

INSPECTION REPORT

ORCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Kirkby-in-Ashfield

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122722

Headteacher: Mrs Patricia Fallows

Lead inspector: Mrs Anne Elizabeth Kounnou

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th July 2004

Inspection number: 257096

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	358
School address:	Chapel Street Kirkby-in-Ashfield Nottingham Nottinghamshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss Maureen Sharman
Date of previous inspection:	27 th April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Orchard is a larger than average primary school situated in Kirkby-in-Ashfield with 358 pupils on roll including those who attend the nursery for part of day. There are currently eleven classes including the nursery. Many of the classes have mixed age groups due to the number of pupils who are admitted each year, which is 40. The school is popular and oversubscribed with regular appeals for places. Thirteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs and this is lower than found in most primary schools. However, the numbers with special educational needs in each year group varies widely. Although there is a wide range of ability, when they start school in the nursery most children's attainment is below that expected for their age. Many children have difficulties in speaking and listening. The proportion of pupils currently claiming free school meals is below the national average at over just over eight per cent. A few pupils at the school are from minority ethnic backgrounds; none is learning to speak English as an additional language. The school won awards for achievement in 2001 and 2003. In addition to this, funding from Awards for All has been used to provide extra sports activities that have led the school to apply for Active Mark Gold for school sports provision.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
30810	Liz Kounnou	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Personal, social and health education Art and design Design and technology
14141	Ernie Marshall	Lay inspector	
24895	Kath Hurt	Team inspector	Provision for special educational needs English Religious education History Geography
19120	Derek Pattinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Orchard Primary is a good school where standards achieved in the national tests for English, mathematics and science are improving at a much faster rate than in other schools. Children achieve very well in the nursery and reception classes, and in Years 1 to 6 pupils achieve well. This is because teaching and learning are good overall and there is a relentless focus by the leadership team on raising standards and helping pupils to succeed. The headteacher provides very good leadership and governance is good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school, doing particularly well in the nursery and reception classes where teaching is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and a strength of the school.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and develop their writing skills in English and other subjects and this is limiting their overall achievement in writing.
- Very good management systems are in place that enable all staff to check the quality of the school's work effectively.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology are not high enough in Years 3 to 6 because pupils do not have enough opportunities to work at sufficiently challenging activities in these subjects.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards are higher now in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Raising these has been the focus of successful school improvement initiatives over the last few years. Provision for ICT has improved, and standards are rising; however, pupils still do not achieve the level expected in Year 6. The role of subject leaders has improved considerably under the influence of the headteacher. Planning for lessons in all subjects has improved significantly.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils achieve well. Standards in the national tests are improving at a faster rate than in other schools in Year 2 and Year 6. In the 2003 tests, the last year for which comparable data is available, standards in English, mathematics and science were well above average and pupils in Year 6 achieved very well when compared to those with similar prior attainment. In reading, writing and mathematics tests, Year 2 pupils reached average levels in 2003, achieving well overall. During the inspection standards seen from Years 1 to 6 were broadly average overall for boys and girls. However, Year 2 pupils reach higher standards in mathematics, and Year 6 pupils reach higher standards in science. In ICT and design and technology standards are not high enough in Year 6. The most recent test results are not included in the table above but pupils continue to achieve well. A good proportion of pupils reached the higher levels in all the subjects in 2004 tests in both Year 2 and Year 6, exceeding the targets that were set for them. However, a significant proportion of Year 2 pupils did not achieve as well as they could be expected to in writing. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs achieve very well due to the very good support they receive in

lessons from well-qualified support staff. In the nursery and reception classes children achieve very well due to the very good teaching and a very well planned curriculum. In personal and social education children often exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. In all other areas of learning most children reach these goals even though their attainment is lower than expected when they start school in the nursery.

Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. There are particular strengths in pupils' moral and social development. However, there are missed opportunities to celebrate the rich range of cultures represented in Britain today. Pupils behave very well and have good attitudes to learning that help them achieve well. In the nursery and reception classes, and in Years 1 and 2 pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Attendance has improved considerably and is now good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall and this contributes well to pupils' good overall achievement. In the nursery and reception classes teaching and learning are challenging and fun. The curriculum is good overall, and provision for personal, social and health education is very good. A very good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum very well. Provision for pupils with special education needs is very good and a strength of the school due to the very good support of skilled teaching assistants. Very good links with local schools support both pupils and staff very well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher's very good leadership lies behind the rapid improvements that are taking place in the national tests. Very good management systems for checking the quality of education have identified the key weaknesses that need to be addressed, and clear plans to address these are underway. Governance is good and ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Almost all parents and pupils are highly satisfied with the school, which is significantly oversubscribed. Pupils show great pride in their school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are already identified in the school improvement plan:

- Raise standards in writing throughout the school by considerably improving the range of opportunities for pupils to write in all subjects of the curriculum.
- Improve standards in ICT and design and technology by the end of Year 6, by ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to work at activities that will enable them to improve their skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement overall is **good** due to the relentless focus on improving pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and good teaching and learning. Standards achieved in the national tests are improving at a faster rate than those in other schools. In the Foundation Stage, children build very well on their overall low attainment when they start school in the nursery; by the time they leave the reception year most have reached the goals expected at that age. Results in the national tests for English, mathematics and science were average in Year 2 in 2003, the latest year for which comparative data is available. In Year 6 results were well above average in mathematics and science, and above average in English.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a very significant improvement in pupils' test results over time.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve very well.
- Standards in writing could be higher from Years 1 to 6.
- Standards seen in ICT and design and technology are not high enough in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

1. In the Foundation Stage children in both the nursery and the reception classes achieve very well. They make very good progress due to the high priority given to developing children's personal and social skills. Most children start school with overall levels of attainment that are below those expected for their age. The majority will reach the goals that children are expected to reach by the end of reception in communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children achieve exceptionally in their personal and social development, often exceeding the goals expected for their age despite their low starting points. The very positive attitudes to learning they develop, and the skills they learn, help them to make very good progress in other areas of learning. The very high expectations of teachers and other staff and the very rich curriculum that is provided contribute very well to children's very good achievement.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (16.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.7 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.8 (17.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well. A comparison with the longer-term national trend shows that standards in Year 2 are improving at a faster rate than those achieved in other schools. Standards in the national tests are broadly average. However, in reading and mathematics, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in the national tests in 2003 was well above the national average. This represents very good achievement for these pupils. In reading, writing, mathematics and science, a very substantial proportion of pupils reached the higher levels in the recent Year 2 tests. However, in writing, a significant number of pupils did not achieve as well as they might have been expected to. This is mainly due to the lack of opportunities for pupils to use and develop their writing skills both in English lessons and in lessons across the

whole curriculum. In reading and writing, basic skills are taught well in Years 1 and 2. Work in English is well tailored to pupils' abilities and imaginative teaching leads them to be interested in the work and make good progress. Standards seen during the inspection are average in reading, writing, and science, and above average in mathematics. Some exciting activities in mathematics motivate pupils very well and as a result they achieve very well. Pupils continue to achieve well overall. In history, pupils in Year 2 achieve very well, reaching higher than expected standards due to the challenging work and teachers' high expectations in the subject.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (28.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.6 (28.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.5 (29.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 53 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Pupils achieve well overall in Years 3 to 6. Results in the 2003 national tests were above the national average in English and mathematics, and average in science tests. Raising standards in the tests in Year 6 has been a very high priority for the school, as standards achieved in previous years were too low. This strategy has been very effective. The longer-term trend of improvement in standards in the Year 6 national tests is much faster than that achieved in other schools. In the 2003 national tests pupils in Year 6 achieved very well in all of the subjects, reaching well above average levels when compared to those with similar prior attainment. In the 2004 tests pupils have achieved well overall exceeding the targets that were set for them. In English, pupils have achieved very well. About a third of pupils reached the higher levels and all of those with no special educational needs reached the expected level for their age. The results of the current Year 6 pupils include a considerable proportion of pupils with special educational needs, much higher than in other year groups in the school. Some of these pupils reached the expected level in English. In science more than half of the pupils reached the higher level, representing very good achievement in the recent tests. Standards seen in English, mathematics and science are broadly average. However, in writing the lack of opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in literacy lessons and other subjects limits their overall achievement in this aspect of English. In design and technology and ICT pupils do not achieve the expected standards by the end of Year 6 because they do not have enough opportunities to improve their skills in these subjects. In religious education standards are broadly average, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There are not enough opportunities for them to develop skills in all aspects of religious education, and this limits their overall achievement in the subject.
- The school identified that boys do not achieve as well as girls in English and some effective strategies have been used to address this, for example by taking out regular subscriptions to magazines that boys want to read to promote their interest in reading. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well due to very good provision for them. Skilled support of teaching assistants who are well-trained helps them very well, both in lessons and in small groups. This highly skilled support lies behind their very good achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good** overall and very good from the nursery to Year 2. Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural elements, is **good** overall with strengths in their social and moral development. Attendance is improving significantly and is now **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils respond very well to the school's consistent approach and very high expectations of their behaviour.
- Pupils' overall good attitudes to learning help them to achieve well, and to achieve very well in the nursery and reception classes.
- Good provision of popular opportunities for pupils' personal development ensures they begin to mature as responsible citizens.
- Pupils' good attendance and punctuality maximise their learning time and help them make good progress.

Commentary

5. Pupils behave well because the school has set very high expectations for their behaviour in all year groups. The behaviour policy is issued at the start of each new school year and requires the signatures of parents and pupils as an acknowledgment of their agreement to meet the principles involved. This means that all pupils are well aware of acceptable and unacceptable conduct and almost always come up to the expectations. Most pupils are polite and their behaviour when moving around school and in the playground is very good. Pupils play well together and there is no evidence of bullying or other forms of harassment.
6. Pupils have good attitudes to learning overall and these have improved since the previous inspection. In the nursery and reception classes, and in Years 1 and 2, attitudes to learning are very good due to the imaginative teaching methods that are used. Very young children in the nursery can barely wait to take part in the exciting range of activities that are ready for them when they arrive each day. They tug off their coats and get straight down to playing as quickly as they can. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are often very enthusiastic about their work. In Years 3 to 6 there are fewer opportunities for pupils to work independently or in groups at exciting activities. Nonetheless, in lessons throughout the school pupils listen carefully to instructions, concentrate on their tasks and try hard to please. They share resources sensibly and work well in pairs or groups when required to do so. Pupils are often paired in order to exchange ideas and decide on ways to tackle their set tasks. This helps them to develop their speaking and listening skills as well as helping them to form very good social relationships. The school operates a range of rewards for good behaviour and good work and this encourages pupils to try even harder, particularly for those occasions where parents are invited to attend assemblies.
7. The school makes overall good provision for pupils' personal development. Each class is involved in the popular termly productions. Through music, dance and themed assemblies, pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop spiritual awareness. There are many opportunities from the nursery to Year 2 for children and pupils to experience spirituality as they begin to learn about the world around them and they respond well. There are fewer opportunities for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 to develop spiritual awareness. Through lessons and topic work pupils throughout the school gain a good knowledge of their own history and culture. Visits to other faith centres and the opportunity for Year 5 and 6 pupils to take part in Sikh wedding ceremony combine to give them a satisfactory insight into other cultures. Nonetheless, more could be done to help pupils understand the contribution that other cultures make to British society. The school's good ethos, promotes pupils' moral and social development very well. They show great respect for each other's feelings and values. Any pupil feeling lonely or in need of help is able to get it immediately by moving to the 'Buddy Stop' signs in the playground. Year 6 pupils are eager to help and support. Year 6 'playground peacemakers' are on hand to help resolve any playground dispute. The school encourages pupils to take on extra duties and responsibilities to help build self-esteem and pride very well. Class councils and the school council are very good examples of pupils from reception to Year 6 accepting such responsibilities and working together for the benefit of the whole school.

Attendance

8. The data in the table below is for 2003, the last year for which comparative data is available. Data for the current year shows a significant improvement so that attendance and punctuality have improved since the last inspection and are now good. Pupils like to come to school and the improved attendance figures show the result. Pupils' regular attendance helps them to make good progress in their learning, because they do not miss any work.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0.3
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.

Exclusions

9. There were no exclusions in the last school year, but during this school year one boy was excluded for a fixed period three times.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good, with some excellent examples seen during the inspection. The curriculum is good, and is enriched very well to provide interesting activities that motivate pupils well. Pupils are cared for well; there are good links with parents and very good links with the local community that contribute well to pupils' good achievement.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. Assessment is **good** overall with very good procedures for gathering information about pupils' progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching in the nursery and reception classes results in children achieving very well.
- Very good procedures for assessment provide teachers with high quality information about the progress that pupils make in their classes.
- Very imaginative teaching methods used in Years 1, 2, and 6 motivate pupils very well.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught very well throughout the school and make very good progress.
- Pupils' understanding of how they can improve their work is limited.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	17 (37%)	17 (37%)	10 (22%)	1 (2%)	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.

10. Teaching and learning in the nursery and reception classes are very good. Almost 90 per cent of lessons seen were very good. The very high expectations, and positive approach to teaching children personal skills, are particularly effective and lead to children developing very good attitudes to learning. Children are very enthusiastic about the exciting range of activities that are planned for them. They quickly learn how to share with one another and how to listen in a large group due the way that teachers use praise all the time to encourage them. Plenty of rewards are available for children who succeed. In the nursery children are often completely absorbed in the tasks. Excellent teaching of early phonic skills turns simple tasks into a magical experience for the children. A particularly effective strategy is to teach children simple sign language to reinforce their understanding of letter names and sounds, so that they happily use their hands to show the adults the name of each letter. In all the classes very good attention is given to planning experiences that take place outdoors. The well-equipped outdoor areas are used very well for teaching and learning in all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The team leader's excellent team-building strategies allow all the adults working in these classes to flourish and develop their skills to a high level.
11. In Years 1 and 2, teachers work very well as a team, and teaching and learning are good. All the lessons seen in these classes during the inspection were good or better. Lessons are planned that encourage and motivate pupils very well. Excellent art teaching seen in Year 1 absorbed pupils' interest and was extremely challenging so that they improved their skills dramatically during the lesson seen. In a history lesson in Year 2 the challenging activity seen covered many different styles of learning. This meant that pupils were fascinated to compare contrasting portraits of Guy Fawkes, and were able to give clear reasons to explain why a catholic artist drew a positive picture whilst a protestant artist drew one that was much more severe. The strategy to provide pupils with activities that involve them in learning in different ways has been a high priority in the school and is very successful in Years 1 and 2. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to talk together in pairs, to make notes, to work in small groups making decisions and to learn basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Nonetheless, pupils' completed work shows that they do not have enough opportunities to use the writing skills they learn when working together as a whole class. As a result, their independent writing skills are not developing as well as they could. Despite the very good teamwork, lessons in Years 1 and 2 often overrun, which reduces the time available for the following lesson.
12. In Years 3 to 6 teaching and learning are good. Teachers make good use of the wealth of information they gain from the very good procedures for assessment of pupils' progress throughout the school. Comprehensive portfolios of pupils' progress are compiled for each class and passed to the next teacher each year. The information is very well presented and easily accessible so that teachers know what each pupil is capable of achieving and add to the portfolios as the year progresses. However, teachers do not yet share key elements of this information with their pupils, so that pupils do not usually know how well they are doing and what they need to improve. Teachers' marking is good overall, and gives clear guidance to pupils, but as yet the targets set are for the whole class rather than for individuals. These class targets are too broad and are not usually referred to in the marking of pupils' work. This tends to limit the progress they make, particularly in writing. An unsatisfactory lesson seen in Years 3 to 6 was due in part to a weakness in team planning. This resulted in one class using all the available resources for a history topic, whilst pupils of a similar age in another class had inadequate resources. Consequently, they could not achieve the skills they were intended to learn. Throughout the school, teachers are careful to explain to pupils at the beginning of most lessons precisely what they are going to learn. This is an effective strategy that helps pupils to know what the teacher will be looking for in their work. In Year 6, teaching is consistently good or better; in this class the very high expectations are a significant factor in pupils' very good achievement in the national tests over time. Pupils in this class enjoy their work and are highly motivated. Throughout the school, the majority of pupils say that lessons are interesting and fun, and that teachers listen to their ideas.
13. Pupils with special educational needs are taught very well throughout the school. Well-trained teaching assistants skilfully support them in lessons and in small groups. The interactions

between the assistants and pupils are very effective and ensure that they play a full part in whole-class sessions. When pupils are taught in small groups, the very careful planning is targeted precisely to meet their needs. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress throughout the school. Some pupils with special educational needs in English achieve the level expected for their age in Year 6 tests as a result of this very good support.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is **good**. The opportunities for enrichment of pupils' learning are **very good**. The quality and range of resources are **good** and the accommodation is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs means they achieve very well.
- The school provides a very good range of extra experiences and opportunities beyond the classroom that successfully boosts pupils' enthusiasm for learning.
- Planning for pupils to learn basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good, but there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in writing, numeracy and ICT across other subjects of the curriculum.
- There are good resources and the accommodation is well maintained, but some practical activities and physical education are restricted because some teaching areas and the school hall are too small and cramped.

Commentary

14. Pupils throughout the school enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic learners because the school provides a very good range of interesting experiences. There is a good emphasis on engaging pupils in practical activities, such as role-play in religious education, and fieldwork in the local area in geography. These give pupils a much deeper insight into the topics they study, and considerably strengthen their skills and understanding. A very wide range of visits to places of interest, visitors to the school and clubs for sport and other activities all successfully extends pupils' horizons, and adds relevance and excitement to their learning. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to explore the rich contribution made to British society by people from many cultures.
15. The curriculum is well planned. The very well planned and vibrant curriculum for children in the reception and nursery classes is particularly effective in stimulating their learning so that they achieve very well. In subjects like literacy and numeracy there is a firm emphasis on thoroughly teaching the basic skills, that is helping to drive up standards in the national tests. Good use of booster groups makes a substantial contribution to pupils' achievements and self-esteem. At present, however, pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and develop their growing skills in work in other subjects, particularly in writing. Through its systematic checking of curriculum plans, the school has rightly identified that teachers' planning for this aspect is not clear enough. Action is planned as an urgent priority in the near future. Good planning guidance ensures that National Curriculum requirements are followed. However, in design and technology and ICT curriculum plans could be clearer about how pupils will develop their skills. This is also the case for some aspects of religious education. Pupils do not achieve as well as they might when teachers place too little emphasis on developing pupils' skills in such aspects as learning from religions or designing and planning their technology projects.
16. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Early identification and clearly stated targets identified in pupils' very good action plans provide an effective steer for teachers' planning. This is due to the very good leadership and management of special educational needs. The result is a very effective mixture of building skills in small groups where they focus

on their individual targets, and support from teaching assistants as they work on carefully adapted tasks alongside others. This means pupils with special educational needs participate fully in all activities and achieve very well.

17. The school is very mindful of the needs of all its pupils in providing good quality resources that support their learning well. The recent provision of good quality books and other resources for literacy means that boys are now more interested and talk enthusiastically about the books they read. The accommodation is bright and very well maintained, but, in some teaching areas and the school hall, space is inadequate. This makes practical and physical activities, where more space is needed, very difficult, for example in teaching gymnastics skills to older pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for care, welfare, health and safety are **good** and ensure pupils are able to work in a safe environment. Support, advice and guidance provided for pupils and based on teachers' monitoring are **good** and reinforced by the very good relationships that exist. The school seeks to involve pupils in the work of the school and does so **very effectively**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The enthusiastic and purposeful class and school councils make popular improvements to the school.
- Very good induction into nursery and reception classes helps children to make good early progress.
- Very good support for pupils with special educational needs helps them to achieve well.

Commentary

18. The school makes very good provision for pupils to take on extra responsibilities, and in doing so gives them opportunity to gain confidence and self-esteem and to be able to discuss and resolve problems independently. The class and school councils enable elected pupils to consult with their classmates. They gather opinions on aspects of the school and suggestions as to how things can be improved. Pupils chair and minute their own proceedings and make decisions by democratic majority voting. Issues are then passed on to the elected representatives from each class who sit on the school council where further discussion and resolution, where possible, takes place. The school council has been very effective in its work. Recent successes include provision of new playground markings, new equipment for lunchtime play, and clearer rules for playground behaviour. Furthermore, the school council were fully involved in drawing up a revision of the school aims. These are now published alongside the aims of staff and governors.
19. Parents hold very positive views of the care that school provides for their children, and almost all pupils say they would turn to one of the adults in school if they were worried. All pupils are well respected and cared for in this school. Health and safety routines are good, including Internet security and child protection. The care begins immediately children start in the nursery. Nursery staff know parents well since many older brothers or sisters have already attended and these good relationships provide great security for children. Separate meetings are held for 'old' and 'new' parents, so that the information is well tailored to their needs. A home visit is offered so that the nursery staff can discuss any problems or concerns parents may have. Children settle into school very well and make good early progress as a result. This process of helping pupils as they move to different stages of their education has a high priority and continues throughout the school. This helps them to gain confidence and build on the skills they have already learned.
20. Pupils with special educational need are very well supported. Their needs are carefully assessed to identify the type and extent of support they require and very good individual

educational plans are prepared in order to meet those needs. Parents are involved in regular reviews of the plans and discuss and agree any new targets set when earlier targets have been achieved. All pupils relate very well to the adults in school; regardless of their needs, the same good level of pastoral care applies to them all.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **good** and parents are supportive as a result. The quality of links with the local community is **good** and well used to enhance the curriculum. The school's links with other schools and colleges are **very good** and provide support for both staff and pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good transfer arrangements and training opportunities provided through links with other schools help staff and pupils to improve their skills.
- Supportive parents provide help in school and with extra-curricular activities that broaden pupils' experiences.
- Good quality information about the curriculum for each term keeps parents well informed of the nature of the support they may need to provide.

Commentary

21. The school uses its regular links with the secondary school very effectively to guide and support Year 6 pupils who are about to make this important transfer. Joint project work in art and drama provides some continuity and gives Year 6 pupils the chance to become familiar with their new school. These good arrangements help to give pupils confidence and allay some of their concerns. Links with local colleges are very well used to secure additional classroom support through regular placements offered to students wishing to gain practical experience of working with pupils. The link with the local university provides good opportunities for undergraduate students to help in school and gives teaching staff preferential treatment in taking up places on weekend seminars. These very good links with local schools and colleges help both pupils and staff to improve their skills. The school makes good use of the local community by arranging visits to local places of historical and geographical interest and by inviting community members into school. For example, art club members are working on a stained glass window for the local church.
22. The school has good relationships with parents and a significant number provide help in the classrooms and help run after-school clubs such as art, craft, football and athletics. Parents help to supervise off-site activities. Parents are kept well informed about the school's work and events through good quality regular newsletters. The prospectus and the governing body annual report are informative and pupils' annual reports provide good information on what pupils have done and the achievement they have made. Each year the school issues a handbook and information on the current objectives in literacy and numeracy so that parents know exactly what the school targets for improvement are. Information on behaviour requirements and details of the security measures related to pupils' use of the Internet are also shared to minimise confusion about these important matters. The school circulates information about the planned curriculum for each term to all parents in order to help them consider the nature of help they may be able to offer. The good relationships between staff and parents mean that staff contact parents if there is any concern and are always available to meet parents at the end of the school day.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership and other key staff **good** leadership. Management is **very good**. Governance is **good** and ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very effective leadership of the headteacher lies behind the considerable improvements in test results over time.

- Very effective management systems ensure that procedures for checking how well pupils are doing are delegated very well so that they are embedded in the school's practice in all subjects.

Commentary

23. This is an improving school due to the drive, efficiency and vision of the very effective headteacher. A very clear agenda to drive up the standards that pupils achieve has been very successful. Sharing information with staff and empowering them to raise standards in the subjects for which they are responsible have achieved this. The quality of information provided at all levels is very good. Staff are very clear about what they are expected to do because this is made explicit in the school's documentation. The school improvement plan is a very effective document that is particularly well audited. The published review provides all staff and governors with a wealth of information about what is working and what still needs to be improved. Senior staff work effectively together as a team under the guidance of the headteacher. A team leader from each of the three main stages of education in the school brings a good perspective to the meetings. The team leader for the Foundation Stage is particularly effective at team building and ensures that all the adults in the nursery and reception classes work harmoniously in a supportive atmosphere for the benefit of all the children.
24. The very good improvement in standards has been secured because the headteacher has supported staff very well in the quest to raise achievement. Very clear guidelines set out the responsibilities of all staff for their subjects. The comprehensive subject reports resulting from the time they spend checking the work in their subjects are a very good model of management practice. A timetabled programme is arranged at the beginning of each year setting out how and when co-ordinators for all subjects will be able to check the quality of teaching and learning, teachers' planning and pupils' work. The resulting information is shared with all staff and governors so that everyone is clear what is working. This is particularly effective in English, mathematics and science, where the work has included a thorough review of the standards that pupils achieve in these subjects. In other subjects a lot of good work has taken place but the analysis of the standards that pupils achieve in each subject is not as clear. This means that not all co-ordinators are aware of the need to raise standards further, for example in design and technology. Nonetheless, staff lead and manage their subjects well. Leadership and management of special educational needs are particularly effective and provide a very clear framework for all the staff.
25. Governance is good and ensures that all statutory requirements are fully met. This is mainly due to the high quality information that governors receive from staff and the headteacher about the school. Governors are fully involved in planning for school improvement in partnership with staff, and bring their own astute observations made from their regular visits to school to this process. Governors are extremely supportive and have forged partnerships with all staff that result in a cycle of continuous improvement. This is partly due to the challenging nature of some of the questions they raise.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	767,792
Total expenditure	766,541
Expenditure per pupil	2,395

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	43,658
Balance carried forward to the next	44,909

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

26. The work taking place in the nursery and reception classes is very good and a strength of the school. Staff flourish under the excellent team-building skills of the Foundation Stage leader. Very good leadership and management lead to a consistently exciting curriculum that is taught very well through high quality play experiences and very well focused teaching of specific skills. A particular strength is the very good use of the outdoor areas to improve children's skills across the whole of the curriculum. The very efficient and well-documented assessment procedures provide staff with a wealth of information about the progress that children make. The staggered intake, with children joining the school each term, is managed very effectively. Every place is taken and there is a waiting list for any places that become available unexpectedly. Children's attainment varies when they start school in the nursery, but many attain levels that are below those found in most schools, with particular difficulties in their spoken language. A new strategy for the summer term, to combine the teaching of 40 reception children in one classroom with two teachers, has been very successful, mainly due to the very good partnership between all the adults and the very exciting way that the outdoor area has been used as an additional classroom. The inspection focused mainly on pupils' personal development, and work in English, mathematics and science across the whole school, and this was also the case in the Foundation Stage. Consequently it is not possible to make clear judgements about the quality of provision in physical and creative development as not enough lessons were seen in these areas across the Foundation Stage.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very positive approach by all adults ensures that children know exactly what is expected of them, helps them develop self-confidence and high self-esteem and enables them to make very good progress in all areas of learning.
- There are plenty of opportunities for children to work together in pairs and groups so that they learn to share very well.
- There are plenty of opportunities for children to organise themselves so that they learn to take responsibility for their work.

Commentary

27. Children achieve exceptionally well in this area, often exceeding the goals that children are expected to reach at the end of the reception year. This is due to very good teaching and a consistently positive approach that makes learning fun. Very clear routines are established in all the classes so that very little disruption to learning takes place. Staff are particularly good at teaching children how to negotiate with one another, to resolve any differences in a calm and friendly way. The many planned opportunities for children to organise themselves and work together in small groups and pairs ensure that they soon learn how to share. When they start school in the nursery some children find this difficult, but the very high expectations and positive encouragement they receive for their efforts soon help them to play well together. In the reception class children taking part in a physical development lesson in the hall were encouraged to use a microphone to tell other children what they liked about the way they were working. Challenging activities such as these permeate the whole curriculum and enable children to make very good progress. The very positive attitudes to learning that are promoted make a very significant contribution to children's learning in all other areas of learning. All the children exercise some choice over many of the activities they take part in throughout the day.

In the reception classes children begin to take responsibility for organising their day. They show the teacher which activity they have chosen by attaching their name card to a chart next to the activity they are completing.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Exceptionally good teaching of early phonic skills in the nursery helps children learn key skills very early.
- Very good attention to improving children's vocabulary and spoken English enables them to make very good progress.
- Very good attention to teaching basic skills in reading and writing means that children succeed in these key skills.

Commentary

28. Children achieve very well in this area due to a very good focus on teaching basic skills, both through play and through well-focused teaching in small and large groups. All adults play a significant part in children's success at learning these key skills. A teaching assistant in the nursery created an excellent atmosphere as she conjured up a bag of letter shapes. The children could hardly wait to be chosen to come out and find a letter from the bag. Using correct language increased children's vocabulary very well, for example, 'phoneme' to describe the sound the letter makes. There are many other rich and exciting activities to improve children's vocabulary. Countless activities taking place during the inspection stemmed from the 'growing' topic, which featured *The Enormous Watermelon* as the book of the week. Melons of every shape, size and colour were available throughout the week and adults ensured that children improved their vocabulary well as they described and played with the melons.
29. Very good teaching helps children to learn very well. In the nursery, the teacher telephoned children playing with her in the 'garden centre' encouraging them to talk about the stock they needed, and the plants that were for sale. Lessons focus very well on teaching basic skills of reading and writing. In a reception class children were inspired by the imaginative use of a book wrapped in shiny paper, with clues in the style of a story board attached to the parcel to help them work out the title of the book inside. They were absolutely delighted when they worked out which book it was by reading the clues. Children know how to read and write most letters, though some are still formed incorrectly. Nonetheless children in the reception class are able to write a list of words independently on their whiteboards that mean the same as enormous. They write 'hoog' and 'jigantic', showing a good understanding of how letters build into words. By the time they leave the reception class the great majority have reached the goals expected of them, and a number of children exceed these.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good use of resources promotes children's interest in mathematics.
- Very good preparation of games for children to play helps them improve basic skills in mathematics.
- Very good attention to providing challenging opportunities for children to talk about mathematics ensures they improve their understanding of how numbers work.

Commentary

30. Children are inspired to achieve very well in mathematics by the high quality resources that are provided in all the classes, so that they achieve the goals that are expected of them by the time they leave the reception classes. Following the theme of watermelons, children in the reception class worked with exquisite resources, sewn in the shape of watermelon slices made of green and red felt, and decorated with sequins to represent the seeds. These delightful resources enchanted the children. They were used to challenge them to estimate how many slices were on the giant silver tray before the teacher covered it with a cloth. Very good teaching of mathematics was evident in the skilled way children were introduced to the challenging concept of estimating sensibly, rather than counting.
31. There are nonetheless plenty of opportunities for counting. Children in the nursery scurried about the outdoor area looking for a sequence of numbered watermelons from one to 15, shrieking with delight as they found the next one in the sequence. The following day they searched for melons with a certain number of pips to improve their skills further. There are plenty of opportunities for children to talk about mathematics to improve their understanding. For example, children in the reception classes were asked to explain how they knew a number was bigger or smaller as they jumped from one to another on the number lines and games in the playground. The teacher's skilled questioning made them think hard about the numbers so that the majority fully understood how the number system up to 20 works. Children with special educational needs received the same skilled support as other children. Working very well with a teaching assistant, this small group of reception children played a game in another area of the playground to help them see how to count on one or two squares.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with all other areas of learning mean that children are interested in the work and have fun.
- Very good use of high quality resources stimulates children's interest and curiosity.
- Very good attention to broadening children' vocabulary means that they begin to understand some technical terms.

Commentary

32. The scientific theme of 'growing' permeated all areas of learning during the inspection, with a particular focus on watermelons. The exciting range of activities planned by all the staff was exciting and great fun for all the children in both the nursery and reception classes. As a result they achieve very well in this area of learning and reach the goals expected of them. Very good curriculum planning underpins the very good teaching and learning. Children in the reception class use computers confidently, drawing melons and melon slices with a graphics program by selecting the tools and colours for their pictures from the toolbar. The 'garden centres' include growing areas, and there are plants on display that the children have grown from seeds, learning the conditions that plants need to grow and thrive as they play. Children have magnifying glasses to study the texture of the melons, and are encouraged to taste and feel the different kinds available. Some pieces were floated in the water tray to see if they sank. In the nursery, a parent talked with children, improving their vocabulary by asking them about the textures and colours they could see as they made a model of a watermelon slice with play-dough and melon seeds from observing some real slices on the table. The very good opportunities for children to talk about their work with adults as they play increases their understanding very well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The strengths of work sampled in this area are:

- very well planned physical development activities for the reception classes are taught very well in the school hall;
- very good use of the outdoor areas provides plenty of opportunities for children in all classes to run, jump and climb and develop their skills;
- very good attention to developing children's control of pencils and other small tools helps them with early writing and drawing skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The strengths of work sampled in this area are:

- very inventive use of resources in all classes stimulates children's imagination;
- very good areas for children's role-play, such as the attractive 'garden centres' in both classrooms, are very well linked to the curriculum theme of 'growing';
- very good links with all other areas of learning mean that children learning to paint, draw and sing do so with great enthusiasm.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection due to good leadership, and very effective management that constantly checks and seeks ways of improving pupils' attainments.
- Good teaching means that pupils achieve well and standards in the national tests have risen more sharply than the national trend since the last inspection.
- Pupils with special educational needs do very well because provision for their needs is very good.
- Writing standards are not as high as they might be because the handwriting policy is not implemented consistently well by all teachers and opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their writing skills in other subjects are too often missed.

Commentary

33. Achievement is good. Pupils do well to reach average standards by Year 2 and Year 6 given their starting points and the relatively large number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. Most pupils reach the higher levels in tests than in most schools. This is an improvement on the below average standards found in Year 6 in the last inspection. However, the school has rightly recognised that standards in writing could be better. Too many pupils in Year 2 only just reach the expected level in writing, and many pupils do not consistently use a neat and joined style of handwriting.
34. Good leadership by the English co-ordinator and senior managers has been a strong driving force in raising standards. A firm focus on helping pupils do well in tests has seen a more rapid improvement in standards than in other schools nationally. Very good and rigorous systems for checking pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching and learning mean the co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject that has successfully highlighted key areas for development. A number of these important developments, like the well-focused comments

teachers make when marking pupils' work, have good potential but are still in their infancy and not yet fully effective or impacting on standards. Teachers set targets for their classes to achieve in English, and track pupils' progress very well. However, pupils are not aware of their individual targets and what they need to do to reach these. This particularly limits their achievement in writing.

35. Teaching and learning are good, more consistently so in Years 1 and 2, with examples of very good teaching seen throughout the school during the inspection. Teachers are good at managing discussions, effectively using questions that prompt pupils so they speak clearly when asked to describe and explain their ideas. Many discussions challenge children to order their thoughts so they express their point of view confidently. Whilst not all pupils become confident and articulate, most do. Some younger pupils show considerable speaking skills prompted by school council debates. Teachers quickly establish good listening habits by insisting that pupils listen when others are speaking. They use action games and timely reminders very effectively to draw pupils back when they lose concentration. Because they make lessons interesting, pupils develop good listening skills and achieve well.
36. A strength in teaching is the way teachers make sure their pupils know what they are to learn through their activities and check their achievements at the end. In very well organised reading sessions in Years 3 to 6, teachers challenge pupils to look for exciting complex sentences and other features, to read play scripts together or to seek out particular facts. Because their reading is purposeful and the good quality books appeal to both boys and girls, they quickly become absorbed and effective in their reading and achieve well. Homework has improved since the last inspection, and reading is one aspect that benefits from a good partnership with parents in regularly reading with their children at home.
37. There is a good emphasis on teaching the basic skills of both reading and writing and pupils achieve well in learning these. Lessons have a good structure so that such skills as spelling, punctuation and the use of more complex words and imaginative words are taught thoroughly. Lively introductions and very good relationships mean that pupils share ideas freely, and learn to identify the features that make writing particularly effective. However, pupils' achievements in writing are not as good as they might be. The school has a handwriting policy and 'pen licences' for pupils who write neatly, but teachers do not implement it consistently enough. Teachers do not consistently promote better handwriting by modelling it themselves and encouraging pupils, particularly older ones, to use a pen and a neat, joined style. Pupils have too few opportunities to practise their new skills in their own independent writing. The school has already identified this weakness, and the recently introduced extended writing sessions are an important development. The impact of this was best seen in a class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, where the skills taught in literacy lessons were substantially extended and reinforced when pupils wrote their own storybooks.
38. Highly skilled and very effectively deployed teaching assistants make a significant contribution to this good teaching. They are well informed and confident, forging very good relationships so that pupils try very hard to please them. This is particularly effective when working with pupils with special educational needs. Teaching assistants are fully involved in the planning, and their good support of pupils in small groups, when they work on carefully adapted tasks learning reading, writing and language skills, means pupils work hard and achieve very well.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

39. This is satisfactory overall. There are some innovative and valuable opportunities for writing in subjects like religious education and history. In Years 3 to 6, pupils write invitations and order of service cards in connection with work on Bar Mitzvah and Sikh wedding ceremonies, and accounts of the lives of Romans and other people in the past. However, because the school does not have a clear plan for reading and writing in subjects other than English, opportunities for pupils to extend their skills, particularly in writing in subjects like design and technology, are often missed. Speaking and listening skills are often developed well when pupils are

encouraged to talk to one another about their work. Pupils still have too few opportunities to use ICT in their English work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in Years 1 and 2 and well in Years 3 to 6 because the quality of teaching and learning is good overall with very good teaching seen throughout the school.
- Leadership and management are very good because rigorous procedures for checking how well the school is doing are helping to drive up standards.
- Teachers make detailed assessments of pupils' achievements so that they can carefully track their progress over time.
- The development of mathematical skills through other subjects is not given enough emphasis.

Commentary

40. Pupils achieve very well in Years 1 and 2 and the standards seen are above average by the end of Year 2. Most pupils achieve well as they move through Years 3 to 6 and standards seen are broadly average. In the current Year 6 cohort, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is higher than average and these pupils achieve very well. Most pupils achieve well because the subject has a high priority in the school. Standards seen are higher than at the time of the last inspection. A very good proportion of pupils reach the higher levels in the national tests. However, higher attaining pupils are sometimes required to engage in unnecessary consolidation before they move on to work that challenges them.
41. Teaching and learning are good, with some very good lessons seen throughout the school. In these lessons, teachers had high expectations and pitched work at appropriately challenging levels for pupils of all abilities. They asked purposeful questions to develop clear understanding of new knowledge and used the high quality contributions of teaching assistants and other adult helpers very well to extend pupils' learning. The lively approach of teachers and the constant encouragement they gave their pupils helped to keep them motivated and involved. As a result of these many strengths, pupils made very good gains in their learning. These strong features, many of which were seen in other lessons, help to explain the often very good attitudes to learning and standards of behaviour seen during the inspection. However, sometimes pupils sit for too long before proceeding to their independent or group task, such as in Year 2. Teachers do not yet use real-life mathematical experiences enough to help pupils appreciate the importance of number in our daily lives. Some teachers in Years 3 to 6 do not encourage pupils to take enough pride in their work, and worksheets, which do not always challenge pupils enough, are sometimes overused in Years 1 and 2.
42. The subject is very well led and managed. This is because there are clear and rigorous plans to help drive up standards, and there is regular checking to see what effect new developments have on raising these and improving teaching and learning. Data from national tests is rigorously analysed, patterns reviewed and effective action taken to ensure that identified weaknesses are overcome. The monitoring of lessons and pupils' work is rigorous, regular and systematic. Because of this, it clearly establishes what works well and what needs to improve. As a result, it is an important tool to help improve the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently the school is very good at checking its own practices and procedures in order to further improve the quality of provision in mathematics. Nonetheless, pupils' ability to handle data, such as through the use of ICT, requires further development.
43. Teachers' assessments of what pupils know and understand are detailed so that they can carefully track their progress over time. However, pupils do not have individual targets for learning that make clear what they need to do next to help them improve. There is a clear framework for developing knowledge, skills and understanding as pupils move through the school. Pupils' work is marked carefully, with agreed approaches consistently followed, and this is helping pupils to make good progress. Teachers are rightly placing increasing emphasis on

providing opportunities to develop pupils' reasoning skills, initiative and understanding through investigative and problem-solving activities, which is helping to bring the subject alive for them. This very good practice was observed in Year 6 during the inspection. Good initiatives in mathematics with the school to which most pupils transfer are helping to ensure a smooth transition.

Mathematics across the curriculum

44. This is satisfactory overall. There are good examples of the use of mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding through other subjects. For example, in a link with ICT, pupils in Year 1 show their findings by completing a pictogram, and in science, Year 5 pupils record their pulse rates before and after exercise. However, activities tend to occur incidentally rather than as part of systematic planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in science by the end of Year 6, reaching above average standards because teaching and learning are good overall.
- Investigations in the subject are not always challenging enough and this limits the achievement of some more able pupils, particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- The subject is well led and managed, and there are clear plans for its continued development.

Commentary

45. Pupils achieve well overall. Pupils achieve very well by the end of Year 6 and the standards seen in this year group are above average and higher than at the time of the last inspection. In Year 2 a substantial proportion of pupils reach above average standards. More able pupils achieve well in the school, because challenging lessons match their needs. Teachers give increasing emphasis in most years to developing important skills of scientific enquiry to facilitate understanding, and good preparation for the national tests helps to boost the standards achieved in these.
46. Teaching and learning are good overall. For example, teachers give good emphasis to ensuring that pupils acquire knowledge of life processes and living things, such as the important parts of plants and the human body, and their functions. These are strongly represented in displays in some classes to help motivate pupils. Good features of teaching include secure subject knowledge, the use of probing questions to develop scientific understanding, and a careful choice of resources to aid learning. All teachers use praise and encouragement well to enhance self-esteem. Most marking is good, celebrating pupils' efforts and helping them to move forward. However, the pace of some lessons seen during the inspection was too slow while others were too heavily teacher-led, which limited learning. Some teachers do not match work well enough to the abilities of pupils, which also impedes learning for some pupils. For example, in Years 1 and 2 pupils sometimes colour diagrams and pictures to enhance their appearance, which does not contribute to the development of scientific understanding. Some teachers do not encourage pupils to take pride in their work, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. Currently, there are no individual targets shared with pupils to help them understand how to improve their work.
47. The skills of enquiry, such as predicting, investigating, testing, recording, evaluating and drawing conclusions as part of carefully structured scientific investigations, are better represented than at the time of the last inspection. As a result, pupils gradually develop understanding. For example, Year 3 pupils carry out an absorbency investigation, using different types of paper, and test the strengths of different magnets using paper clips. However,

investigations are not always challenging enough for more able pupils and this limits their achievement in some lessons.

48. The subject is well led and managed, and there are good plans for its continued development. Rigorous analysis of information from national tests results is helping to identify and overcome weaknesses. Effective monitoring of teaching and learning in science is embedded in the school's work. As a result, the co-ordinator knows what works well and what needs to improve and has clear plans in place to bring this about.
49. There is scope for the further development of writing and ICT within science. For example, pupils do not consistently develop their writing skills through science as they move through the school. In many lessons pupils use prepared worksheets and this reduces the number of opportunities for pupils to decide how to set out their work, and limits the opportunities to practise writing skills. They do not use ICT often enough to represent information in different forms, or to analyse and draw conclusions from accurate data gained from investigations.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising, but are still below national levels by the end of Year 6 because ICT is not used well enough in subjects across the curriculum, and this limits the standards achieved.
- The subject is well led and managed so that almost all of the weaknesses from the last inspection have been addressed, and there are good plans for its continued development.

Commentary

50. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. There has been good improvement in provision since the last inspection, but standards are the same. This is because the school has found it difficult to keep pace with the national improvements in the technology available for teaching the subject since then. Standards seen are average in Year 2 and remain below average in Year 6. Nonetheless pupils now make satisfactory and sometimes good progress as they move through the school. This is because planning for the subject is much improved and results in more frequent timetabling of ICT lessons. In Year 6 pupils use ICT well to present, organise and amend information. For example, they complete computer-generated work on Henry VIII using pictures, text and graphics. In these aspects of ICT almost all pupils achieve the expected level. However, overall standards are below those expected because pupils do not have enough opportunities to exchange ideas and information with others using e-mail, nor compare ICT with alternative methods and with its use outside school. Other areas, such as control technology and data analysis, such as through the use of spreadsheets, are too thinly represented to allow pupils to reach the expected standards at the end of Year 6. This is because not enough opportunities are planned for pupils to develop these skills in subjects across the curriculum, so that the limited time they spend learning ICT skills in Year 6 results in standards that are lower than expected.
51. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good lessons seen during the inspection. In these lessons teachers showed secure subject knowledge. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Good questioning of pupils helped to ensure there was a clear focus on developing understanding, teaching assistants were deployed well and pupils were given much encouragement to succeed. As a result of these positive features, pupils made good gains in learning. However, work is not always matched well enough to pupils' precise needs to help them make the best possible progress.
52. Standards are rising steadily over time despite the school's recent problems with ICT hardware, which have had a considerable impact on the rate of improvement. In Years 1 and 2

the good emphasis on developing skills in all aspects of ICT is raising standards. In Years 3 to 5 pupils achieve standards that are broadly as expected, despite the lack of opportunities to develop skills in other subjects. They cover a broad curriculum that helps them make the progress that is expected. This is because most of the weaknesses from the last inspection have been addressed while others are currently a high priority for school development. For example, teachers are much more confident with the requirements of the ICT curriculum than at the time of the last inspection, and as a result, the subject is much better represented in the school timetable. Resources to aid learning have improved considerably, and all pupils now have regular opportunities to develop ICT skills using the school's laptop computers. Publishing skills are much better represented than at the time of the last inspection, and pupils use computers more often in English to draft their writing. For example, Year 6 produce a newspaper each term using ICT. There are consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress and a clear framework for developing knowledge, skills and understanding. Both of these areas were weaknesses last time, and have now been overcome. Consequently, standards are likely to continue to rise in future because staff are well aware of the weaknesses in pupils' work.

53. The subject is well led and managed and this has led to the good improvements in the quality of teachers' planning and an increase in teachers' skills. Good procedures to check the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' work and teachers' planning are embedded in the school's work. As a result, the co-ordinator knows what is working well and what still needs to improve. This has enabled her to establish clear and rigorous plans to build on the good developments that have already taken place. For example, she has identified training needs for staff to enable them to use the recently purchased interactive whiteboard effectively to help pupils learn. This good level of support for teachers who are gaining more confidence is a strong feature of the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

54. This is unsatisfactory. There is increasing evidence of planning for ICT in other subjects, but this is not yet evident in pupils' work in most subjects. There are very few examples of pupils using ICT to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum throughout the school. This means that pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop and use the skills they are taught in ICT lessons. For example, pupils using the Internet to research information for a history topic in Year 4 did not have enough experience to do so without considerable support. The lack of planned opportunities to improve skills across the curriculum limits pupils' overall achievement in the subject.

HUMANITIES

Geography

55. No overall judgements are made in **geography** because only one lesson was seen during the inspection. However, there are good quality displays around the school that show that geography is taught in line with requirements and the school's planning. These show that the school provides a good range of interesting and practical experiences. Teachers make very good use of the local area for fieldwork. There is a good emphasis on developing pupils' enquiry and mapping skills through each topic. Pupils become adept in interpreting maps and producing their own to show features like the different types of buildings in the local area. ICT is sometimes used to record the results of their investigations, for instance producing pie charts when comparing the jobs people do in Tenby and Kirkby-in-Ashfield. In the very good lesson seen in Year 6, pupils showed a good understanding of geographical terms. They enthusiastically studied photographs and maps of the local area and identified employment opportunities in primary, secondary and tertiary businesses in the town. Pupils of all abilities achieved very well due the high level of challenge introduced to the tasks.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning mean pupils achieve well, particularly in developing good enquiry skills.
- Pupils enjoy their work because teachers make very good use of good resources in interesting practical experiences.
- Some of the recording tasks lack sufficient challenge and there are too few opportunities for pupils to respond to their history work in written tasks.

Commentary

56. Standards have improved since the last inspection and are now above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Pupils achieve well, particularly in developing their enquiry skills. Teaching and learning are consistently good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Some very good teaching and learning were seen in Year 2 during the inspection. This was characterised by a very challenging analysis of how Guy Fawkes could be presented as either a good or a bad man depending on who is presenting the evidence. This very effective lesson covered a wealth of historical evidence as well as teaching Year 2 pupils how to interpret what they see and find. This is a much higher level than expected. Because pupils in Year 1 have been challenged to think hard about what the lives of people like Louis Braille might have been like, they often show a very good appreciation of such hardships as blindness. Throughout the school, teachers plan their lessons very well so that there is a clear focus, and pupils know what they are to learn. Effective use of good quality resources and the area around the school means that pupils from Years 3 to 6 gain a good insight into what life was like in the past. They are often fascinated by old photographs and maps and show excitement when studying them very carefully. Teachers help to stimulate their questions and ideas about the past by skilful questioning and encouraging discussion. Teachers are good at managing discussions so that pupils listen intently and remember well. They take every opportunity in history topics to extend pupils' social awareness.
57. Teachers plan appropriately for pupils to use literacy and ICT skills, for example to search the Internet for information about the Tudors or make notes and produce written reports about their history topics. However, this is not always successful. Sometimes, pupils do not have sufficient ICT skills to undertake the tasks set. This means they waste time and their progress is limited. Overall there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills in history. Throughout the school, some recording tasks lack sufficient challenge, particularly when pupils spend too long on drawing, cutting and sticking pictures into their books. Opportunities that challenge pupils to reflect on their knowledge and understanding and record their interpretations are sometimes missed.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of religions are strengthened by very good opportunities for role-play, through visits to places of worship and by listening to visiting speakers.
- Too little emphasis in the school's planning means that pupils have too few opportunities to interpret and reflect on what they can learn from different religions that might be relevant in their own lives.

Commentary

58. Standards seen in Years 2 and 6 are broadly in line with the expectations in the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education, as they were when the school was last inspected. Pupils' achievements by the time they leave the school are satisfactory. In Year 6, pupils' secure knowledge of Christianity, and some of the features of other world faiths like Judaism, is strengthened considerably by visits to local churches and by hearing about Judaism in the synagogue in Nottingham. However, pupils find it hard to explain the similarities and significance of different beliefs, ways of worship and special books.
59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Some good and very good lessons were seen during the inspection. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 thoroughly enjoyed their role-play of a Sikh wedding ceremony. Teachers plan such activities very well, taking time to prepare good resources. Pupils created decorated head coverings for the ceremony in art and design lessons. They wrote attractive cards showing the order of the celebration. Good activities such as these reinforced pupils' knowledge of what happens during such a ceremony and why, so that when they took part they did so thoughtfully, sensitively and with obvious interest. Very good teaching means that pupils remember well what they learn in these practical activities.
60. There are very good links with activities such as circle times with a personal, social, emotional and citizenship theme. (In circle time pupils sit together in a circle to discuss difficult topics together, listening carefully to one another.) In Year 2 pupils used the circle time that followed a religious education lesson to very good effect. They explored what qualities are needed to be a good godparent as part of their topic on baptism. Because they were clear about a godparent's role from a previous discussion, they made thoughtful comments about the need to be responsible and loving. Teaching is less effective when unchallenging activities like cutting, sticking and drawing mean that pupils are not stimulated enough to reflect on the facts and make their own interpretations, for example through writing. Overall there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills through religious education.
61. A school priority is to revise planning for religious education in line with new local guidance. The way the school has adapted the guidance in the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus currently has some weaknesses. There is too little emphasis in school planning on learning from religions. Consequently, in lesson planning and teachers' checks on pupils' attainment in the subject, this aspect is often missed. This means that pupils' achievements in this aspect of religious education are not as good as they might be.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. Not enough lessons were seen in these subjects to make a secure judgement about the overall provision and the quality of teaching and learning. One design and technology, one physical education, and two art and design lessons were observed. No lessons were seen in music. There were plenty of examples of pupils' work to see in design and technology; in addition there were many samples of pupils' work on display around the school and pupils spoke about the subject, so that standards can be judged. There was no pupils' work to see in music and physical education. In art and design, ongoing work and displays of pupils' work were seen, but there was not enough evidence to make a secure judgment about the standards achieved.

Art and design

63. One lesson in Year 1 and 2, and one lesson in Year 5 and 6 were seen during the inspection. The Year 1 and 2 lesson was excellent and a model of good practice in teaching art and design skills. The imaginative use of textiles contributed well to the good fabric designs that pupils in Year 5 and 6 created. They used the fabric samples to fashion headdresses to wear to the Sikh wedding ceremony they were creating in the school hall. Links with other subjects such as this are a significant feature of the school's good art curriculum. A popular art club is run for pupils to further enrich their experiences.

Example of outstanding practice

A teacher of a mixed Year 1 and 2 class taught her pupils a range of skills to help them create portraits in an excellent art and design lesson that was part of an art day.

Pupils were delighted with the morning's work and talked about it enthusiastically. They had reviewed a wide range of portrait styles before dressing up and sitting for portraits, choosing the clothes and the setting themselves before taking pictures of one another with the digital camera. The photographs, displayed on a black backcloth in a temporary classroom gallery, included portraits of pupils alone, or in groups and pairs; some standing, some sitting, some still and reflective, and some in 'action' poses. Pupils were now sketching self-portraits and had been prepared extremely well. They had plenty of opportunities to learn and practise the skills needed to draw facial features before they began to draw the final self-portrait. The resources were of high quality. Each pupil had a mirror and a range of quality sketching pencils to use. Pupils were very familiar with the way that different pencils could be used to enhance their work. They chose the way they worked, some stood at easels, others worked on the floor, whilst others sat with their friends at tables. Pupils wore pristine white 'smocks' as they worked, to create a special atmosphere. The teacher's highly skilled interventions and encouragements persuaded every pupil that they had the skill to draw successfully. She carefully showed them how to use the pencils gently so that they could modify their work as they went along. They shone with pride at the results, which were worthy of much older pupils.

Design and technology

64. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 but are underachieving in Year 3 to 6. Standards seen in Year 2 are as expected, but in Year 6 standards are lower than those reported in the last inspection. In this year group pupils have limited skills because from Year 3 to Year 6 they do not have enough opportunities to work at activities that will allow them to achieve the expected standards in the subject. Pupils have little experience of working with a range of materials and tools by the time they leave Year 6. They cannot explain how to join materials successfully and have little understanding of how simple mechanisms work. This is mainly because work recently has focused on food technology. However, this work has not been sufficiently challenging and pupils have not understood the process of designing, making and evaluating a product well enough. Throughout the school pupils do not develop their writing skills well enough in design and technology. Too little emphasis is placed on the process of designing and evaluating products. Nonetheless, in Years 1 and 2 pupils have designed and made colourful puppets successfully. The procedures for checking the quality and teaching and learning are comprehensive. The co-ordinator has reported thoroughly on the strengths and weaknesses in planning and teaching of the subject, and her findings have been shared with staff and governors. However, the detailed checking has not included a rigorous judgement about the standard of work produced, so that underachievement has not been identified, and consequently insufficient action has been taken to raise standards.

Music

65. No music lessons were seen during the inspection. There are some good features in the school's curriculum. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 express their feelings about medieval music, commenting on specific musical features, such as tempo and rhythm. There are clear plans for the subject's continued development, such as to develop a curriculum plan that incorporates music in other subjects of the curriculum. Professional music tuition is provided for some pupils learning to play a range of instruments and many of the school's regular productions include singing and performing. During the inspection there were missed opportunities for learning about music from other cultures in the enactment of a Sikh wedding ceremony held in school by Year 5 and 6 pupils. In Years 3 to 6, music lessons are not included in the timetable every week, and this impedes the rate at which pupils develop their music skills.

Physical education

66. Physical education is well represented within the school's good curriculum and is popular with pupils. In the only lesson seen, Year 3 and 4 pupils explored different actions through well-planned activities to develop their hand and eye co-ordination. They made good progress in developing these skills due to the expert teaching. The school has good links with the school to which most pupils transfer after Year 6, which benefits pupils in aspects of the subject, such as gymnastics. Competitive sports with other schools often take place, such as cross-country running and hockey, which extend pupils' learning. Hockey training has been provided due to the school gaining an Award for All, which has provided funding for professional training for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school has applied for Active Mark Gold, and this has required extensive provision in the subject. Other popular and well-attended extra-curricular activities include football, and enrich pupils' experiences. Most pupils learn to swim at the local pool reaching the standards expected by the end of Year 6. Plans for the subject's continued development include applying for grants to help bring coaches with specific expertise to help develop football, netball and athletics skills further. Unfortunately the school's small hall limits what pupils in large classes can successfully achieve in gymnastics because of space restrictions.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject has a very high priority in the school and is taught consistently well.
- Pupils are given a wide range of responsibilities and this helps them to develop very mature attitudes.

Commentary

67. There is a very good programme, both formal and informal, for developing pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship skills. This is taught well from Years 1 to 6. In regular timetabled discussions pupils throughout the school learn to make the right choices and know what to do when confronted by problem situations. The class and school councils make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. They take responsibility for running these themselves and are extremely proud of their achievements and full of their plans to modify the school toilets. Year 6 pupils take great pride in the many additional responsibilities they have in the school. They carefully escort younger pupils back to their classrooms after assembly. During assembly they sit near a class for which they are responsible, and reward a pupil from this class with a sticker for the best example of good behaviour in each assembly. Responsibilities such as these help pupils develop mature attitudes by the time they leave the school.

68. The good school ethos promotes pupils' personal development at every opportunity. Rewards play a key part in this. Parents are invited to weekly celebration assemblies where pupils proudly receive awards for all kinds of contributions to school life. Pupils are regularly given choices to make by themselves. The playground is divided into busy and quiet areas and pupils can choose where they want to be. Older and younger pupils play together harmoniously as a result. Lessons provide many opportunities for pupils to talk about their work, and work together in pairs and small groups, increasing key personal skills. This very good provision motivates pupils throughout the school to do their best and to succeed.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school (ethos)	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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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