging work for older pupils, particularly in terms of experimental tasks. Too often, they provide all of the equipment and guidance to conduct an investigation and this denies more able pupils the opportunity to plan their own work and move ahead of others. The best lesson seen during the inspection showed just what pupils could achieve when given the chance. Year 3 pupils were given the challenge of testing which materials were best to make windows for Stig of the Dump's den, and the teacher gave the more able pupils just enough explanation at the start to stimulate their thinking. By exchanging views in pairs and groups, pupils quickly built up a range of options that they tested rigorously until they had solved the problem. All pupils achieved very well, and more able pupils flew ahead of the rest to produce some outstanding work.

57. Teachers make good use of ICT to extend pupils' learning, and Year 6 pupils' work with sensors was of a high standard.

58. The leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The subject has had a succession of different co-ordinators and has lacked direction. Expectations have been too low, and there has been little evaluation of teaching and learning. The new co-ordinator has a good awareness of what needs to be done and has made a good start at improving the quality of experimental work. The

school's assessment system provides a clear picture of pupils' skills, but is not used effectively to plan challenging work for more able groups.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory** and meets the needs of all groups of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' subject knowledge is good
- ICT is used widely to enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum
- Subject leadership is good and is starting to have a positive impact on provision for the subject
- Currently, the pupils do not communicate by email and they do not make multi-media presentations

Commentary

59. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are broadly average, though not as high as at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and enjoy the way ICT improves their writing.

60. By Year 6, pupils' word processing skills are average. They type competently, and alter the size, style and colour of fonts well to suit the purpose of their writing. They edit, copy, highlight, cut and paste confidently to improve their work. They attach clip art to make text more attractive, often using the school's digital camera for this. The pupils have a sound grasp of how to control events using computers. For example, pupils in Year 6 wrote clear procedures to program room lights and traffic lights. Pupils have a good knowledge of how sensors play a vital part in everyday electronic equipment. The pupils are confident using the Internet and CD ROMs to research information in history and geography, but the school lacks the programs to enable pupils to make multi-media presentations.

61. The teaching and learning are good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. There is a good balance between direct teaching of skills and providing opportunities for the pupils to learn independently. All pupils are fully included in learning and teachers manage pupils' behaviour in the ICT suite very well. In some classes, teaching is effectively organised so that three pupils work at each computer, acting as keyboard operator, mouse controller and instructor. This works very well as pupils take on each role in turn, with the instructor explaining to the others what to do next. As a result, pupils learn quickly and enjoy their work.

62. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator looks at teachers' planning and work samples to see where improvements should be made, but she has not yet had the opportunity to evaluate the quality of teaching. There is a clear action plan to raise standards further and ensure the school has the right equipment. The co-ordinator has introduced good procedures for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress and the information helps teachers to plan the next steps in learning effectively. The curriculum for pupils in Year 3 is enhanced by the provision of a weekly computer club, organised by Year 6 pupils.

ICT across the curriculum

63. ICT is used widely to enhance teaching and learning in a many subjects. In mathematics, the pupils make sound use of databases and spreadsheets to compare supermarket prices and ways in which they reach school. In literacy, the pupils make good use of their word processing skills in descriptive writing about myths and legends and in colourful advertisements as part of persuasive writing. In history and geography, pupils use the Internet effectively to find out about life in ancient Egypt and in Roman Britain and about life in present day Ghana. In physical education, the teachers use digital cameras effectively to help the pupils improve by observing their own performance.

HUMANITIES

64. Insufficient evidence was gained on the quality of teaching in history and geography to make judgements on its quality. Both were sampled and evidence gained from two lessons observed in each subject, talking to pupils and analysing their work over the year. Pupils achieve well in both subjects as a result of very good planning, high expectations of pupils' work and good resources to bring the subjects to life. In **history**, standards are above average. Pupils' work on the Ancient Egyptians shows that they have gained a good understanding of the importance of this period, and they have written good accounts of life and conditions at that time. Teachers make good use of ICT to teach pupils about this period. For example, pupils in Year 4 achieved very well when they used the British Museum's website to conduct their research. In **geography**, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. By Year 6, pupils show a good knowledge of Great Britain and other countries of the world. Pupils' best work has been about Ghana. They have a clear understanding about how people live and work and produce accurate maps of the country. Teachers link much of the work effectively with other subjects and this brings extra meaning to topics. For example, in some of the best work seen, pupils wrote very persuasive letters arguing the case for charitable aid to Ghana that built very well on their work in literacy.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths

- Pupils have a good awareness of a range of religious faiths
- Teachers are good at making the subject interesting
- Pupils discuss issues very well to improve their knowledge

Commentary

65. By Year 6, pupils reach standards that exceed the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus and achieve well.

66. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers are very good at getting pupils to reflect on religious issues and this does much to develop their spirituality. They provide a wide range of stimulating work on different faiths, and this gives pupils a good awareness of how other people worship. Teachers make a point of encouraging pupils to make good use of their literacy skills to develop their thoughts. For example, pupils' writing about Islam was lively and accurate, and showed a deep understanding of the importance of the Qur'an. The teachers' planning is very detailed with clear ideas of what pupils will learn. Teachers use interesting methods to help pupils understand the meaning of complex stories and concepts. For example, by getting pupils in Year 5 to act out the story of the Good Samaritan, the teacher was able to show them how the Samaritan must have felt to be helped by someone from a different faith.

67. The leadership and management of the subject are sound. Resources and books to support the teaching of religious education are adequate and well organised. They include some good materials relating to different world religions. The subject provides very good opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on important issues so they develop a good social awareness and learn to respect other faiths.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68. It was only possible to observe two lessons in art and design and one in design and technology, music and physical education. These subjects were sampled by talking to staff and pupils, looking at pupils' work and photographs, observing after school clubs and listening to singing in assemblies. Pupils achieve well in all creative, practical and aesthetic subjects as a result of the school's good focus on the Arts, good resources and good curricular planning.

69. In **art and design**, standards are above average. Pupils have good drawing and painting skills and have used them well in Year 6 to draw very effective landscapes. They research projects thoroughly, and their pictures of containers in Year 5 show that they have learned much from

studying a wide range of bottles and boxes. Pupils are confident with a wide range of media, and the African masks made by Year 4 were enhanced by very effective use of wood, card, foil and brightly coloured feathers.

70. Standards in **design and technology** are above average. Pupils make a good start in Year 3, producing accurate designs of their picture frames and taking great with the making. By Year 4, pupils have designed and made very attractive purses, and the detailed evaluations of their projects showed a very good awareness of their achievement. By Year 5, pupils have refined their research skills well and have made very realistic Ancient Greek urns. Year 6 pupils have maintained this good progress and have built a good range of shelters based on very detailed designs. Pupils assess their own work very well by using digital photographs and evaluation forms.

71. In **music**, standards are above average. Pupils sing with great enthusiasm and awareness of tone and rhythm in assemblies. This helps to make them moving, spiritual occasions. Many play instruments to a high standard, benefiting from good provision of musical tuition. The one lesson seen was excellent, and had pupils in Year 4 reading musical notation and composing their own very good pieces of rhythmical music. The teacher's innovative methods and great enthusiasm captured pupils' imagination and got the very best out of them. The subject co-ordinator supports teachers very well with detailed curricular planning, good provision of resources and lots of activities after school to practise instruments and sing in the choir.

72. In **physical education**, pupils' gymnastics skills are average. Groups were observed taking part in football practice after school and pupils played to a good standard. They showed good ball skills and played very well as a team. Pupils compete with other schools with some success in netball and football. Nearly all pupils swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

73. Only one personal, social and health education lesson was seen during the inspection, but the evidence of planning and the use of visitors from outside the school, illustrated further in the paragraph about the curriculum, shows that provision is **good**.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).