

INSPECTION REPORT

UNSTONE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Unstone, Dronfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number:112642

Headteacher: Mrs E. Kelly

Lead inspector: Mr P. Belfield

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 November 2003

Inspection number: 260739

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	72
School address:	Main Road Unstone Dronfield Derbyshire
Postcode:	S18 4AB
Telephone number:	01246 413109
Fax number:	01246 413109
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Marianne Rawson
Date of previous inspection:	October 12 th 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very small school in the village of Unstone, near Dronfield, with 72 pupils on roll who all speak English as their first language and are of white, British heritage. Attainment on entry is average although this fluctuates owing to the very small numbers involved. Thirteen percent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is similar to the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. The pupils are taught in three classes with the older pupils taught in a mixed age Year 5/6 class.

The school received an Achievement Award in 2001; Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2002 and the local Healthy Schools Standard in the same year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21661	Peter Belfield	Lead inspector	<i>Mathematics, science, information and communication technology, history, geography, physical education.</i>
14083	Alexander Anderson	Lay inspector	
18331	Jonathon Sutcliffe	Team inspector	<i>English, religious education, art and design, design and technology, music, special educational needs</i>

The inspection contractor was :

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Unstone Junior is a **good school** that is well regarded by both parents and pupils. The teaching is good and the school is well led and managed. The progress of the great majority of the pupils is good throughout the school, and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. The headteacher and governors give a clear direction to sustain and further improve the quality of education provided. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The teaching is good and standards are above average. The teaching assistants provide effective support for individuals and groups of pupils
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and is well supported by the staff
- Standards in information and communication technology are above average and computers are used very effectively to support the pupils' learning in many other subjects
- More could be done to develop the pupils' literacy skills, and in particular their writing, in subjects other than English
- The pupils are confident and have very positive attitudes to learning. Relationships are very good throughout the school
- The levels of attendance are below the national figures because too many pupils take holidays in term time
- The pupils enjoy the investigational work in science and they consistently achieve good standards
- The curriculum is well planned and is enriched through visits and after school activities
- The pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work could be better

There has been good improvement since the school was last inspected in 1998. The teachers have high expectations of all of the pupils and standards have risen. Assessment is used very effectively to plan the work in English, mathematics and science. All of the key issues from the last inspection have been addressed including the appointment of additional teaching assistants.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

All pupils are achieving well. The results in the national test results in 2003 show that in English, mathematics and science the pupils' performance was in the top five per cent nationally and the results were well above average when compared with similar schools. Caution is needed in interpreting the data in the table below as the number of pupils taking the tests each year is small. The inspection evidence confirms that by the end of Year 6 standards are currently above average in English, mathematics and science.

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

The pupils' handwriting and the quality of the presentation of their work varies from class to class and could be improved. The pupils' achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is very good and the standard of their work is above average. Their skills are used very effectively to support work across the curriculum. In all other subjects, standards are in line with those expected.

The pupils have good attitudes to learning and **the school develops their personal qualities effectively. The school promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development very well.** The pupils' understanding of the importance of cultural and religious traditions is good. Attendance is below the national figures because many families choose to take holidays during term time. This results in teachers having to plan separate work for these pupils to ensure that they cover all aspects of the curriculum.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education provided by the school is good. The teaching and learning are good.** The work is well matched to the pupils' individual needs and this results in good progress for all pupils. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the pupils enjoy a good range of visits, visitors to the school and extra-curricular activities. There are, however, too few opportunities for the pupils to use and develop their writing skills across the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good and these pupils achieve well.

There is very good provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils. They have very good relationships with their teachers who monitor their progress carefully. The teachers give consideration to the pupils' views and welcome their comments and ideas. The high levels of care shown by the staff contribute much to the effective learning. The partnership with parents is good and the school has strong links with the local community. Parents support their children well and this aids their achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has been very effective in her drive to improve the school and combines the role of teacher and leader very well. She has strong support and commitment from the staff. All pupils are included in what the school offers. The governors are very supportive but need to take a more active role in monitoring the school's performance.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents are very satisfied with the work of the school. The pupils say they like the school and enjoy their lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

To build on the many improvements made since the last inspection the school should:

- provide more opportunities for the pupils to use and develop their literacy skills, particularly their writing, in other subjects
- raise further the standards of handwriting and the presentation of the pupils' work
- improve the pupils' attendance
- meet statutory requirements by including all of the required information in the school prospectus

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good throughout the school. In the core subjects and in information and communication technology standards are above average by the time the pupils leave the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6
- Standards in information and communication technology are good, and the pupils make very good use of computers to help them learn in other subjects
- The pupils have too few opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in other subjects and to carry out problem solving activities in mathematics

Commentary

1. The numbers of pupils in Year 6 are historically small and only eight Year 6 pupils took the national tests in 2003, so any interpretation of national test results must be treated with great caution. However, the trend in these results over the last three years has been rising and in Year 6 in 2003 the standards achieved in English, mathematics and science were in the top five per cent of all schools. The inspection evidence confirms this picture of high standards.
2. The school is particularly successful in developing the pupils' achievements in mathematics and science. In mathematics, the pupils develop a very good understanding of place value and number operations. They acquire a very good knowledge of shape and are able to calculate using fractions and decimals by the end of Year 6. The pupils demonstrate great enthusiasm for both subjects and their skill in handling data is used regularly in science investigations to present their findings. Overall, however, the pupils have too few opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to real-life and problem solving activities. The pupils' good achievement in science is based on their very secure understanding of scientific principles and a curriculum that offers opportunities to learn through a wide range of experiments and investigations.
3. By the time the pupils leave the school, standards in speaking and listening are average. The school has recognised this as an area for development and is providing more opportunities to improve the pupils' skills through, for example, its personal, health and social education programme. The pupils achieve well in reading. They enjoy talking about their favourite authors and characters, and refer to texts to support their views. The recent emphasis on improving the pupils' writing has paid dividends and the pupils write well in a very good range of styles. This success is not yet reflected in their work in other subjects and more could be done to improve the quality of the pupils' work in subjects such as history, geography and religious education.
4. The pupils turn readily to computers to support their work, particularly in subjects such as English and science. During the inspection computers were used very effectively in all classes and the pupils' confidence and skills in accessing information and using software was apparent. Class teachers keep detailed records of each pupil's progress and, by the time the pupils leave the school in Year 6, all of the units of work in the National Curriculum have been thoroughly covered.
5. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactory standards. In art and design standards are similar to those expected. In subjects such as history and geography standards are broadly average. Visiting experts and visits to museums and the Earth Centre add significantly to the pupils' enthusiasm and their knowledge and understanding.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes to school are good and they behave well in lessons. The provision for the pupils' personal development is good. Attendance is unsatisfactory. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and respond well to opportunities to take on responsibility
- The relationships between teachers and pupils are very good
- The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good
- Attendance levels are well below the national figures

Commentary

6. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good. The spiritual contribution to assemblies, and in lessons such as personal, social and health education lessons and circle time, is well planned and delivered. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and there are opportunities for the pupils to learn about the celebrations and beliefs of other faiths in religious education lessons. The teachers value the pupils' ideas and contributions and encourage them to share their ideas and feelings. As a result, the children enjoy coming to school and show an interest in their work. They are eager to learn and do their best. They persevere and maintain high levels of concentration.
7. The provision for the pupils' moral development is good. All pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. They behave well in lessons and when moving around the school, and in the playground at breaks and lunchtimes. There are a small number of children who can display challenging behaviour, but they are managed well by the teachers and non-teaching staff. The very good relationships between the children and the adults and between the pupils themselves has a very positive impact on learning and contributes to the pupils' good achievement. The pupils are aware of how their actions affect others and they show self-discipline and caring attitudes towards each other. The good behaviour resulting from the school's provision is reflected in the total absence of exclusions from the school.
8. Current attendance levels are unsatisfactory. Attendance rates are adversely affected by the number of families who withdraw their children for holidays during term time. The governors and the headteacher are very aware of this problem, maintain detailed records and actively discourage it. The table below shows the attendance figures for the school. The school's procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are satisfactory.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.5	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is broad and balanced, meets the pupils' needs and provides many opportunities for enrichment.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and the teaching assistants provide very effective support for individuals and groups of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of mathematics, science and information and communication technology is very good
- The teachers assess the pupils' work and record their progress thoroughly in the core subjects
- There is good support and teaching for pupils who have special educational needs
- Relationships are very good and teachers insist on high standards of behaviour from their pupils
- The presentation of the pupils' work and the standard of their handwriting could be better
- The teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously, but could set clearer targets for improvement

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in [number] lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	7	5	0	0	0

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

9. The teaching of English and mathematics makes good use of the lesson structure recommended in the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. In all year groups, the pupils are taught in ability groups and this works well in ensuring that lessons are planned to meet their needs. All of the teachers ensure that the pupils know what they are to learn and they have high expectations of the pupils' ability to concentrate and explain their answers. The teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects and how to teach them and they use appropriate vocabulary and open-ended questions to extend the pupils' understanding. This was evident in a very good lesson in Year 3 when the pupils learned not only how to spell words such as *brief* and *pier* but also were able to use them in context after learning their meaning. Opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills are provided across the curriculum and reading and writing are taught well.
10. The teaching of mathematics and science is very good. The pupils are provided with many opportunities to carry out investigations in science and to analyse and present data in mathematics. Teachers encourage the pupils to use computers to consolidate or extend their learning. This is evident in the way that the pupils have been taught to use spreadsheets to present the results of their mathematical calculations and the outcomes of scientific investigations. In mathematics and science lessons the teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. The pupils concentrate, apply themselves well and produce very good work. They are able to work independently and in groups. The teachers encourage the pupils to raise their own hypotheses, follow their own lines of enquiry and undertake their own research. The work is enjoyable and challenging.

11. In all of the lessons observed during the inspection, relationships were very good and the teachers had high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and commitment to hard work. A calm working atmosphere was evident in all classes in the school.
12. The teaching assistants are fully involved in planning for the lessons and successfully implement the intervention strategies such as the additional literacy strategy. They are well qualified and thoroughly prepared for the groups of pupils that they work with and this make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning.
13. The teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the pupils and plan interesting work based on their clear targets for learning. This enables pupils to achieve well in each lesson and over time. The pupils are always included in discussions during lessons through carefully chosen questions.
14. A significant strength of the teaching is the way in which the teachers assess the pupils work in the core subjects and then use the results of their assessments to plan work that is carefully matched to the pupils' abilities. This is one of the main reasons for the recent rise in standards in English and mathematics. In each of the core subjects the pupils' progress is tracked very carefully through tests and assessment. The teachers plan their lessons to take account of the identified weaknesses in these assessments ensuring that the needs of individual pupils are met. The assessments suggested that standards in writing could be improved and the teachers responded very positively by providing more opportunities for the pupils to produce extended pieces of work. This has had a positive outcome and standards have risen. The teaching could be further improved, however, by providing more guidance and opportunities for the pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. The inspection of their books in subjects such as history, religious education and geography reveals that there are too few examples of writing for a range of purposes and audiences.
15. The pupils' writing is marked regularly and conscientiously and the pupils know from the teacher's comments how well they have done. However, the comments do not give them clear guidance on how to improve their work. The pupils' handwriting and the way that they present their work varies in quality from class to class and, overall, it could be better.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is good and ensures equal opportunities for the pupils. The quality of resources and accommodation is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provided for English, mathematics and science promotes high standards and achievement
- The pupils make very good use of computers across the curriculum
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is good
- A good range of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum
- There is good provision for extra-curricular activities
- The pupils have too few opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in subjects other than English

Commentary

16. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and the teachers' very good planning caters appropriately for the needs of all pupils. It is particularly effective in ensuring that standards have risen in English, mathematics, science and information technology since the last inspection. The guidance in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is used effectively to help the pupils to learn. Much has been done to improve the provision and the quality of the curriculum for ICT since

the school was last inspected. Teachers are adept at identifying how ICT can support the work in other subjects and this is a strength of the school. The pupils have good computer skills and use them well to help them learn in all subjects.

17. A good range of visits, visitors and additional experiences outside classes enrich learning, particularly in sport, drama and music. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good and it includes an art club, basketball, football and a first aid club. There is good use of visits to enhance learning and all the Year 5/6 pupils have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit to Whitehall, Buxton each year. Visitors to the school include specialist musicians and artists. There are good links with the local secondary school. Year 6 pupils make visits to study science before they transfer.
18. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. The school also provides good support for pupils who struggle with some aspects of literacy, especially spelling. Teachers ensure that parents and pupils are involved in drawing up the individual education plans that set out how each pupil will be helped to improve. In all classes the pupils receive regular support from teachers and teaching assistants. The pupils' progress is carefully monitored and their future work is planned after a careful evaluation of their current work.
19. The school is successful in ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils. The needs of individuals are met through the programme of personal, social and health education. Sex and relationship issues are addressed appropriately and the school plans to give attention to drugs education. A racial equality policy has been adopted and the programme of work within PSHE ensures that the pupils are able to consider issues such as racial harmony in an appropriate way.
20. There are sufficient members of staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Support staff are well trained, hard working and committed to the education and welfare of the pupils. The accommodation is satisfactory for the pupils and the appearance is improved by attractive displays. Whilst the playground is suitably sized for the number of pupils, its imaginative use is underdeveloped. The resources in the school are satisfactory. Since the last inspection they have improved in physical education and religious education. The school is not easily accessible for those with physical disability.

Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance and support for pupils are very good overall and support the pupils' learning well. Health and safety procedures are very good. Achievement and personal development are monitored well. The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has excellent procedures for ensuring the children's health and safety
- Child protection procedures are securely in place and fully understood
- Pupils have access to well-informed support, advice and guidance
- Pupils have good opportunities to be involved in the running/development of the school
- There are no significant weaknesses

Commentary

21. The headteacher and the governing body ensure that all health and safety checks and inspections are regularly carried out and properly recorded. Risk assessments are rigorously undertaken and meticulously recorded. There is consistent safe practice in lessons.
22. The pupils are well cared for. The teachers establish clear routines and expectations and manage lessons well. The headteacher, teachers and non-teaching staff know the children very

well. All members of staff have a very good understanding of the school's pastoral arrangements and are totally committed to the welfare of the children in their charge. The pupils report that they have very good relationships with their class teachers and with the mid-day supervisors, and that they find it easy to discuss any difficulties they might have with their learning. The staff are very approachable and supportive and every pupil has a very good and trusting relationship with one or more adult in the school. The staff ensure that the pupils' success is recognised and rewarded.

23. The school council affords good opportunities for pupils to be involved in the day to day running and development of the school. Pupils also have the opportunity to agree, for example, their class rules. Personal, social and health education lessons and circle time give pupils the chance to express their ideas and opinions.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

A strong partnership exists between parents and the school. Links with other schools and the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The vast majority of parents hold the school in high regard
- The information provided to parents is very good
- Links with other schools contribute significantly to the pupils' achievements
- The prospectus omits some of the statutory required information

Commentary

24. The school is successful in promoting good links with parents and this helps to ensure that pupils achieve well. Parents indicate that they are very pleased with what the school provides and have every confidence in the ability of the school to meet the needs of their children. The parents feel welcome in the school, support its activities and provide financial help through the successful Unstone Home School Association. A minority of parents expressed concerns about the provision of appropriate homework. Inspection evidence did not support these concerns and the use of homework was judged to be good.
25. The information provided by the school is very good. Parents receive good curriculum information and the annual written progress reports are very good. There are suitable opportunities for parents to discuss their children's work and progress both at formal meetings and informally at the start and end of the school day. The school publishes an attractive and informative prospectus. However, the current prospectus omits some of the statutory required information, for example, absence rates and parents' right to withdraw their children from religious education and collective worship.
26. The school has productive links with the community and is well supported at social events. The pupils have lunch with senior citizens each week and the minister from the local church has regularly led assemblies. The school has established good links with the feeder infant school and the receiving secondary school. A primary liaison group has been established and this ensures that the pupils progress through the various stages of their education smoothly. A technology support group has been established and has helped to improve the provision for ICT. The strong liaison within the cluster of small schools in the area increases the pupils' learning opportunities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads the teaching team very effectively and manages the ongoing improvement of the school well. Governance is satisfactory. The good management of the school ensures equal opportunity for all pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's commitment to raising standards has been very effective
- The school evaluates its performance data carefully and takes effective action
- The governors are highly committed to the school and work closely with the headteacher to secure improvements. They do not evaluate effectively the impact of their spending decisions
- The school has established very productive links with the local cluster of small schools

Commentary

27. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1998 and has worked hard to address the key issues raised in the last report. In the time since her appointment, and despite her significant teaching commitment, the headteacher has led very effectively the drive to raise standards. Although the teaching team is small, there is a strong focus on improving the quality of education, maintaining high standards in English, mathematics and science and continuing to raise standards across the broader curriculum. The pupils' achievements in the 2003 national tests provide clear evidence of the success of this work. The headteacher analyses the school's performance data and compares the school's performance with other, similar, schools. The tracking of the pupils' achievement is now established and provides the information needed to set targets for each child. It is effective and has contributed to the rise in standards. The headteacher monitors her colleagues' work well and sets appropriate targets for them. Subject co-ordinators have been very successful in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and providing advice and guidance to colleagues about teaching and learning in the core subjects. They have strongly and successfully promoted the use of computers to support learning in their subjects.
28. The school development plan is a useful planning tool that provides the governors with information about how their decisions are to be implemented. The governors do not yet, however, have a systematic approach to evaluating the effect of their decisions on the quality of education that the school provides and the standards that the pupils attain.
29. In common with many small schools, providing a wide range of activities to enrich and broaden the curriculum provision is not always easy. The school has responded very well to this challenge and the pupils' learning benefits significantly from the links the school has established with other local primary schools. Membership of the cluster of local schools has enhanced the curriculum by providing opportunities for schools to share ideas, organise joint visits and sporting events. Curricular activities such as a 'multicultural arts week' and 'racial awareness days' have contributed significantly to the pupils' understanding of cultural diversity and the promotion of good race relations. Together with local and residential educational visits, drama workshops, and sporting events, the curriculum is made lively and interesting. The local cluster of schools also shares good practice and the joint training programme for teaching assistants has improved the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
30. The school's financial planning is good and there are clear links between the school development plan and the budget. The governors have effective financial oversight of the finances and budget.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	192,702
Total expenditure	192,440
Expenditure per pupil	3,848.80

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	11,240
Balance carried forward to the next	262

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

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 2

English

Provision in English is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards in reading, grammar, spelling and writing are above average and have improved since the last inspection
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well
- The pupils enjoy the subject, work hard and behave well in lessons
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported
- Pupils have too few opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in other subjects
- The presentation of some pupil's work and their handwriting could be better

Commentary

31. Standards in English have risen as a result of consistently good teaching, careful lesson planning and preparation by teachers. These have ensured the provision of a good match of work to pupils' needs and the pupils work hard to meet their targets. In the summer of 2003 the standards attained by the Year 6 pupils were in the top five per cent when compared with all schools. The inspection found that all pupils including those with special educational needs and the more able achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported with effectively planned work and good support and encouragement from classroom support assistants.
32. Overall standards in speaking and listening are average throughout the school. Most older pupils speak confidently although some younger pupils are limited by a restricted vocabulary. All teachers give good opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and to contribute their views in circle time and in personal health and social education lessons. The pupils take part in drama and school performances which helps to improve their skills of speaking and listening.
33. The pupils achieve well in reading. Skills are promoted effectively through regular practice and involvement with parents in home reading. There is a good, well structured reading programme. Many pupils read accurately and with expression showing a love of books. The older pupils read for information and competently extract information sifting it for relevant points. The library contains a good range of books. It is well organised and used regularly by all classes to develop reading skills and interests. Pupils, especially older ones, are developing firm preferences for the work of different authors. J.K.Rowling and Roald Dahl are firm favourites.
34. The school's emphasis on developing writing skills has led to good achievement and higher standards than at the time of the last inspection. They are taught to write for different purposes and older pupils produce extended pieces of writing. They have too few opportunities, however, to improve writing skills through subjects such as history, geography and religious education. Handwriting is taught, but the pupils do not always transfer the skills they learnt and their handwriting in workbooks is at times untidy and lacks consistency of presentation. Furthermore, marking is inconsistent across the school and pupils are often not clear about what they have to do to improve.

35. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and is strongest in Years 3 and 5/6. In these classes the teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, high expectations of the pupils' capacity to learn and very good lesson plans containing clear objectives. This results in very good learning. A range of teaching methods is used so that lessons move at a fast pace and the pupils' interest is maintained. Introductions are clear and the pupils are immediately interested and engaged. In a lesson in Year 5/6 the pupils enjoyed writing witches' poems. Very good use was made of the witches' scene from Shakespeare's Macbeth and the pupils were encouraged to share and develop their ideas through the drama, engaging in role play. Consequently, they were very keen to write and produced work of a high standard. Homework is used effectively throughout the school to improve the pupils' reading, writing and spelling skills.
36. The subject leadership is good and the co-ordinator for English has a clear view of what needs to be improved. There is regular monitoring of teaching and learning and good use of assessment data to set targets. Regular training helps to ensure that staff are kept up to date with developments in the subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

37. There are some links between literacy and other subjects. For example younger pupils write about Tanzania in geography and about birds in their science work. Older pupils link history to their literacy work when writing about the Egyptians and about World War Two. Staff ensure that computers are used frequently and effectively to support learning, for example in emailing letters to penfriends. There are, however, too few opportunities for pupils to write at length or in a range of styles across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 6
- The teaching is very good
- There are too few opportunities for the pupils to solve real-life problems
- Computers are used very effectively to present investigational work
- The subject is led and managed very effectively

Commentary

38. The standards in the subject have risen since the last inspection. The teachers' consistent implementation of the Numeracy Strategy, with its emphasis on developing the pupils' mental calculation skills and their understanding of the processes of mathematics, has had a considerable impact upon standards. Results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were in the top five per cent when compared with all schools. The scrutiny of the pupils' past and present work and lesson observations confirm that all pupils, regardless of ability, make good progress and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
39. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. All of the staff attended training in how to teach numeracy and have good subject knowledge. Expectations are high, lessons move along at a brisk pace and the pupils speak of their enjoyment of the subject. In the lessons observed during the inspection the teachers were adept at using visual aids to promote the pupils' learning. This was evident in a lesson in Year 3 where the teacher used a counting stick in a very skilful way to help the pupils to learn their multiplication tables. A strong feature of the work is the way in which the teachers assess the pupils' understanding and plan future lessons based on what the pupils

need to do to improve. At the start of each lesson they share clear objectives for learning with the pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively and work particularly well with small groups of pupils in well planned activities. Computers are used regularly to consolidate or to further extend learning and there are many examples in the pupils' workbooks of data and other information being presented graphically. A weakness in the mathematics provision is that the pupils have too few opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding to solve problems in real and imaginary situations.

40. The co-ordination of the subject is good and the teaching and learning is frequently evaluated. The subject leader has ensured that good quality computer software is available for the pupils to improve their basic numeracy skills. The pupils are skilled in loading and using the programs independently. The assessment procedures have been recently revised and there is detailed information in year group records that tracks the pupils' progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

41. Many opportunities are provided for the pupils to apply their skills, particularly in science and information and communication technology. For example, the pupils are able to accurately measure the changing temperature in the classroom and present their results in a graph. There are fewer examples of mathematics being used in subjects such as history and geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards in science are consistently above average
- The pupils plan and carry out a wide range of investigations
- The quality of teaching is very good

Commentary

42. The scrutiny of the pupils' work and discussions with them show that they have a very good knowledge and understanding of science by the time they leave the school. They make predictions accurately, describe experiments and record their findings in a variety of ways. They cover a wide range of work in lessons and many investigations are recorded in their workbooks using charts, graphs and tables, many of which are compiled using computers. The pupils make predictions and justify them and design fair tests. This was evident in a lesson in Year 5/6 when the pupils investigated why shadows change in size. They were able to explain to each other what was happening using appropriate scientific language. Younger pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught in a similar way and they follow a simple formula for recording the outcomes of their investigations – *what I did*, *what I saw* and *conclusion*. They evaluate the evidence well and draw valid conclusions. The achievement of all pupils is good. The pupils with special educational needs are provided with additional help from teaching assistants and pupils of lower ability are given worksheets when recording tasks that are complicated. At times the quality of the presentation of the pupils' work slips and results in untidy sections in their workbooks.
43. The teachers are confident and have very good subject knowledge. The planning of lessons is excellent and the level of challenge for the pupils is high. In a lesson observed in Year 5/6, the teacher organised for the pupils to move around the room to carry out different investigations on *light*. The teaching assistant helped pupils with a particularly challenging task and the teacher moved from group to group to support and question the pupils. The pupils were engrossed in all of the activities and the progress made in the lesson was good. The pupils are assessed at the start and end of each unit of work and the teachers make good use of these assessments when planning future work. The pupils enjoy the way science is taught and their visits to the *Earth*

Centre and Dronfield School where they are taught in the science laboratories. The subject leadership is very good and ensures that the pupils achieve consistently high standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve standards that are above those expected for their age
- Computers are used extensively to support work in other subjects
- All staff are confident in the use of computers and make good use of them to support the pupils' learning across the curriculum

Commentary

44. The provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection and a significant investment has been made in resources. The pupils make good progress as they move through the school and by the end of Year 6 they make good use of computers in most subjects. The pupils are very competent in all areas of the ICT curriculum. The pupils develop good word processing skills and know how to use ICT to add to, amend and combine different forms of information from different sources. They make use of spreadsheets to display pulse rates and a variety of graphical forms to analyse data. They evaluate websites and make good use of the Internet to gather information. They are competent in the use of digital cameras and can incorporate photographs into their work.
45. Staff training has been intensive and all teachers now have the confidence and knowledge to teach the subject effectively. Teaching assistants have also been trained and are well able to support pupils in their learning. The quality of teaching in the subject is very good and the pupils' progress is regularly assessed. This was evident when older pupils were given the task of checking for errors in the data recording each pupil's weight. The teacher reminded them of their previous learning and then taught them how to make alterations to the database and how to change the graphs.
46. The pupils are helped to record their own progress in the subject and the subject leader keeps good records of the pupils' progress and achievements. His regular attendance at the meeting of the local schools ICT steering group ensures that he is able to keep up to date with developments in the subject and improve his own expertise.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

47. The use of ICT across the curriculum is very good. The pupils expect to use computers in every lesson and they usually do. The use of ICT to support learning is common in almost all subjects including the creative and aesthetic areas of the curriculum. In science, for example, the pupils use software to plot graphs to indicate the boiling point of various liquids and the varying thickness of dandelion stems found in long and short grass. In other subjects they use computers to calculate the costs involved in planning a party and use word-processing software to produce newspapers.

HUMANITIES

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are offered a broad range of religious faiths to study
- Teachers provide a variety of suitably interesting work
- There are no assessment procedures or systems in place to monitor standards
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to be involved in extended and sustained writing
- Some of the pupil's work is poorly presented

COMMENTARY

48. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. From the two lessons observed and the analysis of the pupils' past work, it is clear that standards are in line with expectations. Pupils of all abilities begin to understand some of the similarities and differences between world religions such as Judaism and Sikhism. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to write at length. By the time they leave the school pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of stories from the Bible. They also know about places of worship and the main Christian festivals. They do not, however, have opportunities to study religion beyond the factual and to express a deeper inner response.
49. In the lessons seen one of the lessons was satisfactory and the other was good. In the good lesson the planning was linked to the pupils' own experiences and previous learning. The teacher's skilled questioning and good use of group discussion enabled all the pupils to understand and gain knowledge of the features of the local church. The use of an interesting computer program on Christian churches further enhanced the lesson.
50. A revised scheme of work is planned based on the new locally agreed syllabus. The co-ordinator ensures that an appropriate range of work is covered. However, she has had no opportunities to monitor teaching and learning or standards across the school. There are now more artefacts in the school than at the time of the last inspection. These extra resources are beginning to have a positive impact on teaching and learning.
51. Work was sampled in history and geography and no lessons were seen. It is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. The indications from the pupils' work is that standards are broadly average and similar to those found at the last inspection. Discussions with the pupils in Year 4 and 6 about their work indicate that they have a satisfactory knowledge of the Victorians and Greeks and of the chronology of major historical events. The pupils' written work in history is not always presented well and there are few opportunities for them to write at length.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

52. No lessons were seen in art and design and technology and only one in physical education. It is not therefore possible to make a clear judgement about provision in these subjects. The inspectors discussed the subjects with co-ordinators, analysed the pupils' work and had talks with the pupils about what they had learned in art and design technology.
53. The scrutiny of the pupils' past and present work in art shows good opportunities for printing and observational sketching. Year 4 pupils produce mosaic patterned fish and take great care with their observational drawing of lampshades. There is, however, only limited evidence of work reflecting tone and texture and the use of rich colours. There are good examples of world art, including work reflecting South American and Australian traditions. The opportunity to study European artists is more limited.

54. In design and technology the evidence shows that pupils are gaining experience of a range of materials and techniques and developing most of the expected skills through designing and making a variety of products. Younger pupils design slippers and Greek chariots linking their work to history. Older pupils design shelters and make different types of hats. Further curriculum links are made with Year 5/6 pupils making musical instruments. However it is clear that pupils do not always evaluate their work or that of their classmates. Often work is poorly presented and lacks care. Most pupils have opportunities to design and assemble products but there is little evidence of work in food technology or with malleable materials.
55. Resources for design and technology and art are sufficient and adequate for current use. The use of ICT to support learning is developing well. Teacher assessment arrangements are informal and there is no monitoring and evaluation of standards in either subject.
56. The scrutiny of teachers' planning and conversations with the pupils and the subject leader indicates that **physical education** has a secure place in the curriculum. The pupils are provided with a broad and balanced physical education curriculum that includes dance, gymnastics, games and athletics. The Year 5/6 pupils also have swimming lessons on a weekly basis during the Autumn term and the Year 3 / 4 pupils in the Spring term. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of the physical education curriculum. During the inspection a satisfactory dance lesson was observed. The pupils improved their knowledge of the patterns and steps in a number of traditional country dances that were taught effectively by the teacher. The pupils enjoyed the lesson which kept them very active throughout.

MUSIC

The provision for music is **satisfactory** overall.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The pupils sing very well in lessons and in assembly
- The music co-ordinator has good subject knowledge
- The standards in the subject are not monitored
- There is inadequate regular assessment of the pupil's progress

COMMENTARY

57. Standards in music are satisfactory. A similar judgement was made at the last inspection. During the inspection two lessons were observed and the quality of teaching was satisfactory in one and very good in the other. In the very good lesson, which involved the whole school singing together, the teacher had planned the lesson well and used his good subject knowledge effectively. The pupils sang well in two parts and gained good knowledge of the musical terms of pitch and tempo. The less successful lesson was too long and some pupil's progress was affected by their loss of concentration.
58. The school provides appropriate opportunities for some pupils to play instruments with tuition from external staff. The pupils clearly enjoy these opportunities to play brass and woodwind instruments and they achieve well. Opportunities for more of the pupils to play tuned instruments and learn musical notation is limited.
59. The newly appointed subject leader is enthusiastic and committed to extending the range of opportunities for pupils. Currently there are no systems for assessing pupil's attainment and development of skills, knowledge and understanding and this makes tracking pupil's progress difficult.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good scheme of work is implemented very effectively
- 'Circle times' (*) are used very well to discuss relationships and responsibilities and other issues
- Pupils develop very good levels of confidence and become socially mature
- Pupils are involved very well in decision making

Commentary

60. The school has recently adopted a new scheme of work to support the teaching and learning in this aspect of its curriculum. Based on a two year cycle, it is comprehensive and addresses all the requirements of the National Curriculum. The teachers plan interesting lessons from the scheme of work that enable the pupils to confidently put forward their points of view about a whole range of issues. This was evident in a lesson in which the pupils designed a public park for the village. The teacher facilitated some good discussion about respecting property and the impact of vandalism. The pupils then shared their designs with the rest of the class. Some pupils were able to use their graphic design skills to produce computer generated images of their ideas.

61. In *circle times* the pupils have opportunities to explore and discuss their feelings and develop a strong awareness of how their actions affect others. Teachers provide good opportunities for reflection during these sessions.

62. The pupils are encouraged to become mature and self-confident as they move through the school. They know that adults will listen to them and that their views are valued. Most pupils have a good awareness of how their behaviour affects others. There were many examples of pupils helping others during the inspection both in lessons and during breaks. Adults in school encourage pupils to resolve disagreements by looking at alternatives, making decisions and explaining choices. The good relationships between staff and pupils inspire confidence and self-assurance. Sex education is taught appropriately within the programme of work. Residential and other visits build in pupils an awareness of life outside school and how different rules apply when they live as well as work together. The pupils gain a good understanding of citizenship and the democratic process through the work of the school council.

* *when pupils sit in a circle and discuss various issues*

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	3
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	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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