

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **DUNSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112777

Headteacher: Mrs A Wilkins

Reporting inspector: Mrs E Parry  
2615

Dates of inspection: 30 April - 4 May 2001

Inspection number: 235687

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Foundation

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Dunston Lane  
Newbold  
Chesterfield  
Derbyshire  
Postcode: S41 8EY

Telephone number: 01246 450601

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. M. Treece

Date of previous inspection: September 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2615	E. Parry	Registered inspector	Art Music	Under fives Equal Opportunities English as an additional language The School's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11437	A. Anderson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17681	R. Sharples	Team inspector	Science Design Technology Physical Education	Special educational needs
2616	P. Cole	Team inspector	English Information and Communication Technology History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
3533	A. McGregor		Mathematics Geography Religious Education	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Dunston Primary has grown in the last four years and is now a larger than average sized school catering for 270 pupils; 141 boys and 129 girls. The nursery has places for 26 pupils at morning and at afternoon sessions. The school is at the edge of the small town of Chesterfield. The percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is above the national average.

Children come to the nursery with a wide range of skills and abilities but overall attainment is below what is usual when they start full time education at four years of age. Ten pupils have statements of educational need and a further 82 of the children are on the school's register for special educational needs. This is higher than is found in most schools. Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds and there are rarely any who speak English as an additional language

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school provides a safe caring environment with good relationships between the staff and pupils. Results of national tests for eleven year olds in the important subjects of English, mathematics and science are well below those of most schools. Results for seven year olds were well below average in reading and mathematics and a little better but still below average in writing. Teaching is good overall with strengths in nursery and reception (the Foundation Stage). It is stronger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Some effective improvements have taken place, but the school has not addressed the weaknesses in standards soon enough. The value for money provided by the school is unsatisfactory.

#### **What the school does well**

- There is a good curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes and they are taught very well.
- Teaching is good for juniors.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school provides a safe, caring environment and good relationships between staff and pupils.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The strategies of the headteacher and senior management team to raise standards.
- The quality of some aspects of the teaching and learning.

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

Although it provides an acceptable education overall, it is the view of the inspection team that the school has serious weaknesses especially in the standards that pupils have been reaching, which have been consistently low in the national tests.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1998 when it was judged to have serious weaknesses. Teaching is now good overall and the curriculum is much improved through careful planning. Provision in the reception class is also now good with good links to both nursery and Year 1. The role and contribution of governors has changed noticeably and most of those interviewed have a very clear knowledge of what is happening in the school and of the need to raise standards. Despite improvement in many areas, the leadership and management have not succeeded in the important area of raising standards sufficiently. Results in national tests have been well below those of all schools and of schools where children come from similar backgrounds.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	E*	E*
Mathematics	E	E	E	E
Science	E	E	E	E

**Key**

Well above average A

above average B

Average C

Below average D

Well below average E

Over the last three years, results in the national tests for eleven year olds have been consistently well below those of all schools in all three subjects. They have also been well below those of schools where the take up of free school meals is similar. In the Year 2000, results in English were in the bottom five per cent compared to all schools and compared to similar schools. Although there has been a slight improvement in mathematics and science in this time, results in English have got worse. Where the results have improved, they have been below the rate of improvement nationally, making the gap wider. The school did not reach the targets it set for eleven year olds last year. It is likely to get closer this year in mathematics and science but the picture is not improving at the same rate in English. Results for seven year olds have also been consistently well below average in reading and mathematics and a little better but still below average in writing.

Overall, pupils' current work is still below average at the ends of key stages in English, mathematics and science and pupils are not achieving well enough in these subjects. There is, however, evidence of improvement which is faster in science and in mathematics than in English. Throughout the school, pupils read better than they write. In ICT and history, standards are below where they should be for eleven year olds. They are in line with expectations by the ends of both key stages in art, design and technology, geography, physical education and religious education and also for history at Key Stage 1. In music in both key stages and in ICT at the end of Key Stage 1, there was too little evidence to judge how well children are doing.



In the current reception class, attainment is below that expected for this age in early reading, writing and mathematical skills but generally average overall in other areas of learning. Children make good progress in all areas of their learning in both nursery and reception.

Children with special educational needs are meeting their special targets. Records show that a wider group of pupils, who receive additional help in reading and writing, are making steady progress.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are keen and interested in their work. They are polite to adults and work well together or by themselves.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in and around the school. There are a very small number who have special educational needs related to behaviour and have had to be excluded.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. There are limited opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities. A programme for personal and social development has yet to be produced.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. It is below average despite the good procedures that the school uses to encourage attendance.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>Aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>Aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Very Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons with 16 per cent of these being very good. In 7 per cent of lessons (4), teaching was less than satisfactory.

Teaching in nursery and reception is of very good quality. Activities are well planned to make sure that children have good experiences and that all adults work effectively together. Children's learning is carefully assessed and future work planned to help them to progress. Teaching is stronger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. There are lively lessons where children know what they are going to do and make rapid progress and others which are more gently paced and less challenging. In the lessons which were unsatisfactory, teaching did not keep children interested and working at a good level and children did not learn enough. When marking work, teachers give pupils plenty of praise but do not give clear enough guidance on how they can improve. In lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, children lost interest and did not work hard enough. However, in most lessons, they are interested and work hard whether by themselves or with others. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Numeracy skills are being taught well and are more firmly embedded into lessons and used in other subjects than are

literacy skills. These are taught satisfactorily but pupils' skills, especially in writing, are not secure and need to be more fully developed through other subjects.

Children with statements of special educational needs are well supported in class and some receive personal support in small groups or individually. A wider group of pupils are well supported through provision such as the additional literacy strategy. Governors have provided some extra help for classes particularly in Key Stage 1 through the appointment of Educational Care Officers (ECOs). Usually they provide good support but on occasion they are not well enough involved in lessons and do not use their own initiative to help pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for children in nursery and reception is good with care taken to ensure that reception children have outdoor play and also take a similar approach to literacy and numeracy as the main school. For infants and juniors, the curriculum is satisfactory. All subjects are taught. There is little extra-curricular activity.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with statements of educational need are supported well in class and through special provision. More pupils are supported through ECOs and through provision such as the additional literacy strategy.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Moral development is stronger than the others with a good emphasis on teaching children right from wrong
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Staff know pupils well and the school provides a safe, caring environment. There are good procedures to assess how well pupils are doing but teachers need to do more to make pupils aware of how they can improve.

The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. Nursery staff work well with parents to involve them in saying what their children can do and to involve them in helping children in the classroom. The school would welcome more help from parents, relatives and friends in infants and juniors but at present few offer help.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Unsatisfactory. There have been a number of factors that have been beyond the school's control and have affected the pace of developments. Nevertheless, overall the leadership and management have not been successful in raising standards and making improvement soon enough.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. Some governors are taking a keen interest in finding out the school's strengths and weaknesses and are aware of the need to raise standards quickly.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Procedures are in place to see how well pupils are doing and to monitor teaching and learning. These are beginning to have an effect on standards but are not well enough in place to make a significant difference to pupils in their final year in school.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Generally the budget is planned to support priorities. Teaching and support staff are effectively deployed. Some of the ways that the school is using to raise standards are more efficient and effective than others.

The school has sufficient classrooms and teachers for the numbers of pupils. The governors have increased the number of Educational Care Officers who help in classrooms to a good level at Key Stage 1. There are sufficient materials for the curriculum but inadequate space for ICT and library. Administration space is severely limited. However, there are proposals which will, if implemented, improve ICT and administration space to a satisfactory level.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children making good progress.</li> <li>The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>They feel comfortable in coming to school with their problems.</li> <li>Children like coming to school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range of extra activities.</li> <li>Better information about how well children are getting on.</li> <li>Working more closely with parents.</li> <li>Behaviour in school.</li> <li>The standards that the school achieves in national tests.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree that, with the current teaching staff, children work hard and are making better progress in lessons. However, when taken over time, some children, especially the oldest, have not done as well as they should. The range of extra activities is limited. Information on reports is satisfactory and the teachers are prepared to talk to parents who need more. Most children behave well and like coming to the school. They are occasionally restless when not fully involved in their work. A small number of children have special educational needs because of problems with their behaviour. The team agrees with parents that standards in national tests have been consistently too low.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. The results of the national tests for eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science have been consistently well below the average in the last three years in comparison with both all schools and similar schools. Additionally, in the Year 2000, results were in the bottom five per cent in English. The school has not reached the targets it set. Although there has been some improvement in mathematics and science, this has been less than improvements in schools nationally thereby widening the gap. In English, results have fallen making the difference even greater. Very few pupils reach the higher level in English and results at higher levels are below the national averages in mathematics and science. Until the last year, girls have had much better results than boys in English and better results in mathematics; they have been closer together in science. Results for seven year olds have also been consistently well below average in reading and mathematics and a little better but still below average in writing.

2. Inspection evidence confirms that standards at the ends of key stages in English, mathematics and science are below average and that pupils are not achieving well enough in these subjects. There is, however, evidence of improvement which is faster in science and in mathematics than in English. This should show in the current Year 6 results which are most likely to reach the targets set in science, be closer in mathematics but unlikely to reach them in English.

3. The current Year 6 pupils have satisfactory speaking and listening skills. Reading is generally sound but only the higher attainers can explain why they prefer one book to another. Lower attainers read word for word and do not have enough strategies for attempting those they do not know by sight. Some pupils write well with interesting content and good style but a large number do not. Their punctuation and spelling are weak. Handwriting is generally neat and usually joined up. However, a few have developed unusual style features which makes their writing difficult to read and could affect their grades in tests if not corrected. At Key Stage 1, higher and average attainers speak confidently and read with sufficient expression and meaning. There is a large group of lower attainers who do not listen carefully enough. They struggle to read with understanding. Writing varies widely from the very competent to those who can do very little independently.

4. Standards in mathematics are improving but are still not good enough. Year 6 pupils have a range of skill in all areas of mathematics which range from the very able to those with limited competence. There is a lack of confidence in applying mathematical knowledge to real life problems and investigations. At Key Stage 1, most pupils have sound counting and measurement skills, knowledge of number and of two dimensional shape. They are less secure in estimation of quantities and in their knowledge of three dimensional shape.

5. The work seen in science during the inspection suggests that an improvement in the standards achieved in previous years' national tests is likely. Year 6 pupils have a sound investigative approach and reasonable level of knowledge. They are being given the skills to deal with the tests through revision. However, higher attainers are not doing well enough. They are not given sufficient opportunity to develop their learning through research and independent learning. At Key Stage 1, pupils are less secure in answering and lack confidence in what they say.

6. There is too little evidence to judge standards in ICT for seven year olds. By the age of eleven, standards are below those expected nationally. In art and design, design and technology, geography, physical education and religious education, standards are at expected levels at the ends of the key stages and pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. In music there is too little evidence to judge what pupils are able to do at the ends of both key stages. Standards in history at Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with expectations. They are below the expectations by the end of the Key Stage 2 because the coverage of the different aspects of history is unsatisfactory and this results in some aspects which pupils do not know enough about.

7. Children's attainment on entry to nursery is quite wide and varies from those with above average ability to those whose skills and abilities are not up to the expected level for three-year-olds. In the current reception class, attainment reflects a typical yearly picture in this school and is just below that expected for this age in early reading, writing and mathematical skills but generally average overall in other areas of learning. This is because there is a sizeable group of children who reach good standards and a similar group at the lower end with a spread in the middle. Given their starting points when they come into the nursery, the children have made good progress and achieved well.

8. Pupils with statements of special educational needs related to learning difficulties are making good progress through effective support and carefully planned learning in relation to their special targets. Those with behavioural difficulties also have good support but on occasions, the nature of their needs makes it difficult for them to remain working in class. Although it is a perfectly appropriate strategy to take pupils out when their behaviour is extreme, it does also mean that they can sometimes have a much narrower curriculum experience.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Pupils' attitudes, personal development and relationships are good overall. There were many examples observed throughout the inspection week in which pupils worked hard and evidently enjoyed what they were doing in their work. They were polite with adults and worked together well with other pupils. Most pupils are keen and interested in classroom activities, as in a Key Stage 2 science lesson in which they recorded the changes to their own heartbeat following a series of variable physical activities. In a very small number of lessons, pupils lost concentration and achieved too little because the teaching did not keep them interested.

10. Overall, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. During a Key Stage 1 assembly, for example, pupils walked quietly into the hall and then listened carefully to a story about a picnic which was related to the current theme of 'our world'. During the inspection, the pupils' behaviour was consistently satisfactory and there were several occasions when it was good. There is significant documentary evidence of recent challenging behaviour from a tiny minority of pupils at the school and there have been several fixed term and permanent exclusions. There are still a few pupils who have special educational needs which affect their behaviour and in one case this affects the length of time the pupil can cope with being in a class without influencing the flow of the lesson for everyone else.

11. Relationships between pupils and teachers, including the Foundation Stage, are consistently good except where the teaching is less than satisfactory. Pupils carry out occasional tasks for teachers such as taking attendance registers to the office but the range of opportunities to develop their personal relationships is limited.

12. The overall attendance at the school is unsatisfactory and is below the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is higher than the national average. Although current attendance levels are lower than those published for the whole of the last academic year, a part of the discrepancy can be explained as a result of one pupil being kept at home every day following a fixed term exclusion from the school. Pupils usually arrive at the school on time.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

13. Overall, teaching during the inspection was good, but varied within the school. This is a stronger picture than in the previous inspection with much more teaching judged good and very little unsatisfactory. As well as monitoring which has helped to develop teaching, there have been recent changes of staff. Some are new to the school and some have moved age groups. These factors help to explain the improvement. Overall, teaching was very good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2.

14. Throughout the school, the good and very good teaching is based on good planning, well organised resources and a lively pace as in a Year 4/5 lesson on science which resulted in a good level of learning for pupils about the human body. Direct teaching of skills is good, for instance in the Year 6 booster class for literacy. A strength is the patience that teachers have in dealing with difficult and challenging behaviour and keeping pupils working at a good rate. For example, expectations in the Year 6 class are consistently high and the good relationships allow the teacher to tackle sensitive issues such as those in a religious education lesson. Sometimes teachers provide unusual lessons which come off because of the good structure and interest that they have for pupils as, for example, when Year 3/4 classes used the playground environment to consider how they might improve it through art and design. Pupils responded well and were keenly interested in their tasks. Satisfactory lessons are often more gently paced and pitched too much at the middle ground. They can be lacking in challenge for more able pupils and too hard for others, as in a Year 6 lesson on science. In the three unsatisfactory lessons, one common feature was that the content of the lessons was not effectively planned to flow throughout the time. Another feature in two lessons in Year R/1 was that the teacher did not adapt the content quickly enough when problems occurred to maintain pupils' interest and they became increasingly restless and difficult to manage.

15. Even in lessons where the teaching seen was good or very good, there are areas which all teachers can improve on. In all classes in the main school, teachers give pupils plenty of praise which sets up a pleasant working atmosphere and they deal with pupils' errors positively. Whilst the teachers often write out what the children are to do and learn so that these objectives can be seen, they are not consistent in referring to them at the beginning of lessons nor of checking them at ends to allow pupils to see how much they have understood and discuss problems. Some important features which could affect attainment in tests are not picked up, such as a personal writing style which is difficult to decipher. In marking pupils' work, the written comments follow the school's marking policy. However, whilst there are examples of suggestions for improvement such as 'improve your spelling', these are rarely precise enough to tell pupils exactly what to do to improve. These are examples of reasons why, despite the good quality of teaching seen, pupils are not making fast enough progress.

16. Overall, the teaching of English is satisfactory. It is good in Key Stage 2 and just satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The literacy hour has been implemented satisfactorily and is improving the quality of teaching in English. Literacy is developed satisfactorily across the curriculum, although in some classes an over reliance on the use of worksheets, in subjects

such as history, limits the ability of pupils to practise important skills they have been learning in literacy lessons.

17. Overall, teaching and learning in mathematics in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 is good. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented. In the best lessons, teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Challenging questions stimulate and extend pupils in their learning and tasks are designed to make them think hard. As a result, the pace is rapid and much is achieved by pupils in a single lesson. In some lessons, teaching was less effective because the work was insufficiently well matched to pupils' previous learning, the pace too slow and the range of ways to manage pupils behaviour was limited, as seen in mathematics in a Year 6 booster class.

18. The teaching in science lessons in Key Stage 2 was good and at Key Stage 1, was satisfactory. Overall, teaching is satisfactory rather than good because there is a need for teachers to be much more precise in marking to help pupils learn through their successes and failures. It also needs to be more consistent in providing equally challenging work for all abilities especially the higher attainers.

19. Only one lesson was seen in history in Key Stage 1 which was well taught. Two lessons were seen in each of art and ICT. All were in Key Stage 2 and were of good quality but these provide too little evidence for secure judgements of teaching across the school in any of these subjects. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching in music where only two lessons were seen, one in each key stage, neither of them taught by the part-time specialist who usually teaches the classes. Teaching in design and technology and in geography were satisfactory in both key stages and in religious education and physical education, teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2.

20. Children in nursery and reception benefit from teaching which overall is very good. In both classes planning is good. Adults work effectively together especially in the nursery where they work within an activity but keep a good overview of what is happening elsewhere so that they can intervene when necessary. Personal and social development is particularly well promoted so that by reception, children are more settled and ready to take part in more formal activities. Adults in the nursery take every opportunity to engage children in talk and extend children's vocabulary very well through constant questions and discussions. Staff use a good range of assessment in both classes, including initial tests and ongoing observations which are used to amend plans and to provide relevant activities. Direct teaching of skills, such as the names and sounds of letters or number recognition, is good. There is good provision for reception children to use the nursery outdoor play area and there are effective links into the literacy and numeracy strategies.

21. Pupils with statements of special need receive good support individually and in small groups which matches clear learning targets on their individual education plans (IEPs). A wider group of pupils also receive help through booster classes in Key Stage 2 and through a variety of other strategies in Key Stage 1. This support is very variable in quality and effectiveness. For example in one of the booster classes, Year 6 pupils benefited from very good teaching in literacy but in the numeracy session observed, the quality of teaching was poor. In the very short additional reading practice where pupils spend no more than five minutes on one-to-one practice of key words, pupils' errors in spelling were corrected but pupils were not given strategies to try again with greater accuracy.

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

22. The school provides a broad and reasonably balanced curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. Statutory requirements are met. An appropriate emphasis is placed on English, mathematics and science and sufficient time is given to other subjects through the topics identified throughout the year. The school uses the national literacy and numeracy strategies and the recent national model schemes of work as the basis for planning its work for pupils. The two year cycle of topics helps to ensure that pupils in mixed age classes do not miss aspects of their learning as they move through the school. Teachers' medium term planning clearly identifies what pupils will be learning and provides satisfactory progression in developing pupils' understanding and skills. The organisation of the mixed age classes based on pupils' prior attainment, simplifies the planning done by teachers. The National Numeracy strategy has been effectively implemented and the setting of pupils in Key Stage 2 is working well. There is still too much variation in the teaching of literacy, with some lessons having an ineffective structure and others lacking rigour. The school has recognised this weakness and has now arranged for expert help in improving its approach to implementing literacy.

23. The curriculum for the pupils in the nursery and reception classes is firmly based on the Foundation Stage guidance and as the children move towards the Year 1 provides good bridging activities for literacy and numeracy that prepare them well for Key Stage 1. The weaknesses in the last inspection have been addressed successfully and now there is a coherent approach to planning across the early years' classes. A good example is the provision made for reception pupils to use the outdoor play facilities in the nursery with the support and guidance of the nursery nurse.

24. There is extensive support provided for pupils with special educational needs. They have appropriately detailed individual education plans that are available to teachers, but these are not always taken sufficiently into account when the work of groups is planned. The formal aspects of their support, which includes withdrawal for tightly focused individual and small group work, as well as individual in class support for some pupils with statements is mostly effective and leads to good progress being made against their special learning targets. The very short additional reading practice where pupils spend no more than five minutes on one-to-one practice of key words is less efficient and effective than the other forms of support and is quite disruptive to the work of their classes. A downside to the extensive support for pupils with special educational needs is the regular withdrawal of pupils for literacy support from lessons in other subjects such as religious education. These pupils miss significant parts of lessons. Although pupils are virtually all white and the school has no specific programme to promote racial harmony, the few pupils who come from minority backgrounds are well integrated into the life of the school and the one pupil who speaks English as an additional language is able to take a full part in all lessons.

25. The school has a programme for pupils' personal social and health education. This is less well planned than other aspects of their learning and does not yet cover citizenship. This weakness has been identified and is one of the priorities in the current school development plan. The school's links with outside agencies provide a valuable resource for teaching both sex and drugs education and the school's link with the dental service has been very beneficial in developing the youngest pupils' awareness and interest in looking after their teeth. All the children in the nursery are given new toothbrushes each term and have been taught how to clean their teeth properly which they do regularly in school. The school provides opportunities for nursery nurse students to work alongside the teachers of the pupils in the Foundation Stage and this is working well for both the school and the higher education college. There are also arrangements for supporting teachers in training.

26. The school provides very few out-of-class opportunities for pupils to extend their learning. There is some football, a recorder club and an occasional choir. No form of study



support is provided. Educational visits, including a residential adventure weekend do enhance pupils' learning and support the delivery of the school curriculum well. A visit to a mosque during the inspection clearly brought to life aspects of Islamic worship and ways of life for the pupils in the Year 5/6 class. Classes make frequent visits to the local library and this is benefiting their ability to use books, as well as their interest in reading.

27. The provision for the spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is satisfactory overall. Spiritual development is satisfactory. All pupils are invited to attend a daily act of collective worship and this is usually delivered through Key Stage assemblies. One observed assembly included a prayer, singing by pupils and a story with a moral theme. Pupils were encouraged to make occasional contributions to the story and offer suggestions as to what was the right way to proceed with regard to litter. Spirituality is also occasionally evident through the curriculum in subjects such as art, design and technology, history and geography. An RE lesson included references to God, the creation and looking after our world.

28. The moral development of pupils is good. Teachers act as good role models for pupils in the way they present themselves in the classroom and around the school. The caring ethos of the school is used well to promote the difference between right and wrong and in the nursery there is a strong focus on teaching children from the start to take turns and to share toys and games with each other. The school's behaviour code is prominently displayed on classroom walls and the rules are consistently applied by both teaching and support staff as a means of ensuring school-wide promotion and training.

29. The social development of pupils is satisfactory but the opportunities provided by the school to enhance this provision are limited. For example, pupils sit and talk together at lunchtime in the dining room and in the playground but there are too few wider opportunities to develop these skills, for example through extra activities. There is some evidence of pupils being encouraged to collaborate in the classroom, for instance in music lessons where small groups work together.

30. Satisfactory provision is made overall for pupils' cultural development. They have many opportunities to study local culture in subjects such as English, history, geography and art. One classroom display demonstrates the recent study of Islam and a group of pupils has recently visited a Mosque. However, there are very few examples of the diversity of the multi-cultural world in which we live to be seen in and around the school.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

31. The procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are good and for the monitoring of personal development and for pupils' educational support and guidance, they are satisfactory.

32. Child Protection procedures are in place and effective. The teaching staff, supported by the classroom assistants, know their pupils well and, as a team, provide a good level of support and guidance. During the inspection there were many examples of pupils receiving minor bumps in the school yard and the lunchtime supervisors and administrative staff were quick to offer an appropriate level of care. Detailed records are maintained of all accidents and parents are kept informed as required. The school conducts regular health and safety checks of the site and there is a recorded fire drill each term.

33. The present system of monitoring the individual levels of pupil absence is good and the school is assisted by the Education Social Worker who is a regular visitor to the school. The late book is used well by the school to promote punctuality. The school is aware that the actual attendance levels for this academic year are lower than for the whole of last year. However, this is partly caused by the long-term absence of one pupil who is being kept at home following a brief fixed term exclusion. A reward system is used to encourage regular attendance and certificates are presented during the regular merit assemblies.

34. The school has developed a range of strategies for the monitoring and control of behaviour following a recent period during which several pupils were permanently excluded. The impact of this provision can be seen in the consistent levels of actual pupil behaviour in the classroom and across the key stages. In the playground, all supervisory staff have also been trained to apply the code of conduct and the consistency of application is now beginning to have the desired results. Lunchtime supervisors keep very detailed records of playground incidents some of which are of a very minor nature. Practice should now be reviewed to cover only significant incidents and release supervisors to engage more in pupils' play. The Headteacher plays a co-ordinating role in this area and external agencies also provide appropriate support as necessary.

35. The school acknowledges pupils' individual achievement through praise in the classroom and, more formally, during merit assemblies in which their success is shared with the whole school population. Awards are presented for good work, good behaviour and good attendance. The opportunities for pupils to enhance their personal development through taking on responsibility for various tasks around the school are limited. The lack of extra-curricular activities is also a limitation but the school has recently received a grant which is to be used to improve this kind of provision.

36. Significant improvements have been made in the arrangements and quality of assessment since the last inspection. Careful attention has been given to all the issues raised in the inspection report. Considerable work has been done to develop teachers' expertise and understanding, especially in relation to the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Procedures and arrangements have been tightened up substantially and they are now good overall. Staff regularly assess pupils in a variety of appropriate ways and for a range of purposes from the first few weeks of children's entry into the nursery and reception classes. There are good procedures for assessing children in the Foundation Stage. However, assessment in some non-core subjects is at a much earlier stage of development and is sometimes far less well used and systematically collected. There are, nevertheless, plans to tackle this by the school, making use of recent national guidelines.

37. Good procedures are in place to identify pupils with special educational needs and for assessing and reviewing their progress. The arrangements for the assessment of gifted and talented pupils are currently less well developed. Considerable information is collected for pupils with statements of special educational need, which is used well to plan their learning as well as to record their progress.

38. Overall, sound use is made of assessment information to guide teachers' planning. Assessment information from a variety of sources is often used well in mathematics to target weaknesses. Teachers look closely at national test results to find out if changes are needed to tackle weaknesses. All pupils are assessed on a term-by-term basis to enable each teacher to gauge overall progress and attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This information is used effectively as the school's 'Proof of Progress' for each pupil in each year of the school. Tracking of pupils' progress and attainment is now effectively established and is being used, for example to guide setting

arrangements for pupils. From their knowledge of individual pupils, teachers set pupils personal targets, for example in numeracy and literacy, to support them in their learning and achievement. However, many of these targets now need to be more specific and more attention given to their regular review and discussion with pupils. Although some attention has been given to the marking of pupils' work much more remains to be done. Whilst a few examples of astute guidance for pupils were seen, these were the exception and this approach is not widely developed throughout the school. It is particularly important that this aspect is significantly improved since, along with other strategies for continuous assessment, it can have such a vital place in raising levels of attainment and progress.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

39. The school has satisfactory links with parents. They are given a good start in the level of information and the early contacts with the nursery. Parents are involved as governors, through the friends of the school association and occasionally through helping in classrooms.

40. The parents' meeting with the inspectors was not well attended by parents and the percentage return to the parental questionnaire was low. A majority of parents who completed the questionnaire are very supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. They feel that their children like school and that they are making good progress. However, some were dissatisfied with the level of homework. Of those who replied, there was dissatisfaction with the range of extra curricular activities available to pupils and with the level of information given to them about how their child was getting on at school.

41. School academic reports provide a satisfactory level of information to parents in terms of providing details of what their children have been studying over the past year. The information provided by the school through the Prospectus and the Annual Governors Report to Parents conforms to statutory requirements. The school also sends out regular class newsletters to keep parents informed and these provide a good level of detail covering curricular topics and other relevant domestic issues. The available range of extra-curricular activities at the school is poor.

42. Very few parents are regular visitors to the school in terms of providing classroom support or in helping to listen to pupils read, although one grandparent provides excellent reading assistance to the school on a regular basis. Occasional homework is provided to supplement pupils' work at the school and this includes a variety of reading books and other curricular related topics. The school operates an 'open door' policy and parents are always welcome to discuss any particular areas of concern in relation to their children.

43. There is a good level of additional support provided to the parents of pupils with special educational needs. There is also a wide range of external visitors to the school who provide academic, medical, behavioural and pastoral support to both pupils and parents.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

44. Overall leadership and management in the school are unsatisfactory because the measures taken to raise standards have not had sufficient success. Following the judgement of serious weaknesses in the previous report two years ago, the school began a programme of monitoring and development with Local Education Authority support. This has secured improvement in a number of areas, for example there have been a large number of staff changes in this time, including two newly appointed teachers in their second week in the school during the inspection. Teaching during the inspection was good overall. However, there are still areas of general weakness in teaching, for example the understanding of the

importance of letting pupils know how well they are doing and setting them relevant targets. There have undoubtedly been delays to the programme of improvement which were beyond the school's control, for example, changes in LEA support, the long-term illnesses of the headteacher and deputy headteacher and the appointment of teachers who turned out to be unsuccessful and have since left. However, the senior management team, with the exception of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator, has not put enough emphasis on raising standards quickly until quite recently.

45. The governing body has also had a number of changes since the previous inspection. They ensure that statutory responsibilities are fulfilled. Some of them have a very good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses through their monitoring of the school's work. Those who are well informed do not accept pupils' social circumstances as reasons for low standards and have a clear sense of the urgency of raising standards.

46. Co-ordinators have started to play a full role in monitoring what is happening in their subjects. The school has put in place a system for tracking pupils' progress which, coupled with analysis from tests and assessments, is making teachers more aware of where the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' attainment lie. The effects of this, together with the range of strategies to raise attainment, such as booster classes, are beginning to show mostly in Years 3 and 4. Some effects can be seen in Year 5 and 6, more noticeably in science and mathematics than in English.

47. School development planning is satisfactory. The priorities identified are appropriate but the detail should be more precise. Priorities are matched by planned spending. For instance, ECOs in Key Stage 1 provide support for pupils with special educational needs and also for lower attaining pupils especially in reading and spelling. However, some of the ways that these people work need to be more closely analysed for effectiveness because the time that they spend trying to help so many pupils is often very small indeed and may be better reorganised to give longer periods of time.

48. The school's finances are satisfactorily managed by the school administrator with the assistance of the headteacher and the governing body as required. The school applies the principle of 'best value' to all significant purchases and the rules for both Finance Committee and Governing Body approval are clearly set out in the school's procedures. Less emphasis has been given to finding out how parents and pupils feel about the direction and value of the school. School administrative staff receive appropriate training in the best use of new technology and the school works very closely with the LEA on all financial matters. The Headteacher and other senior staff ensure that specific grants are used for their designated purpose, for example, the 'booster class' funding.

49. There are sufficient teachers and a good level of support staff for the numbers of pupils. Resources for subjects are sufficient. Two recently built classrooms and small teaching space mean that there are enough classrooms. There is no separate space for ICT. The library is housed in a corridor area and limits opportunities for pupils to work near to the books. Administrative rooms are tiny. However, there are improvement plans which, if implemented, will improve ICT and office space.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. In order to continue the work of raising standards in all areas of the school's life, the headteacher, staff and governors should consider the points below.

(1). Raise the standards that pupils achieve.

in English by:-

- i) ensuring that pupils know what they are to learn and using the ends of lessons to check on the effectiveness of pupils' learning;
- ii) ensuring that there is support within classroom for pupils for example by providing word lists that support writing generally or give alternatives;
- iii) providing models of writing that support pupils when they are asked to produce specific types of texts;
- iv) evaluating the impact of the different support strategies for reading and literacy, changing those that are least effective and providing training where necessary to get the most effective support for pupils.

*Paragraphs 16; 68-79.*

in mathematics by:-

- i) continuing to identify and target areas of weakness in the subject such as problem solving, fractions, decimals, percentages and mathematical investigations;
- ii) developing further strategies to enhance continuity and progression for pupils in the National Curriculum;
- iii) making further improvements to the quality and consistency of the mental and oral and plenary sessions in lessons;
- iv) developing the range and quality of pupils' work in mathematics on display throughout the school to enhance expectations, progression and attainment.

*Paragraphs 17; 80-88*

in science by:-

- i) continuing to keep a practical and investigative approach to how pupils work in science;
- ii) seeking ways to stretch higher attainers and making sure that lower attainers are supported as well.

*Paragraphs 18; 89-96*

(2) Improve the effectiveness of the headteacher's and senior management team's skills in raising standards by:-

- i) continuing to monitor lessons but putting as strong a focus on what pupils learn as how teachers teach;
- ii) developing a fuller understanding of how targets can improve standards and provision at all levels;
- iii) ensuring that there is a shared understanding of the importance of raising standards and of the means to do so.

*Paragraphs 44-47*

- (3) Improve the quality of teaching and learning further by;-
- i) ensuring that all lessons have well planned and coherent content and that they move at a pace that keeps pupils' interest;
  - ii) ensuring that the work is consistently well matched to pupils' age and ability;
  - iii) marking more effectively and setting precise targets that help pupils to understand what they need to improve and how.
- Paragraphs 14-21; 76; 86.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	16	44	33	5	2	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	265
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	84

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	67

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	23	22	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	14	17
	Girls	21	20	19
	Total	36	34	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (64)	76 (81)	80 (88)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	15	16
	Girls	20	20	18
	Total	36	35	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (81)	78 (88)	76 (83)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	16	19	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	10
	Girls	9	9	11
	Total	17	17	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	49 (53)	49 (44)	60 (62)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	13
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	22	24	26
Percentage of pupils	School	67 (n/a)	69 (n/a)	74 (n/a)



at NC level 4 or above	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	5
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	265
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29.4

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	215.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34.5

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	18	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	569081
Total expenditure	571923
Expenditure per pupil	2158
Balance brought forward from previous year	27760
Balance carried forward to next year	24918

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Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	288
Number of questionnaires returned	58

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	40	7	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	36	57	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	22	57	10	2	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	60	9	3	5
The teaching is good.	29	60	7	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	50	16	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	36	3	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	45	5	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	29	47	12	5	7
The school is well led and managed.	31	47	7	5	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	48	9	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	24	16	16	29

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Concerns were raised at the meeting about the low standards that were achieved in the school compared to other schools.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

51. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in the nursery, reception and mixed reception/Year 1 classes. At the time of the inspection, ten of the reception children were under five. Children's attainment on entry to school varies from those with above average ability to those whose skills and abilities are not up to the expected level for three-year-olds. In the current reception class, attainment is below that expected for this age in early reading, writing and mathematical skills but generally average overall in other areas of learning. Children make good progress in all areas of their learning in both nursery and reception. This is due to the good provision for this age group and the very good quality of teaching.

52. The quality of education has been maintained since the last inspection in nursery and improved in the reception class. Staff show a good awareness of the needs of young children. They work well together to provide a good range of practical learning experiences that interest and involve children well. Planning of the curriculum and assessment of children's learning takes into account the new guidance.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

53. Children come into their classrooms happily and confidently. Staff pay great attention to developing children's ability to share, skilfully settling minor disputes such as who is going to use the telephone. Children are encouraged to wait their turn to speak. Whilst some in the nursery find this very difficult because they are so keen to share their thoughts, those in reception are more patient and understanding of the needs of others. Any who are unsettled are given swift personal attention to their problems so that they are not distressed for long. Children's personal, social and emotional development is supported well both through the general ethos of the Foundation Stage and through the good quality of teaching and learning. Children are given a clear understanding of what is expected of them in a positive way, through praise and encouragement, and their behaviour is good. Children with special educational needs are included as far as is possible in all the activities. Good individual education plans pay attention to particular learning needs and children are well supported in class.

54. Many situations are provided to enable children to learn to co-operate, for example, through baking in the nursery. Children are encouraged to use activities independently and staff make sensitive interventions to support their learning as in the sand and water play. In the reception class, children are directed to activities more but are still given some choices. The very good quality of teaching in nursery and reception results in children making good progress in their personal and social development and almost all are likely to meet the expectations of this age group by the end of the reception year.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

55. In both classes, staff read stories expressively and this captivates children's attention. There is a very good use of questioning to assess children's understanding and extend their learning and in reception, story time was also used profitably for assessing the responses of a child with special educational needs. Staff encourage all children to contribute to discussions and value each child's efforts. This results, in both the nursery and reception class, in most children answering questions confidently and talking to adults competently. However, children demonstrate a wide range of skill in their talk. In the reception classes, for example, there are children who use good vocabulary and are capable of discussing ideas

very competently and others whose speech is indistinct and who use brief phrases or gestures.

56. In the nursery, there is a good balance between teaching specific skills, such as the sounds and shapes of letters, and encouraging children to see themselves as writers through play, for example in the writing area or on the blackboards and paper outside. Whilst some children in the nursery are on course to reach the level expected when they transfer to the reception class, others will be a little behind. There is quite a wide range of attainment from the most able to those with special educational needs. This shows in the skill and control which children have in holding pencils and making marks. Some form letters clearly whilst others struggle to grasp the pencil.

57. Children in reception are taught literacy skills through an adapted form of the literacy hour which acts as an effective bridge between the informality of the nursery and the more structured approach in Year 1. Some reception children recognise all the letter shapes and the sounds they make, write their names correctly and attempt to write familiar words. The highest attainers who are in the reception/Year1 class have already exceeded the targets for five year olds and are beginning to write simple sentences without help. There are also some children with little letter or sound recognition and limited prowess in writing and so it is likely that attainment overall by the end of reception will be below the expected level in this area.

### **Mathematical development**

58. Adults in the nursery make many opportunities to extend children's understanding of number throughout the day. They consistently encourage the children to count themselves, the objects in front of them or animals in the story book they are looking at. Concepts of full and empty are reinforced well when an adult works with the children in the sand play in reception. Baking activities are used very well for introducing weighing vocabulary, as well as reinforcing hygiene awareness. In reception, learning takes on a more formal structure with a modified version of the numeracy hour.

59. The good quality of teaching, in both the nursery and reception classes, results in good progress being made. Children with special educational needs are encouraged to take full part in numeracy sessions, for example by making sure that in the mental and oral work, they are given lower numbers to recognise. However, attainment is very varied and overall is a little below the average. Some children are likely to meet the expected standards by the end of the year in the nursery, with some exceeding them and some not reaching them. In reception, some children count confidently with larger numbers, write numbers to 10, can undertake simple addition sums and know the names of the most common mathematical shapes. Others are not as advanced and some have special educational needs. They make good progress, but are not likely to meet the targets for the end of the reception year. For example, they know the counting sequence to 5 but do not co-ordinate the counting and pointing to objects so they end up with the wrong number in the group.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

60. Teaching in both classes is good for knowledge and understanding of the world. The children make good progress and reach satisfactory standards.

61. The nursery is well organised to promote children's learning in this area. Activities such as the water play with small sea creatures encourages their imagination, as well as providing opportunity to widen their vocabulary to include new words such as sea-horse and squid. Similarly, baking was used very well for good language development as well as introducing early scientific awareness of how materials change when they are combined. The

children thoroughly enjoyed themselves mixing with determination and only just resisting the temptation to have a 'lick'!

62. In reception, the main focus for this area was on designing a simple container to hold seeds. The children happily experimented with different joining techniques, using staples, cellotape, holes and treasury tags as well as glue.

63. Both classes use computers. Although the new program in the nursery was a little difficult for children to manage, they were learning about the different ways that computers can be used. In reception, a short session with about two thirds of the class was effective in showing the children how to operate a particular program and those who tried it, quickly got the hang of 'shooting' icing onto buns.

### **Physical development**

64. Children in the nursery show skills typical for their ages as they ride bikes and push wheeled toys in the pleasant outdoor area. Staff have chalked a one-way system on the small track but unfortunately it is too narrow for more adventurous road play. Good arrangements are made for children in the reception class to continue to have outdoor play using the nursery area at the end of morning sessions for small groups. This is balanced by time for more formal activity in the hall when they are expected to work hard and to improve their efforts. The very good teaching in movement enabled children to reach above average standards in this lesson showing good co-ordination and balance.

65. Although there is a good range of provision, children's hand and eye co-ordination is much less secure and in this part of their physical development, attainment is overall below what is expected. For example, some children in nursery do not know how to hold a pencil whilst others pick them up confidently. By reception, some use scissors competently whilst others are not sure which hand to use and struggle to make them cut. The use of only thick pencils and crayons misses out the opportunity for children to work with finer tools and make more delicate writing and drawing.

### **Creative development**

66. There is good provision for children's creative development in the nursery with a wide range of opportunities for them to learn through play, for example in the Vets' Surgery and the Home Corner. They explore paint, happily rubbing the thick ready-mixed colours together on their paper, rolling, moulding and cutting playdough, and using a variety of different materials to create their own pictures. In all these activities, they show skills similar to what you would expect for three to four year olds. Children in reception have less opportunity for such expression. In common with the rest of the school, they have a main focus either on art and design or on design and technology (DT) and on this week it was design and technology. Their creative work on the walls is of a satisfactory standard. More could be done within this area of provision in both classes to extend children's experiences of drawing with fine tools to link to areas of weakness in physical development.

67. Children enjoy songs and rhymes in the nursery and occasionally experiment with instruments on a table. In reception, they work as a class on learning to respond to smiley face symbols representing fast and slow. The teaching is satisfactory in taking the children through such an activity but was a little long and lacking in variety for such young children. Nevertheless, they worked hard and showed good self control in waiting for their turn to play.

## ENGLISH

68. The test results, achieved at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, in 2000 were low, particularly at Key Stage 2 where they were in the lowest 5 per cent of all schools and also the lowest 5 per cent of schools with similar levels of free school meals. They were also below what might have been expected for these pupils, given the results they achieved when they were tested in Year 2. Although a similar proportion of pupils achieved the expected level 4 compared to all primary schools, very few achieved above and nearly a half of the pupils tested achieved below the expected level. Over the last three years, results have deteriorated, while nationally they have improved. The situation in Key Stage 1 was not as poor but pupils achieved well below other pupils in all schools in reading and below them in writing. Their results were below those achieved in similar schools. The trend at Key Stage 1 over the last three years has been one of improvement, but results have remained stubbornly lower than they should be, with boys doing noticeably less well than girls.

69. Although the school recognises the seriousness of this situation, and has taken positive action to address weaknesses, much more remains to be done if the pupils are going to achieve as well as they should. Improved teaching, a better organised curriculum and more effective tracking of pupils' progress are beginning to make an impact but the standards pupils are currently achieving are still below expectations at the end of both key stages.

70. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate satisfactory skills in speaking and listening when they are challenged to apply them, for example, in role-playing situations. In an imaginatively implemented literacy lesson they confidently took on the roles of newspaper reporters, pupils and teachers, and the manager of an activity centre that had provided a dreadful residential experience. Reporters' questions were probing while the responses from pupils, teachers and the centre manager showed appropriate empathy, understanding and detail. By the end of the key stage, a large proportion of pupils have sound reading skills. Pupils across the range of ability know which authors they like but only the relatively few higher attaining pupils can provide detailed explanations as to why they have particular preferences. Higher and average attaining pupils read with fluency and reasonable expression, which reflects their secure understanding and use of punctuation. Less able pupils still tend to read word for word and struggle with unfamiliar ones, making insufficient use of letter sounds and the meaning of sentences to help them tackle words they read incorrectly. All of these older pupils have benefited from their regular visits to the local library and can confidently describe how they would find particular books using the classification system. They make effective use of the contents and index pages of non-fiction books to locate pieces of information.

71. Pupils' writing skills are below expectations. Higher attaining pupils achieve the expected level 4 and access the higher level 5. They are able to write interestingly for a range of purposes, including persuasive writing, reports, diaries, narrative stories and poetry and make use of paragraphs and devices, such as bullet points, when these are appropriate. Direct speech is correctly punctuated when they write dialogues and their spelling is generally accurate. Most of these pupils' handwriting is well formed and neatly joined, but one or two have developed stylised features that can lead readers to misinterpret what has been written. Average attaining pupils do not all consistently punctuate sentences accurately and only sometimes use commas when they are needed. Similarly, they do not use paragraphs consistently to help to structure their work and they make use of a limited range of connectives to join their writing together, showing a heavy reliance on "then". Their handwriting is joined and clearly formed, spelling is mostly accurate and sensible attempts are made when they are not sure how a word is spelt. Many of these pupils are still working

below the expected level for their age. The writing of lower attaining pupils shows many of the same characteristics but their spelling is sometimes much weaker.

72. At the end of Key Stage 1, overall, standards are below average. Higher attaining pupils show aspects of attainment above expectations and most of the average ability pupils are achieving in line with what is expected for their age. However, a relatively large group of lower attaining pupils is working noticeably below expectations. Speaking and listening skills are under-developed. Too few pupils listen closely to what the teacher and others are saying and only higher attaining pupils provide detail in their answers to questions or when they are explaining and describing what they have done. Higher attaining pupils read words accurately but they do not always pay sufficient attention to punctuation or use much expression in their voices when reading aloud. They do have an appropriate understanding of what they are reading. Many other pupils read with little fluency and struggle to use letter sounds and blends to help when they come across words they do not know by sight. Higher and average attaining pupils know the difference between story and information books and higher attaining pupils can make use of the index to find what they want. Average attaining pupils are still not sure about alphabetical order and this limits their ability to locate information.

73. Pupils' writing at Key Stage 1 shows a greater range of achievement than does their reading. More able pupils work at the level appropriate for their age and sometimes above it, whilst a sizeable group of lower attaining pupils is struggling at least a level below what is expected for Year 2 pupils. Higher attaining pupils can write in complex sentences, attempt to use speech marks in their writing, spell common words accurately and make sensible attempts with those they are unsure of. Their handwriting is joined and easy to read. Average attaining pupils can also write for a variety of purposes but they do not always use full stops and capital letters accurately and their sentences are often simple, with little use of describing words to make their writing more interesting to the reader. Many spell common words accurately and make reasonable efforts with harder words. Not all lower attaining pupils form their letters clearly and they run words into each other. They do not write with structure to their ideas and make little attempt to punctuate. The lack of written work in some of these pupils' books suggests that many struggle to write independently.

74. In many literacy lessons the behaviour of pupils was good and in Key Stage 2 where teaching was mostly good or better, pupils usually showed high levels of interest, worked hard and enjoyed what they were doing. In Key Stage 1, where the teacher was either establishing herself with a new class or when the teacher was not as skilled in using questioning to draw pupils into lessons, pupils' involvement was more variable and pupils with behavioural problems sometimes made it more difficult for others to concentrate. In these lessons, pupils did not work as hard as in Key Stage 2 and the progress they made in their lessons was less evident.

75. Overall teaching of English is satisfactory. It is good in Key Stage 2 and just satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Teaching has improved since the last inspection with only 10% being unsatisfactory compared to 25 per cent three years ago. The literacy hour has been implemented satisfactorily and is improving the quality of teaching in English although the effectiveness and sharpness of focus of literacy lessons varies from class to class. Literacy is developed satisfactorily across the curriculum, although in some classes an over reliance on the use of worksheets, in subjects such as history, limits the ability of pupils to practise important skills they have been learning in literacy lessons. Weaknesses in planning, pupil management and expectations of pupils identified in the last inspection, have mostly been addressed satisfactorily. The weekly literacy planning almost always provides teachers with clear guidance on what will be taught in each lesson and often indicates what each group will be doing. In almost all lessons, teachers manage pupils' behaviour at least satisfactorily and they expect pupils to apply themselves to the tasks they are given. In the one lesson in Year



2, that was less than satisfactory, there was a lack of coherence in what pupils were being taught that led to a fragmented lesson and little progress being made overall. The shared reading and word-level work were used to develop the lesson's learning objectives to do with characters and synonyms but these were not then built on in the group work and plenary. These were unrelated and dealt with literal comprehension work and changing verb tenses respectively.

76. In the best lessons, teachers were well prepared and had a very clear idea about what the pupils would learn in the lesson. These strengths enabled teachers in Key Stage 2, including the Year 6 booster class, for example, to provide clear explanations that built well on what the pupils had learned earlier, to develop new learning systematically and to use questioning well to check pupils' understanding and to encourage them to think more deeply. These lessons also benefited from a good pace throughout that kept pupils interested and involved. In these lessons teachers provided tasks that mostly met the range of needs of pupils within each class. However, when the pupils were asked to work on the same open-ended activity rather than different group tasks the teachers did not adjust the level of challenge for pupils with different abilities. This was also the case in other lessons and reflects the weakness across the school in not using assessment and marking to identify and address what individuals and groups of pupils need to do to improve their work. As a result pupils do not have a clear idea of what they need to do in order to make their work better.

77. In almost all lessons teachers display the objectives for their lessons but many do not discuss these with their class and opportunities to sharpen the focus of pupils' work are missed. Similar lack of rigour is seen when teachers do not use technical words when discussing aspects of language, such as similes, metaphors and adjectives so opportunities to consolidate earlier learning are missed. This lack of support for literacy is a common weakness across almost all. Words to develop knowledge and understanding of technical terms, lists of common words, words to do with the current focus of lessons, spelling patterns and families and good examples of different forms of writing are not a natural feature of each classroom. This reduces the opportunities for teachers to make helpful incidental teaching points, to encourage pupils to experiment with words and most importantly, for the younger pupils, to support them when they are writing independently.

78. The curriculum for English is satisfactory, being firmly based on the literacy framework and it is sensibly implemented to meet the needs of mixed-age classes, where lower attaining pupils from one year work with average and above average pupils from the year below on that year's literacy programme. The needs of pupils with special educational needs related to learning difficulties are met effectively through the support of their educational care officers who often work with these pupils on individual learning plans. Other pupils who find learning in English difficult receive support through the additional literacy initiative, and the Better Reading programme. The records that are maintained for these pupils show that they are making steady progress.

79. Over the last two years the school has implemented a thorough system for assessing pupils and monitoring their progress. This has led to more careful grouping of pupils and to identifying those who may need extra help because they are either lagging behind or are not making sufficiently rapid progress. A start has been made on identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the learning of pupils through the analysis of national curriculum test and formal test information. This has led to some general refocusing of teaching but has not been used to set targets for either individual pupils or groups of pupils. The management of the subject has involved monitoring the quality of lessons, teachers' planning and the outcomes of teaching as seen in pupils' work. The information gained from this has not been used systematically to develop strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The

lack of urgency in addressing the low standards in English over several years, makes leadership and management of the subject unsatisfactory.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards which are below expectations for their ages. The 2000 national test results were well below average at the end of both key stages when compared to all schools and similar schools. These figures continued a trend of very low results over the last three years, although there was a slight hint of improvement at the end of Key Stage 2 when the results were compared with pupils' prior attainment. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 is just beginning to show modest gains, particularly the older age group. Nevertheless, attainment is still not as high as it should be at the end of either key stage. However, the picture is more positive in some earlier years, especially in Years 3 and 4 where pupils are making significant progress and are on course to achieve higher standards of attainment than the school's results would indicate. Girls achieve better than boys, broadly matching national trends over time at Key Stage 2, although with more variations at Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs generally make sound and sometimes better progress and achieve appropriate levels of attainment.

81. By the age of seven, most but not all pupils can count on and backwards in twos and tens, recognise different sequences of numbers, including odd and even numbers, and are able to complete missing numbers in a simple sequence. Some have a sound knowledge of place value to 100, but others are much less confident and few can solve problems using larger numbers to 1,000. Most pupils can name and identify some features of flat shapes and to a lesser extent solid shapes. Many can measure using an increasing range of different standard units, although others are less accurate in their estimates, checking results and measurements using basic units. Many pupils are beginning to use an appropriate range of mathematical language and vocabulary.

82. By the age of eleven, many pupils can now work out calculations in their heads quickly and accurately, although others are more hesitant and less successful. Many pupils use a number of different strategies in their mental and oral work at an appropriate level but, in rounding, doubling and other strategies, some pupils are still not as adept as they could be. Some pupils have a sound grasp of fractions, decimals, percentages and measurement, however a significant minority are much less confident and competent. Many are able to use and interpret a range of diagrams and charts. Throughout the school, pupils often lack confidence in applying their mathematical knowledge to real-life problems and in carrying out investigations.

83. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and it is good in Key Stage 2, although there was a wide range from very good to poor. There has been a significant improvement in teaching and learning since the last inspection, which has been closely linked to the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and reflects the high priority and commitment given to the subject by the staff. On many occasions, good quality direct teaching was seen in both key stages, but especially Key Stage 2, which had a marked effect on the quality of learning and achievement by pupils. In the best lessons, teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, expectations of behaviour and learning are high, the pace is rapid and much is achieved by pupils in a single lesson. In such lessons good use is made of a range of challenging questions to stimulate and extend pupils in their learning. Tasks are designed to make them think hard, as seen in a Year 3 and 4 lesson where pupils used different strategies well to rapidly work out addition and subtraction problems. On a few occasions, lessons are less effective where work is

insufficiently matched to pupils' previous learning, the pace is too slow and the range of management strategies is limited, as seen, for example, in one Year 6 booster class lesson. Care is taken by the school in the arrangements for the setting of pupils which are appropriate, but more attention is needed to ensure a better match of tasks for different groups of pupils in some lessons, to ensure that they have sufficient opportunities to make good progress.

84. Teachers generally make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy which they apply effectively. Lessons are usually well structured, planned and organised. Good use is often made of the mental and oral session at the beginning of the lesson, although occasionally it lasts for too long and impinges on the time available for the main part of the lesson or, more particularly, leads to insufficient time being left for the plenary at the end. On a few occasions, some pupils' attention wanders during such extended periods of sustained talking and listening. In the best lessons, the plenary session is used well to tackle misconceptions and to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. At best, group work is well matched to pupils' age and ability, targeting is highly effective and pupils make rapid progress in their learning. However, on occasions, this part of the lesson is much less effective, particularly where the tasks are imprecisely matched to pupils' prior attainment and learning. Pupils use mathematics appropriately to help learning in other subjects. For example, pupils are involved in numerical work when drawing graphs, such as that seen using ICT, in a Year 2 design and technology lesson, and also taking accurate measurements, for example working out differences in gravity as part of a science investigation in Year 3.

85. Most pupils have appropriate attitudes to the subject and often these are good. They mostly work hard, listen carefully and take pride in their achievements, including the presentation of their work. They mainly behave well and often clearly enjoy the challenging mental work and practical tasks which are provided for them. On a few occasions, however, some pupils lose concentration when the tasks are either too difficult, too undemanding or management strategies employed by the teacher are less effective.

86. The arrangements for assessment are sound and some aspects are good. Results from a variety of sources, including past papers, are analysed carefully and often used well to target underachievement and the differing needs of pupils. All pupils are assessed on a term by term basis to enable each teacher to gauge overall progress and attainment. This information is used effectively as the school's proof of progress for each pupil in each year of the school. Increasingly effective use is made of continuous assessment to guide teachers' planning, which at best is proving to be an invaluable source of information in improving the quality of teaching, learning and raising standards. However, whilst there are some examples of good practice in marking, too often it provides inadequate guidance to pupils on how to improve. Much attention is being given to providing personal targets for pupils but these now need to be made more specific. They also need to be more effectively discussed and reviewed with pupils throughout the school, as they are in just a few classes at present.

87. The co-ordinators are providing a positive lead in developments and their role has been significantly strengthened since the last inspection. Arrangements for staff development are effective with good use of outside agencies to provide in-service training and support. The quality and consistency of teachers' assessments have improved considerably since the last inspection, although further refinements can still be made. A collection of work showing the level at which pieces were assessed, though not a requirement, could usefully be developed in the subject to enhance the quality and consistency of assessment even further. Similarly, a stronger emphasis on a range of displays of pupils' work in mathematics throughout the school, with a particular focus on progression and attainment, would also serve to enhance expectations, understanding and ideas in the subject. Strategies for monitoring and evaluation are already contributing well to

improvements in provision and standards, although more remains to be done over a period of time. In particular, the monitoring of planning, lessons and pupils' work now needs to be much more strongly focused on the effects of provision on pupils' learning and attainment.

88. The school is satisfactorily resourced for the subject, although further items will be needed from time to time to keep pace with developments which are taking place and to replace worn or outdated equipment. Currently additional practical classroom resources are still needed in some classrooms to support some numeracy strategies, for example mental and oral sessions at the beginning of lessons.

## **SCIENCE**

89. The results in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 are well below the national average and those of similar schools and have been so for a number of years. The teacher assessments at Key Stage 1 show the same outcome but in comparison with similar schools the results are not as far below.

90. The work seen during the inspection reflects an improvement in standards and is closer to the national expectation than the previous test results. For example, during the inspection the results of a 'mock' test for the Year 6 class showed an increase in the number of pupils achieving level 4 and above. This recent improvement is due to the use of information gained from analysing the past national tests, the use of pupil progress assessments and the effective use of time in a number of lessons to focus on the identified areas of weakness. For example good use was made of a lesson in Year 6 to revise specific questions from the test papers.

91. In Year 6, pupils understand the properties of a solution and that some substances are more soluble than others are. Higher achieving pupils could interpret the amounts of substances that will dissolve in water, from the results of an investigation displayed on a bar graph. Lower achieving pupils found the activity confusing and did not understand what the figures represented. Pupils know how to ensure fair testing in the investigation and they can give examples, such as the need for the same amount and the same temperature of water. When talking about plants, pupils described the process of photosynthesis and higher achieving pupils understood the balance between animals breathing out carbon dioxide and plants giving off oxygen. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils investigated the effect of gravity by comparing how much an elastic band will stretch when different weights are attached. A higher achieving pupil stated that a thicker band would stretch less. In another Year 4 class, pupils discovered that their pulse rate increases as they change their rate of exercise. They understand that the heart is a muscle and that it pumps blood around the body.

92. Pupils in Key Stage 1 need more prompting when talking about scientific facts and they are less secure in their knowledge. They are able to describe the parts of the body, for example arm, leg and nose. A higher achieving pupil knew that the brain is inside the skull and that muscles are used to make the body move. When discussing the difference between living and non-living things pupils find it more difficult to provide the correct information but can state what conditions are needed for a plant to grow. They can name equipment in the home that works on electricity, such as a cooker and television and can describe that a switch is used to turn the lights on and off. Pupils in Year 2 knew the names of the materials that are used to make objects, such as a window and a chair. They can also describe the waterproof qualities of different types of paper following an investigation in a lesson.

93. Teaching in Key Stage 2 was good and ranged from satisfactory to very good. At Key Stage 1, it was satisfactory and ranged from satisfactory to good. Overall, teaching is satisfactory rather than good because there is a need for teachers to be much more precise in marking to help pupils improve and in providing equally challenging work for all abilities including the higher attainers. A portfolio of marked work has started but the ongoing assessment of pupils' achievements in class lessons is under developed. Overall, though, there is a good improvement since the last inspection when all the teaching at Key Stage 1 was judged to be unsatisfactory together with some unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2. The quality of the teaching has been improved through the monitoring of the planning in each of the classes by the co-ordinators and by the use of national guidelines on the content of lessons. At present, co-ordinators do not have the time to monitor the teaching of the subject across the school.

94. When the teaching is good the lessons are well planned and resources are carefully prepared to allow pupils to develop good skills of investigation. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils conducted an investigation to discover if greaseproof, brown, kitchen towel and paper towels are waterproof. Their findings were influenced by their ability to feel the papers prior to conducting the test and being able to record their predictions on a worksheet. Because the paper towel had holes in it, they predicted it would not be waterproof and could state that it is the opposite of waterproof. Pupils' interest and concentration in lessons is good when the teacher asks challenging questions and provides an opportunity for pupils to give well reasoned answers. Pupils respond well when they are set target times to complete an activity. When the pace of lessons is slow, the pupils lose interest and their behaviour deteriorates. The content of lessons does not always provide opportunities to extend the knowledge for the ability of all pupils in the class. For example, higher achieving pupils are not provided with the chance to extend their research and independent learning skills and insufficient support is given to the lower achieving pupils.

95. The co-ordinators are providing a clear direction for the subject but need the time to help other staff to develop their skills and confidence in order to support the initiatives that have been introduced. Resources are adequate, well organised and matched to support the developing use of practical classroom activities.

96. There are clear signs that the recent developments have provided more structure to the curriculum and the increased focus on the teaching and learning are beginning to have a positive effect on the standard of pupils' work.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

97. Only two lessons were seen in art and design because it shares the allocation of time with design and technology and was not planned for this time of the year. Most of the evidence for judgements about standards is taken from display in classrooms and around the school and from discussions with the co-ordinator and a review of the co-ordinator's file. From this evidence, pupils are producing work which is in line with that expected at the end of each key stage.

98. Planning, and the evidence in the co-ordinator's file, indicates that a broad programme of work is presented. For example, Year 6 pupils have produced abstracts of objects placed in interesting arrangements. Some of these use tone well to give a three dimensional feeling to the work. Year 4/5 pupils have used pastels effectively linked to science work on planets. Some pieces show that pupils are being made aware of other cultural traditions, for instance Celtic patterns in Year 3/4, the symmetrical designs created on the computer to reflect the designs seen on a prayer mat and European artists such as

Van Gogh in reception and Year 1. Displays in the Year 3 class thoughtfully include Maketon signs so that a pupil with special educational needs can read the information. There is also work using the computer such as the fabric designs in Year 2.

99. The lessons seen were taught well, making imaginative use of the school environment to see how it might be improved and how what is there influences how we feel. Pupils were able to identify aspects of the environment which are appealing and those which are not. Sketch books were used to record ideas and collect information. Pupils were interested and eager to plan their work, and supporting adults (ECOs) worked well with their pupils. The picture of good teaching and positive attitudes to art and design is similar to that described in the previous inspection.

100. The co-ordinator has made a good start in collecting information into a file which will inform further planning. Her monitoring of planning and samples of pupils' work show some perceptive comments, such as the appropriateness of the marking policy for art and adaptations which might be needed.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

101. The attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with national expectations.

102. Pupils in Year 2 are able to explore the properties of different kinds of fruit and use a range of relevant vocabulary to describe its texture, taste and appearance. As part of their history topic they discuss and look at the designs of household artefacts from fifty years ago, for example a wireless and hair curlers. Pupils in Year 1 are discovering ways of designing a winding mechanism using a cotton reel, string and a cardboard box.

103. In Year 6, pupils have designed and made models of fairground rides and moving toys using a range of different control mechanisms, such as cogs and methods of joining and fixing. Year 3 pupils have designed 'pop-up' books for the children in the nursery and evaluated and recorded the response when they showed them to the children. In Year 6, pupils have used various methods of folding to design and make books. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils discuss materials used by sculptors, consider the work of Andy Galsworthy and sketch the possible designs of sculptures that could be used to improve the appearance of the playground and surrounding area. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils identify the design features of the types of packaging used for different products, for example chocolates and how the appearance of the presentation is important in attracting customers.

104. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. When it is good pupils are encouraged to develop an analytical and practical 'hands-on' approach to the design process which maintains and promotes their interest in the activity. In the unsatisfactory lesson, pupils sat as a whole class for a long period listening and watching with no practical involvement in the designing or making of a winding mechanism. As the lesson progressed their concentration and interest declined, as did their standard of behaviour.

105. The teachers' planning is based on national guidelines and there is a good range of resources to support the activities. The co-ordinators have recognised the need to produce a record-keeping system to monitor the pupils' achievements. A portfolio of photographs has been started but this requires further development, for example the attachment of explanatory comments. Since the last inspection, standards and teaching have remained about the same but there has been an improvement in the planning for the development of skills.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. During the inspection only two full lessons and one part lesson were seen in geography. However, a range of other evidence was also available including, pupils' work, teachers' planning, assessments, reports, discussions with pupils about their work and many other sources. From this evidence, appropriate opportunities are being provided for pupils to develop in the subject and attainment at the end of each key stage is in line with national expectations. This is a broadly similar picture, overall, to the last inspection.

107. By the age of seven, pupils can talk knowledgeably about features of a journey they have made, for example types of houses, traffic and use of roads, services, amenities and know a great deal about their own locality. Many are able to make simple comparisons with other localities such as a seaside location and Chesterfield town centre. They have studied and know a lot about key people in the local community and are able to draw on a range of first hand experiences of school and other visits. Many pupils are beginning to develop appropriate map skills and can draw simple and effective plans and routes as seen in studies of the local area in Year 1 and 2.

108. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils have had an extensive range of experience in carrying out studies in the locality of the school. Most have an appropriate range of geographical skills and many can use keys and interpret important features from a map. Some, but not all, are able to use scale and grid references appropriately. Pupils have carried out a range of geographical work and have a good understanding of their own locality and a sound understanding of some places further afield. Many can identify and name an appropriate range of different capitals and countries on a world map or globe and have studied important geographical issues related to such aspects as, the effects of pollution, use of roads and amenities, changes in climate, use of natural resources and land use. Many are beginning to understand how settlements differ and change. Most pupils recognise the importance of location in understanding places and use an appropriate range of geographical language and vocabulary in their discussions and writing.

109. The quality of teaching and learning is sound in both key stages; on occasions, it is good, as seen in much of the extensive and detailed work done throughout the school in connection with the "Dunston Survey" and carried out in the immediate locality of the school. With impressive support and interest from outside agencies and the local community, pupils were engaged in a wide and valuable range of geographical studies which significantly enhanced their own understanding and knowledge of local geography and tackled a number of important local issues, such as those related to environmental change and the use of roads. Teachers' planning is sound overall, and sometimes of good quality with close attention to recent national guidelines and the National Curriculum. Whilst some good opportunities have been developed for pupils to enhance their independent learning and research skills, as in the local studies already mentioned, there is still room for further development of these important skills.

110. Pupils are interested in the subject and often enjoy the work, especially practical, local studies which they see as valuable. They talk about their work with confidence, take care with the presentation and make appropriate links with other subjects, such as science, ICT and mathematics. Resources are adequate although there is a shortage of more local and other Ordnance Survey maps. Whilst attention is currently being given to monitoring and evaluation it is still, as yet, underdeveloped.

## **HISTORY**

111. Only one lesson was observed in history because geography was the focus for the most of topic work during the inspection. Pupils' completed work was analysed together with teachers' planning. This shows that the periods of history identified in the National Curriculum for Key Stage 2 and the themes identified for Key Stage 1 are covered. The coverage of the different aspects of history in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory and this results in imbalances in pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills, and standards that are below expectations by the end of the key stage. The content of pupils' completed work at Key Stage 1 indicates that standards are broadly in line with expectations.

112. At Key Stage 2, pupils' work shows that they gain a good understanding of every day life in the past and how the lives of groups, such as the rich and poor, were often very different. Less emphasis has been given to developing their knowledge of important people, of the impact they had on people's lives and of the major events in the different periods and what brought them about. For example, pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of what life was like for the children of the rich and poor and of the dreadful conditions in which many children had to work but they do not know about Lord Shaftsbury and the changes he brought about to improve their working conditions. Similarly, pupils in Year 4 know about Henry VIII's family tree and that he had six wives but little about how his struggle to get a male heir resulted in the Reformation in England and the destruction of the monasteries. Their work includes good coverage of life in rich and poor houses but nothing about Queen Elizabeth and the Armada. In Year 3/4 classes, pupils have studied the Vikings and Saxons and their impact on our heritage. Pupils have opportunities to make use of source materials to find out about the past through for example looking at portraits and pictures.

113. At Key Stage 1, pupils are learning about famous people, such as Florence Nightingale and about life in the past. They do this through listening to and discussing stories and as seen in the one lesson observed, in Year 2, through using artefacts and pictures. In this well taught lesson the teacher skilfully used a picture of a kitchen fifty years ago to encourage the children to compare life then and now. Pupils were fascinated by the use of a suspended drying rack. The teacher also made good use of artefacts and pupils were intrigued by a tea cosy, which some thought was a toilet roll holder, and were surprised to find out that what they thought were pieces of seaweed were in fact tea leaves.

114. The co-ordinator has modified the school's history curriculum to make use of the model national scheme of work and to ensure that it covers the requirements of Curriculum 2000. Although she monitors teachers' planning, the imbalance of coverage of the different aspects of the subject has not been identified and addressed.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

115. Standards in ICT are below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. There was too little evidence on which to base a judgement on the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1.

116. As in many schools, the major strength in pupils' learning is in using ICT tools to communicate information and in handling information. Pupils in Year 6 are confident in using the school's network to log on to their work spaces, launch the programs they need to use, save and print out their work. In common with pupils across the school, they talk enthusiastically about their use of the computer and are keen to share what they have done. They have satisfactory skills in using a word processor to present their work and they make effective use of different fonts, colours and emphasis, such as bold and underlining to set out their work and make it look attractive. The eye-catching posters they have made, display a range of skills including cutting and pasting artwork and skilful use of text boxes, while their



computer generated art work demonstrates effective use of the wide range of drawing and painting tools available in their painting program. The school has Internet access in all classes and pupils in Key Stage 2 are confident in searching the World Wide Web for sites that provide information for their research. They have yet to use email to share and acquire information, for example with and from pupils in other schools. Pupils understand that computers can be used to hold information and are powerful devices for sorting and searching through it. Their skills in handling information themselves are below expectations, although pupils in Year 6 are developing a good understanding of how to structure information to include in a branching database. The weakest area in pupils' learning of ICT is in monitoring events and controlling devices, where they have developed limited skills in using programmable toys and, for example, in giving instructions to a screen turtle to create geometric shapes on the computer's screen.

117. The three lessons seen were in Key Stage 2 and were of good quality but these provide too little evidence for secure judgements of teaching across the school. There is a well thought out scheme of work that guides and supports teachers' work and they have all benefited from the professional development provided by the subject co-ordinator. All classrooms have at least two computers and a toolbox of appropriate software. As a result, ICT is regularly taught across the school through whole class lessons or short, focussed inputs to smaller groups. Teachers also provide opportunities through other subjects for pupils to practise their ICT skills. Lessons are well taught and enable pupils to make good progress in their learning, and over time, the implementation of the scheme of work will enable pupils to cover all the aspects of ICT they are expected to learn while in primary school.

118. Two class lessons were observed and one small group input. All these sessions were carefully planned with clear objectives for what pupils would learn. They were well organised and teachers gradually and skilfully developed new skills. In the Year 4/5 class, pupils had been introduced to the Roamer (a programmable toy) in a previous lesson and the teacher carefully reviewed what they had already learned. She then extended their use of the simple commands they knew to refine their problem solving and programming skills by setting them increasingly difficult challenges. The pupils were all fully involved in the lesson and eager to contribute their ideas. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher was following an equally well planned sequence of lessons on developing branching databases. The lesson also built very effectively on the previous one where pupils had explored branching databases, with the teacher challenging the pupils to design a structure for an identification key and to devise questions that required "yes/no" answers. Wipe boards were very well used to encourage pupils to jot down and modify their ideas. Both these lessons were pitched below the level that pupils are expected to work at for their ages, but this was appropriate given the prior attainment of pupils in each class. In the very useful short group input in the Year 5/6 class, the teacher carefully questioned pupils in order to review and consolidate their use of the network and their skills in changing the appearance of text in a word processing program. This focussed approach to developing ICT skills is successfully raising standards to where they should be. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of what needs to be done to continue to move the subject forward and has provided a good lead through her own teaching, her support for colleagues and by providing the clear programme for teaching.

## **MUSIC**

119. Only two lessons of music were seen, one in each key stage, and because of complications with the timetable, neither was at the end of a key stage. Other than planning and some notes left by the co-ordinator who works part-time, there is no evidence on which to make judgements about standards at the ends of key stages, nor of teaching overall.

Within assembly, singing is satisfactory. Pupils in Key Stage 1 sometimes have difficulty remembering words but where the hymns and songs are well known to them, they sing with confidence.

120. Of the two lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory in one and unsatisfactory in the other. Neither of the two teachers were fully confident in teaching music although they were well enough prepared for the content of the lessons. In Key Stage 1, the lesson did not go well because the teacher pursued a particular answer she required for too long. Although the pupils were giving appropriate answers, it was not the one in mind. After a while, most of them became bored and did not listen. A couple, who have special educational needs related to behaviour, begun to be disruptive by wriggling and making small noises so that it was difficult for other pupils to concentrate. Where responses were given to clapping the rhythm of names, most were correct. The Key Stage 2 lesson moved at a steady pace and pupils were able to perform the simple tasks of clapping in response to symbol with the teacher's help. They found the second task, of writing and performing their own rhythm pattern, much more difficult because the symbols chosen reflected beats rather than the number of smaller rhythms within the beat.

121. Music lessons are normally taken by a specialist who was not available during the inspection with a shorter follow-up taken by class teachers. Plans show an appropriate balance of activities. Pupils in Year 3/4 have made neat observational drawings of instruments they play and labelled them correctly.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

122. Overall, standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. At Key Stage 2 this is an improvement since the last inspection when it was found that some of the older pupils' level of skill was too low.

123. In the lessons observed, the standards range from satisfactory to good. In Year 1, pupils showed progress in their throwing and catching skills and they are developing the accuracy of throwing the ball to a partner. They were able to move in different directions but a small number of pupils found it more difficult to travel backwards and sideways. They could transfer these skills to moving with various pieces of small equipment, for example skipping with a hoop and rope and balancing a ball on a bat, but some pupils find difficulty in producing the co-ordination required to skip.

124. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils showed imagination by creating a sequence of movements with a partner and they were constantly attempting to increase the complexity of their performance. In Year 6, pupils were encouraged to explore different ways and styles of running to suit various distances. A number of pupils attempted to run the longer distance at the same speed as they did for ten seconds and quickly discovered that this was not possible. Through practical experience they understand that speed is an important factor when participating in two runs, one lasting ten seconds and the next two minutes. They were able to explain that it is more difficult to run with a ball in their hands because of the restrictions placed on their arm movements. Pupils in Year 6 were able to adapt their throwing and catching skills to bowl accurately at a wicket and in playing a game of French cricket.

125. The teaching was good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when some of the teaching in Key Stage 2 was found to be unsatisfactory. In the lessons which were good, pupils were asked to consider the reasons for the warm-up session. They commented on the need to increase

their heart rate to prepare for the activities. In a very good lesson in Year 6 pupils were asked to review their performance during the activity and in the classroom at the end of the session good use was made of whiteboards for pupils to record their interpretation of the different styles of running. The pupils' standard in attainment is enhanced by watching other pupils' demonstrations and by the teacher demanding a high quality of performance. When this occurs in lessons, pupils apply themselves to the activities and make every effort to improve their performance. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils were encouraged to watch the movement sequences of others in the class and to give their opinions.

126. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has identified the need to develop and extend the number, and type, of after-school and outdoor activities, for example orienteering. At present there are limited opportunities for pupils to participate in team games and methods of assessing pupils' achievement require further development. The quality and range of resources is good and they match the planned activities.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

127. Pupils at the end of both key stages attain standards which are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This represents significant improvement since the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. Considerable attention has been given to religious education and all the issues raised in that report have been fully addressed. Pupils in the infants continue to make sound progress and pupils in the juniors now make good progress in the subject.

128. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of festivals and celebrations. They have an appropriate knowledge of the events in the life of Jesus. Many are beginning to develop an understanding of story telling and exploring appropriately the different ways in which stories are told and the meanings they convey, such as those told by Jesus. By the age of eleven, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of world religions, such as Islam and Sikhism, including beliefs, festivals and sacred books. During the inspection, Year 5/6 pupils visited the Muslim Centre as part of the school's unit of work on Faith in the City. They clearly gained a great deal from the experience. From their discussions and writing, it was evident that many pupils had gained very good insights into aspects of Islamic customs and practices; their writing showed sensitivity, respect and a real interest in a culture and set of beliefs different to their own. Elsewhere in lessons, pupils are exploring in detail their own ideas about God, as part of the religious education programme of work. Many pupils can use metaphors effectively to describe themselves and are beginning to understand the idea of describing God using metaphor, some with real insight and all with thoughtfulness and sensitivity.

129. Teaching and learning are sound in Key Stage 1 and good now in Key Stage 2, reflecting marked improvement from the last inspection where teaching and learning were found to be unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. In the best lessons, there is high quality direct teaching with good knowledge of the subject and high expectations of behaviour and pupils' progress. Such lessons are well thought through, the pace is brisk and issues are handled with sensitivity, understanding and skill by the teacher, ensuring that pupils are making good progress in their learning. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, however on rare occasions, the attention of a few pupils wandered during overlong discussions, but this was recognised by the teachers at the time and appropriate changes made. The quality of teachers' planning has been improved considerably since the last inspection and most is now of good quality with clear learning objectives for lessons. It is closely tied in to the locally agreed syllabus, recent national guidance and makes effective use of a range of other source materials,

including those from another Local Education Authority. Pupils often work hard, show a real interest in activities and show good attitudes to religious education throughout the school. They clearly enjoy many aspects of the work, notably the numerous visits and visitors who significantly enrich the curriculum. They also enjoy those imaginative and varied practical tasks, directly related to the subject, which stimulate their interest and enhance their insight and understanding of themselves and others.

130. The co-ordinator is providing very strong leadership and management in religious education, actively supported by the headteacher and all the staff. High priority has been given by the school to making improvements in the subject. Clear action plans have been produced which have been very effectively acted upon. Extensive and well-matched staff development has been provided. Policies, schemes and guidance have all been improved and are of good quality. Every class now has a timetabled lesson in the subject each week. Monitoring and evaluation of planning, teaching and learning and pupils' work have all been significantly developed and are providing extremely valuable information to guide planning and practice. Resources have been completely reviewed in the light of developments in the curriculum and improvements in teaching and learning. New items are being added as they become available or needed; presently more Bible story books are needed for some levels and age groups and further computer software and video material is being sought to extend teaching and learning in several units of work.