

INSPECTION REPORT

BROCKWELL NURSERY and INFANT SCHOOL

Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112673

Headteacher: Mrs. Andrea Robinson

Lead inspector: Mr. George Crowther

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th June 2005

Inspection number: 266505

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	227
School address:	Purbeck Avenue Loundsley Green Chesterfield Derbyshire
Postcode:	S40 4NP
Telephone and fax number:	01246 232034
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Robert Pont
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Brockwell is an average-sized infant school for boys and girls who are 3-7 years old. It has 175 pupils organised in six classes, and 52 children who attend part-time in the nursery. The school is situated in a residential area of Chesterfield and most of the pupils come from the local area. It serves families from a range of social circumstances but, taken together, these are about the same as the national picture. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Overall, pupils' attainment when they start school is about the same as that expected for their age, though there is a wide range of ability within each age group that varies from year to year. Sixteen pupils, a well-below-average proportion, have been identified as having special educational needs, largely for moderate learning difficulties. Two pupils have statements to outline more severe special needs. The great majority of pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds, but there are a few from other backgrounds. No pupil is at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Brockwell gained a Schools Achievement Award for improved results in the 1999 Year 2 national tests. It has had Investors in People status, which recognises that it has good systems to support and train its staff. In 2003, it was awarded a Basic Skills Quality Mark and, most recently, its commitment against bullying was recognised by a Derbyshire anti-bullying award. At the time of the inspection, two classes were being taught by temporary teachers.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18814	George Crowther	Lead inspector	Mathematics, science, art and design, physical education, religious education
9391	Norma Ball	Lay inspector	
11746	Robin Coulthard	Team inspector	English, geography, history, music
27714	Sheila Wilding	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, information and communication technology, design and technology, special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Brockwell is a very effective school. The pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning because lessons include a wide range of interesting activities and the teaching is very good. Parents greatly appreciate the school's very friendly, approachable style. Relationships at all levels are excellent. These great strengths support the pupils' very good achievement emphatically. The headteacher's very good leadership is focused on ensuring that each child does as well as possible, and this is reflected in the work of the staff. Very good management considers carefully how the school can improve still further and takes purposeful action. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths are

- In the nursery, the children get an excellent start to school
- Very good teaching ensures that, by the end of Year 2, standards in English and mathematics are much better than in similar schools
- The headteacher's high expectations lead the drive for further improvement
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and they behave very well because the school values and promotes their personal development
- Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning
- The curriculum is rich, interesting and very well planned
- The school's excellent partnership with parents supports pupils' learning very effectively

Since the school was inspected in 1998, improvement has been very good. The pupils' results in national tests have been sustained at a high level, largely above and often well above the national average. The school has dealt very effectively with the points for development from the previous inspection. In particular, planning for pupils' learning is now very good, information about how well pupils are doing is used effectively to set targets for future learning, and the staff who co-ordinate work in subjects are much more involved in identifying and tackling areas for development.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	A	A	A	A
Writing	A	B	A	A
Mathematics	B	C	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

The table shows that, in 2004, results in national tests were well above average, and much better than those gained by similar schools. Early indications of the 2005 results suggest they will be not quite as high in reading and writing, but similar in mathematics.

Pupils' achievement is very good. When children join the nursery, overall attainment is usually about the same as expected for their ages. In the nursery, very well planned and exciting activities, and excellent teaching, enable the children to make rapid progress. Work in the reception classes builds upon this well. Almost all the children in the current reception classes are on track to reach, and a good number should exceed, the goals expected nationally by the time they join Year 1. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils achieve very well, owing to very effective teaching and a very well planned curriculum. Teachers make the learning interesting and challenging and the pupils are keen to do well. By the end of Year 2,

standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average, and standards in science are above average. Standards in art are much better than usually seen. Pupils of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs, and from all backgrounds achieve equally well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are fostered very well. As a result, they are very keen to learn and they work hard in most lessons. The pupils are very well behaved, both in lessons and around the school. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent and contribute to the very positive environment for learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed very well because they have very good opportunities to explore and share their thoughts and feelings. There is a strong emphasis on respecting others and learning about right and wrong. Attendance is good and punctuality very good because both parents and pupils value very highly what the school has to offer.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good.

The quality of teaching is very good. Learning for children in the nursery is outstanding, with lots of interesting experiences that build their skills rapidly. Teaching supports and extends the children's learning very skillfully. Good teaching in the reception classes ensures the children make good progress. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is very good overall. Meticulous planning results in lessons that have a very strong focus on what the pupils need to learn. Lively whole-class sessions and a good range of teaching methods, with an emphasis on practical activities, lead to successful learning. Teachers use a very good range of resources to encourage and support the pupils' learning. Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to pupils' progress. Teachers want the pupils to do well, and so they set challenging tasks to help pupils learn quickly. The pupils respond very positively in lessons, working hard and with enthusiasm.

The curriculum is very well planned and provides a very good range of work in most subjects for pupils of all abilities. It is enriched by the excellent range and quality of activities outside lessons. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and checking on their progress are very good and have improved significantly since the last inspection. Teachers use this information very well to plan appropriately challenging work. The school provides very good care and support for its pupils and has created a highly constructive partnership with its parents. Links with the community and other schools are very good. The accommodation and resources for learning are very good, and used very well to support pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher's leadership is very good because she strives to provide the best possible education for all the pupils. She transmits her values very successfully to the staff, and so they are firmly focused on maximising the children's learning. She has a very clear view of what the school needs to do to sustain the many high-quality aspects of its work, and she leads the staff very well in taking opportunities to improve even further. The rest of the staff support the headteacher very well by carrying out effectively the leadership and management roles they have been given. Governors fulfil their role very effectively. They have a very good grasp of what the school does well, and a keen interest in how it can improve still further. They provide a good balance of support and challenge. Very good management ensures that any potential weaknesses in the school's work are identified quickly and dealt with. All this has a very positive effect on pupils' achievement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school and feel that their children are doing very well. Many have chosen the school because of its good reputation. Parents support the school very enthusiastically. Pupils love the school, thoroughly enjoy being here, find lessons interesting and fun, and know they are expected to work hard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The inspection team found no significant weaknesses in the school's work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is very good. In the nursery, the combination of a very well planned and exciting curriculum, and excellent teaching, enables the children to make rapid progress in developing their skills in all areas of their learning. Work in the reception classes builds upon this well. Almost all the children in the current reception classes are on track to reach the expected standards by the time they join Year 1, and a good number should exceed them. Pupils make very good progress in Years 1 and 2, owing to a very well planned curriculum and very good teaching. By Year 2, they achieve very well, particularly in English and mathematics. In these subjects, and in art and design, standards in the current Year 2 are well above those expected for pupils' ages. Standards in science are slightly lower because the curriculum is not quite as strong. Pupils from all backgrounds and of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs, achieve just as well as others.

Main strengths

- Children get a flying start to school in the nursery
- Pupils achieve very well in English and mathematics because the quality of teaching in these subjects is very good
- Pupils reach high standards in art because skills are taught very methodically
- Pupils who have special educational needs achieve very well because work is well matched to their needs and they receive very good support from the staff
- Pupils' achievement and the standards they reach have improved since the last inspection

Commentary

National test results and other performance data

1. Results of the 2004 Year 2 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average and much better than those gained by pupils in *similar schools*.^{*} In all three tests, almost all the pupils reached the expected standard, and in reading and mathematics about half exceeded it. The school has sustained and improved upon the good results gained at the time of the last inspection.

^{*} *'Similar schools' are those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.9 (17.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.9 (15.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.2 (16.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The school checks very carefully on the progress pupils make by assessing their attainment at various points in the year to find out what gains they have made in their knowledge, skills and understanding compared with the measures set out in the National Curriculum. These records show that most children make better progress than expected, and teachers, urged by the headteacher, have high expectations that pupils will exceed gains that would be usual. The very good quality of teaching seen in many lessons, and the quality of pupils' work in their books, supports the school's view that pupils make very good progress during their time at the school, particularly in English and mathematics.

3. Children join the nursery with attainment that is average overall. The Year 2 national test results, the school's own records of pupils' progress, and the standard of work seen in pupils' books, represent very good achievement in English and mathematics. Very effective teaching in these subjects means that pupils make very good progress, building their knowledge, skills and understanding very well. Achievement is good in science, but there are some relative weaknesses in pupils' experimental skills and in the recording of work, particularly in Year 2. In 2004, teachers' assessments of Year 2 pupils' attainment in science showed that almost all pupils gained the expected Level 2, and just less than a half reached the higher Level 3. Year 2 pupils' current work, however, includes few tasks that develop their skills in experimenting and investigation and, in this aspect of science, standards are not as high as the teachers' assessments suggest. In art, the richness of the curriculum and high-quality teaching enable many pupils to reach high standards. The school's very positive approach to pupils' learning, with high expectations of what they can achieve, plays a significant part in giving each child the confidence and desire to be successful.

Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes)

4. The children make exceptional progress in the nursery because the vibrancy of the curriculum and the high-quality of the teaching give them the means, motivation and opportunity to do really well. The last inspection pointed to weaknesses in the work of the nursery, but these have been overcome completely so that the children get the best possible start to their time at school. The staff use exciting, first-hand experiences to fire the children's enthusiasm for learning and they are very skilful at extending that learning through discussion, questioning and further tasks. Evidence about progress in the reception classes is conflicting. Judging from the standards the children reach by the time they join Year 1, achievement is good. During the inspection, however, there were weakness in the quality of teaching and learning in some of the lessons seen, with teachers planning too many activities, some of which lacked purpose, and pupils not always fully engaged in their learning. On balance, the inspection team judges that teaching and learning are normally better than seen during the inspection. It is clear that the children are keen and confident learners and very well prepared to join Year 1.

Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2

5. Pupils achieve very well in all aspects of English because lessons build their skills very effectively and teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can accomplish. The curriculum is very well planned and ensures that all aspects of the subject – speaking, listening, reading and writing – are taught in harmony, each contributing to the other. In mathematics, pupils achieve very well because the teaching is challenging and lively, and so pupils enjoy their lessons. In both these subjects, standards in the current Year 2 are much better than expected for pupils' ages. In most other subjects, pupils' achievement was at least good in the lessons seen because the curriculum is planned very thoroughly and teachers have good skills and subject expertise. In art, although no lessons were seen, the quality of pupils' work on display shows that they reach standards that are much higher than normally seen. In ICT, achievement is satisfactory, because teachers are still learning to make the best use of the school's improving resources.

Pupils who have special educational needs

6. The school is successful in ensuring that pupils who have special educational needs can take full advantage of the very good teaching. These pupils' needs are identified early and special provision is put in place for them. They do equally well in lessons as other pupils, largely because teachers involve them fully in whole-class sessions and set appropriate work for them when they are working independently. Teaching assistants have very good skills in working with pupils who have special educational needs, either when supporting individuals or working with a small group. They provide just the right balance of support and

challenge that helps the pupils do as well as they can. These pupils often reach standards higher than might be expected, bearing in mind their individual needs.

7. At the previous inspection, pupils' achievement was good overall. Pupils' achievement by Year 2 is now very good, which is a marked improvement since the last inspection. Despite its successes, the school is always looking for ways to improve pupils' achievement still further, and this is one of the reasons why it is such a good school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is good and pupils arrive at school on time. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good, which makes them very keen to learn and supports their achievement very well.

Main strengths

- Pupils behave very well in lessons and this helps them to achieve very well
- Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent and contribute to the very positive environment for learning
- The staff encourage pupils to do well, which develops pupils' confidence and enjoyment of school
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and they have very good opportunities to explore and share their thoughts and feelings
- Good levels of attendance have been maintained since the last inspection

Commentary

8. The pupils enjoy coming to school. Parents are very appreciative of this and are also pleased that their children are encouraged to become independent, confident and caring young people. All pupils show an excellent desire to learn and do well. In almost all lessons and around the school they behave very well. They are friendly and caring towards each other. They listen carefully to their teacher and to each other showing real enjoyment in what they do, both in lessons and at playtime. They work well in small groups and also like class discussions where they share their ideas in a very sensible and thoughtful way. For example, in a Year 1 circle time (when pupils gather in a circle to talk about their thoughts and feelings), pupils discussed their ideas thoughtfully for making playtimes even happier and more enjoyable for everyone. Behaviour is very good because pupils respect the behaviour code and meet the high expectations that are set. All adults have a fair and consistent approach to managing behaviour and pupils recognise and value this. They know and understand the golden rules and greatly enjoy the praise and rewards they receive for their good work and behaviour.
9. Pupils feel confident they can share problems with adults, and relationships at every level are excellent. Pupils carry out a number of responsibilities in class and around the school with pride and efficiency. They feel they have a part to play in making their school a happy and well ordered place and this helps develop mature and very responsible attitudes. They are very proud of the Badger Club and the contribution to the school made by its elected members. Among the recent innovations of the Badger Club have been the friendship bench in the playground and litter bins to make the school a tidier place. The very good attitudes shown by pupils towards all their work and activities and their very good behaviour have continued since the last inspection and contribute to the very positive learning environment in the school.
10. Attendance is above the national median and there is very little unauthorised absence. A few pupils do miss some schooling through the year because of genuine problems of ill health but, overall, the majority have good attendance records. Sensible steps are taken to monitor attendance and there is an effective system of early telephone calls home to check on pupils who are not in school but for whom no message has been received.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

11. Pupils understand that each one of them is special and that what they do affects other people. They enjoy raising money for charities, recognising that they can help others less fortunate than themselves. From their class studies and from visitors they gain a good understanding of their own culture and history. For example, some pupils have been comparing the life of school children in Victorian times to their own lives. In religious education they learn much about other faiths and what other people believe. Pupils show curiosity, sympathy and care to one another and to living things. Many opportunities are provided in the school day, as well as in assemblies, for pupils to think about their feelings and relationships. Moments of great intensity of feeling and excitement were seen during the inspection, such as the huge delight shown by nursery children in seeing the development of their caterpillars which they had been studying as part of their 'minibeast' project. Pupils understand that people come from different backgrounds, cultures and faiths and they show respect for others, especially within their own school community. All aspects of their personal development are very good and this area has improved since the last inspection.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good education for its pupils, many aspects of which have been strengthened since the last inspection. The very good quality of the teaching ensures that most lessons are interesting, challenging and help the pupils to learn quickly. A very good curriculum, planned much more thoroughly than at the last inspection, provides good learning opportunities for pupils of all abilities. A rich variety of activities ensures the pupils make very good progress in developing a wide range of skills. Teachers assess pupils' attainment and check on their progress very carefully, so that work can be targeted accurately to help pupils take the next step in their learning. The school cares for its pupils very well. The school and its parents have an outstanding partnership, and there are very good links with other schools and the local community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall, and particularly strong in the nursery and for English and mathematics. As a result, pupils are interested in their learning, work hard in most lessons and make very good progress. The proportion of very good and excellent teaching has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths

- High quality teaching for children in the nursery ensures they make a very confident start to school and learn quickly
- Teachers plan meticulously and so lessons are well organised and have a strong focus on what the pupils will learn
- Teachers make lessons interesting and learning exciting, so pupils are keen to do well
- Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning
- Pupils learn quickly in most lessons because teachers employ a good balance of teaching methods and make very good use of a range of resources to support learning
- Excellent relationships help teachers to motivate their pupils and to manage learning and behaviour very effectively
- Teachers use their assessments of pupils' attainment very well to identify and target the next steps in learning

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
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4	10	9	4	1	0	0
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The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

12. Teaching for children in the nursery is excellent. The children learn very successfully owing to a number of outstanding strengths. The nursery staff establish excellent relationships with children and their parents, which make everyone feel at home, and ensure the children are confident in their learning. As a result, the children arrive eager to learn and are very receptive to activities provided by the staff. Expectations are very high. Learning in the nursery is rich and varied, so the children's interest is captured and sustained. For example, during the inspection the children were learning about 'minibeasts'. They were fascinated by live snails, watching the way they move, touching their slime, and learning about how they live. Drawing on this first-hand, stimulating experience, the staff extended the children's learning to looking at books about snails, drawing snails, moving like snails and making models of snails. The quality of the initial experience, along with the imaginative activities planned to complement it, were the keys to the children's excellent learning. Having planned and created fertile conditions for learning, the staff are exceptionally skilled at working with individuals and small groups to support and extend that learning. They question the children skillfully, encourage them to have a go at the various activities, and give lots of praise when the children make an effort. This combination of excellent relationships, stimulating activities and very purposeful teaching enables the children to make an exceptionally good start at school.
13. Throughout the school, teachers plan lessons very purposefully to identify exactly what the pupils will learn. As a result, there is a very strong emphasis on sharing the learning objectives with the pupils, which keeps them focused on the task in hand. Clear and detailed plans also give teachers the confidence to teach at a good pace, and in an interesting and methodical way. For example, a very good Year 1 mathematics lesson began by the teacher explaining that the children were going to learn how to tally information and draw a graph. The planning set out a series of activities leading to this objective, and the teacher maintained a keen pace as she demonstrated tallying by asking the children to pick shapes from a bag. When she was sure the children understood, they carried out independent tasks to consolidate the learning. A very clear sequence of teaching, at a good pace, ensured that the pupils were successful. Similarly, in a very good Year 2 geography lesson, exceptionally good planning kept the pupils' eye on the ball as they explored the differences between Chesterfield and Tideswell. The teacher started by making the learning objective clear, began the work with a searching question and answer session, and then provided very good resources to enable the pupils to carry out their own research. The very good quality of teachers' lesson planning is linked effectively to the school's very good curriculum plans, which ensure that work builds in difficulty as the pupils move through the school.
14. Teachers always try to make lessons interesting and enjoyable because they know this will motivate the pupils and help them to learn quickly. They find lots of ways to capture the pupils' attention and involve them practically in their learning. For example, during the first part of most mathematics lessons, pupils use number fans, white boards and other resources to involve them in calculating and showing their answers. This holds the pupils' attention and ensures they are fully involved in the learning. In a very good Year 1 English lesson, the teacher enlivened learning about sounds by asking pupils to hold various letters, line up, and then make words and sounds with the letters. Involving the pupils in this way motivates everyone because it makes the learning special. Year 1 pupils were fully involved in a discussion about how to solve problems in the playground. In this case, it was the subject matter of the lesson that was cleverly chosen to interest and involve the pupils and, as a result, they suggested a wide range of helpful ideas. These lessons are typical of many seen, in which engaging teaching enthused the pupils and helped them to learn very well.
15. The team of teaching assistants provides high-quality support for pupils' learning, particularly for the less able and those who have special educational needs. When the teacher is leading the lesson, teaching assistants are very adept at providing quiet encouragement for pupils who are finding it difficult to concentrate, or whispered explanation for those who need a little more help. Teaching assistants work very well with small groups of pupils, such as when reception children threw bean bags and measured the length of their throw. Excellent relationships with pupils, who they know well, ensure that teaching assistants get the best from their groups. They provide a good balance of support and challenge, making sure the pupils complete the work they have been set. The very

good working partnerships forged between teachers and assistants ensure that the organisation of lessons runs smoothly.

16. The pupils' involvement in lessons, and hence their motivation to learn, is much enhanced by the very good range of methods, strategies and resources teachers use in their teaching. Most lessons start with a whole-class session, in which teachers are very skilled at quick-fire questioning, with activities that really get the pupils thinking. For example, a very good Year 2 mathematics lesson began with pupils counting to 100 in 10s and back again, and then answering questions about counting on in 10s from various numbers. The teacher targeted her questions well to assess the pupils' understanding and concluded that almost all had grasped the skill. Small group and individual activities are almost always interesting, matched well to pupils' needs, and well supported by staff. For example, Year 2 pupils learnt about non-fiction books, and the tasks set for groups of pupils of varying ability were just right to help them learn more, without being too difficult. The less able received very good support from a teaching assistant. Varied approaches to learning ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to benefit from the very good quality of the teaching, whether they learn best in a whole-class situation or need individual support.
17. All the staff have built excellent relationships with their pupils, which support learning very effectively. They show their interest, concern and care in the way in which they treat the pupils, listening to their ideas, boosting their self-esteem, and sharing in their successes. This creates an atmosphere of mutual respect in which pupils are willing and enthusiastic learners. It enables teachers to manage and organise pupils' learning very effectively. Strategies to ensure that pupils pay attention, get on with their work and, therefore, make as much progress as possible are very effective. As a result, there is a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere in most lessons.
18. The way in which teachers assess pupils' attainment and check on their progress has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. Teachers assess pupils' knowledge and skills at regular intervals, in all subjects, against the requirements of the National Curriculum. This allows the school to track pupils' progress and to identify those who are doing better than expected and those who need extra support. The school also sets individual learning targets for pupils, in English and mathematics, each term, which are shared with parents. This system is being refined so that the targets are more easily acted upon by parents. For the most part, the school's arrangements for assessment ensure that work in lessons is well matched to help pupils take the next step in their learning. On occasion, however, work was not challenging enough for the most able pupils. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is generally good. It is thorough and encouraging but rarely identifies clearly what pupils need to do next to improve their work.

The curriculum

The school provides a very good curriculum with an excellent range of opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation and resources are very good.

Main strengths

- The curriculum is very well organised, and so it provides very good guidance for teachers when they are planning lessons
- Very good opportunities are provided for developing literacy and using art in other subjects
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs is very good
- Events, visits and visitors provide excellent stimuli for learning

Commentary

19. The school provides a very full curriculum that meets all statutory requirements. Planning is now very thorough and the weakness raised at the last inspection has been resolved. Planning in all subjects has been extensively developed since then. All schemes of work have been revised and provide in detail for pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs. Substantial detail provides very good guidance for teachers, enabling very good continuity to be maintained, for example when a long-term supply teacher is needed. All planning is closely linked to National Curriculum requirements. Curriculum planning supports effectively the way in which pupils' knowledge, skills and

understanding are built systematically from year to year, and is now a strength of the school's work.

20. Subjects such as geography, history and religious education, benefit from a topic-based approach. High standards of planning ensure that, for the most part, each subject covered by a topic is tackled in sufficient depth. In science, however, in some classes, combining the subject with others has led to too little emphasis on developing the pupils' skills in experiment and investigation. Constructive links with the junior school ensure that curriculum priorities are shared to aid pupils' transition to Year 3. Very good opportunities for the use of literacy and art are identified in all subjects, and provision for the development of ICT in other subjects is satisfactory.
21. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) has undergone recent review and development as a priority in the school improvement plan. The new scheme of work is good and contains the best of previous practice combined with up-to-date published recommendations and developments. The effectiveness of the new scheme is shortly to be evaluated. Messages from PSHE are reinforced in circle time, and themes are regularly made the basis of assemblies. Very good examples of the treatment of moral and social themes occurred during the inspection, such as when the book *Badger's Parting Gifts* was used effectively to prompt discussion about the difficult issue of bereavement. The new curriculum, along with the day-to-day attention the staff give to PSHE issues, make the overall provision very good.
22. The school provides very well for pupils who have special educational needs and they make very good progress. A very good assessment system ensures pupils with special educational needs are identified early. These pupils do very well because the school enables them to benefit fully from the very good quality teaching by matching work closely to their needs and providing very good support. The staff work hard to build these pupils' confidence and concentration, and they ensure that each success is praised. A skilled team of teaching assistants provides much of the extra support for these pupils. They have formed excellent relationships with the children, which enable them to give high-quality, purposeful support. Pupils have carefully-written individual educational plans with targets that are reviewed regularly by all adults supporting them. Children and parents are also encouraged to review progress at regular meetings so that everyone knows what the next steps in learning are.
23. The range of enrichment activities experienced by the children is outstanding. This reflects the headteacher's philosophy that children are most stimulated to learn by first-hand experiences. The school grounds, the immediate locality and the town of Chesterfield provide a wealth of opportunities for learning. All groups go on inspiring educational visits, for example to a butterfly farm, a Victorian classroom and a wildlife centre. Numerous whole-school events take place, such as concerts, book fairs and charity fund-raising events. A baby, an old person and pets visit school and are used as the basis for topic work. Expert coaching is provided in tennis and football. An annual highlight is the visit by a fire engine.
24. The school has a very good level of well-qualified teachers. Teaching assistants are a particularly effective resource. They are very well managed. They support individual pupils with special educational needs and they give expertly-targeted help to other individuals and groups. Their very good initiative in the classroom, taking every chance to support and extend pupils' learning, is an important factor in the effectiveness of teaching. Accommodation is very good. The school is set in a very attractive parkland area. Outdoor spaces are excellent for playing and learning. The hall is spacious and versatile. The nursery is attractive, stimulating and provides an excellent environment for learning. The premises are exceptionally well cared for. Resources are very good, plentiful and of good

quality. Photographs of events and visits are used very effectively as resources in subsequent work.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are very well cared for in a safe and happy community. They are given very good advice and guidance and feel very confident in the staff who care for them. Pupils' views are sought and listened to very sympathetically.

Main strengths

- All staff know the pupils very well and regard their care and welfare as a very high priority
- Child protection and first aid matters are very well managed
- The Badger Club is a very valuable forum for pupils to share their ideas about school issues
- Pupils feel very well cared for and able to share any anxieties or concerns they may have

Commentary

25. The way in which pupils are supervised and looked after with great care, throughout the school day, reflects the high priority the school gives to ensuring that children thrive and are eager to learn. Pupils recognise this and show confidence in the staff who look after them and a willingness to share their worries and concerns because they feel secure and know that staff will listen and try to help. All the staff have had recent training in procedures for child protection and first aid, so they know what to do and provide very good support when needed. Pupils who are unwell during the school day or have minor accidents at playtime are very well cared for. Pupils who have special educational needs are given a high level of care, particularly those who have emotional difficulties that affect their learning. Outside agencies are well used to extend the care provided by the school, for example support offered by the educational psychologist and educational welfare officer. Policies relating to health and safety are implemented well and regular inspections of the school premises and equipment are carried out.
26. Excellent arrangements are made for parents and their children to find out about the school when they join the nursery, including optional home visits by staff. A number of visits take place before children start in the nursery so that they and their parents are confident and relaxed about the start of their school life. Similar, thorough and sensitive arrangements are made for the pupils who join the school at a later stage. There are friendly links with the adjacent junior school that are used very well when pupils move to the next stage of their education. Regular visits to the junior school and a number of joint events organised by the two schools and the parents' association ensure that pupils are known as individuals and help the transfer process to be less stressful. Parents were very appreciative of the careful arrangements made for the induction of their children.
27. A very good range of information is collected about pupils' academic progress and is used very effectively to guide and promote their very good achievement. Pupils feel that their work is marked well and from their marks, teachers' comments and the targets set for them they feel they know just how well they are doing. Monitoring of the personal development of pupils, although less formalised and systematically recorded, is nevertheless very effective. The headteacher, teaching staff and other adults know the pupils in their care very well and use this knowledge very effectively to help pupils and guide their personal development carefully. Pupils know that they are treated with respect and kindness. They feel valued as individuals. The monitoring of the academic and personal development of pupils has improved significantly since the last inspection.

28. Pupils' views and ideas are greatly valued and used well by the school. The Badger Club has elected representatives from all areas of the school and is an important forum for pupils to express their views and share ideas about developments in the school. Badger Club members take their role very seriously and show a very mature approach to their task and strong recognition of the importance of a united team to support developments in the school. Through circle time and class discussion, pupils are also consulted and share their ideas about projects and new initiatives as well as considering issues that arise in school from time to time. Respecting pupils' contributions to school life is a very positive feature of the school and adds greatly to the confidence and personal development of pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

An excellent partnership has been forged with parents. Links with local schools and the local community are very good.

Main strengths

- Parents value greatly the friendly and open approach of the school
- Information for parents is helpful, comprehensive and of very good quality
- Very good links with the community are well used by the school to extend classroom studies
- Links with other schools are good and still developing well

Commentary

29. Parents are extremely positive about all aspects of the school and the quality of education and care it provides. They are very confident they can discuss any problems or concerns easily and frankly and they very much appreciate the way they are kept informed about their children. The headteacher and teaching staff are readily available to speak to parents at the beginning and end of the school day. Many parents mentioned how pleased they are that the headteacher meets and greets families each morning because this gives them the confidence to have a quick word with her, if needed. Parents believe that their children are well taught and encouraged to work hard and achieve very well. Parents also feel very strongly that their children are treated fairly and have access to a good range of activities and interests.
30. Parents are provided with an excellent range of information through the prospectus, frequent friendly newsletters, and regular meetings with staff. A particularly strong feature is the support given to parents in helping them to know more about the work their children are doing and providing them with information about the curriculum and new curricular developments. Reports at the end of the summer term are well set out, informative and give parents a secure picture of how well their child has achieved during the year. Parents are aware of the learning targets set for their children, but are also given specific pointers to ways they can help their child at home.
31. Parents provide very good support in many areas of the school, on a regular basis, such as helping with reading or with school trips, and this is greatly valued. The parents' association is both a social and fundraising group providing regular practical contributions to the school. Parents are consulted very well through questionnaire surveys and their views are regarded as significantly important. These surveys are well structured and the results are reported and used efficiently in monitoring and planning future developments.
32. Some links between the school and the community are well established but newer initiatives are developing on a regular basis. The school premises are available for some lettings and local residents are invited to join the school community to enjoy fairs and sports' events. The local housing area and shops are a well used resource for pupils to learn about different types of homes, shopping and the price of different kinds of food. Pupils like to meet local residents to find out about their experiences. This adds greatly to their maturity

and sense of awareness of the world around them. There are also some very helpful links with local business that provide support to the school, for example in helping with publicity for events or providing prizes for raffles and fund raising ventures. The fire service and local community police officer are also welcome visitors to the school and add to the learning experience of pupils.

33. There are strong partnerships with the local playgroup and with the adjacent junior school to which most pupils transfer at the end of Year 2. These links are very well used to help ensure a smooth transfer of pupils in and out of the school. Sports and cultural experiences are shared with pupils in other local schools and the partnerships are well planned and used to great effect to support the learning of pupils. Regular and much-valued professional in-service ventures are organised and hosted by the school and this area is continuing to expand. The school provides regular placements for teachers in training and also for secondary school pupils on work experience projects thereby making a very good contribution to their development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher's very purposeful leadership promotes high expectations from staff and pupils. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. Other key staff also play a strong role in helping the school to continue to improve. Governance of the school is very good. The quality of leadership and management has improved significantly since the last inspection.

Main strengths

- The school evaluates its performance critically because it is always looking for ways to improve pupils' achievement still further
- The headteacher wants the best for, and expects the best from, both staff and pupils
- The governors fulfill their role very effectively, providing a good balance of support and challenge
- Subject co-ordinators lead and manage their subjects well

Commentary

34. The headteacher values highly the academic progress and personal development of each child. As a result, she has created a climate of high expectation and achievement within the school, so that everyone is aiming to provide the best possible education for the pupils. Her leadership has motivated the staff to work as a team to achieve this goal. For example, she has actively supported the staff to understand and use pupil learning targets. These give teachers, parents and pupils a clear understanding of what each pupil needs to do to take the next step in their learning. Staff, parents and governors are all highly confident in the leadership of the headteacher because she has a very clear view of what needs to be done to make the school even better than it is. A range of appropriate strategies to raise standards further have been put in place and are robustly monitored to measure their effect. One example of a successful initiative can be seen in the improved mathematics results at the end of Year 2 national tests.
35. Subject co-ordinators have a good understanding of their subject, owing to good opportunities to monitor pupils' work and the quality of learning in lessons. They produce action plans to support them in improving their subject areas further. Very good professional development opportunities support the staff well in developing their expertise and skills. A very good system of performance management has been extended to include teaching assistants. They have successfully achieved a team target of developing positive play to support pupils' learning. The school improvement plan drives the school's priorities. Staff

and governors check on the impact of the actions taken but, as the success criteria are not always specific enough, progress in some areas is difficult to measure.

36. The governing body is very supportive and actively involved in the school. It is aware of its statutory responsibilities and ensures that requirements are met in full. The governors have a very good understanding of what the school does well and a keen interest in how it can improve still further. The headteacher keeps the governing body fully informed about the work of the school through purposeful meetings and detailed reports. The governors are not afraid to challenge the school to give an account of its work, and they compare its performance with other schools carefully.
37. The arrangements for the financial management of the school are very good. The school has ensured that finance staff are appropriately trained to carry out routines effectively. Governors and senior staff ensure that spending decisions relate to raising standards so that all pupils benefit.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	538,734
Total expenditure	528,596
Expenditure per pupil	2629

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	12,826
Balance carried forward to the next	22,964

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

38. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) is very good overall and excellent in the nursery. When the children join the nursery, their skills and knowledge are about the same as those expected for their age, but there is a wide range of ability that varies from year to year. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good for all areas of learning except physical development where it is good. The children make outstanding progress during their time in the nursery because the teaching is excellent. Adults work enthusiastically as a team to guide, lead and extend the children's learning very effectively. Teaching in the reception classes builds upon this well. Most children are on track to reach, and a good number should exceed the goals expected nationally by the time they join Year 1. Teaching in the reception classes is good, but some weaknesses in the organisation of children's learning were observed during the inspection. These are not reflected in the standards of work seen in the reception classes and the children make good progress. By the time they join Year 1, children's achievement since joining the school is very good.
39. The curriculum is very well planned to make very effective links across the different areas of learning. It provides lively, purposeful activities that capture and hold the children's interest. Children who have special educational needs are identified early and are very well supported through careful planning and additional teaching so that they make very good progress. Assessment is very thorough and children's progress is checked upon very carefully. The school has excellent arrangements for supporting children when they start in the nursery. Parents are encouraged to be fully involved in their children's learning, which has a significant impact on the children's confidence in school and their progress. The staff make very good use of the stimulating range of resources. Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is well led and managed but too few opportunities are taken to ensure that the outstanding practice in the nursery is shared across all the classes. Since the last inspection, when the report identified some weaknesses in the work of the nursery, there has been very good improvement overall.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is very good.

Main strengths

- The children work very independently for their age because the teaching gives them the confidence to do so
- Children usually behave very well, owing to clear routines and expectations
- Parents are encouraged effectively to support their children's learning
- Relationships between staff and children are excellent

Commentary

40. Most parents come into the nursery at the beginning of each session to support their children when they register their attendance and to plan their first activity. This helps the children to settle happily and confidently. It also encourages the children to become independent and to take some responsibility for their own learning. In the nursery, children play alongside each other and co-operatively because secure routines and clear expectations have been established. The staff use the sensory corner in the nursery very effectively to develop good skills in looking, listening, feeling and sitting. The children enjoy their time spent in this stimulating area. In both the nursery and the reception classes, it is clear what the children are learning and need to achieve. In the reception classes, the

children benefit from the very good start they had in the nursery. Most children are eager to learn. They listen well, follow instructions and change for physical education independently. Children make very good progress in their personal and social skills which supports their achievement in all other areas of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is very good.

Main strengths

- Very good opportunities are created to develop children's speaking and listening skills
- Children are encouraged very effectively to write independently
- Children enjoy the wide range of opportunities to share story and information books

Commentary

41. In the nursery, the staff provide stimulating experiences and then use their questioning skills very skillfully to develop the children's vocabulary. For example, the children enjoyed describing the live snails they were observing and talked about them using a range of descriptive vocabulary. Supported by adults, they used information books very well to further their knowledge. Children listen very well and are expected to take turns when speaking. The staff constantly celebrate children's own attempts at writing through displaying labels, stories and books the children have written. Most children in the nursery recognise their own names and a number are beginning to attempt to write them. By the end of the reception year, many children are beginning to read simple texts independently. In the reception classes, children used holiday brochures enthusiastically to find out about different destinations before designing their own passports to use in their travel agent role-play area. The children are encouraged to write independently so that, by the beginning of Year 1, quite a few write their own sentences with common words correctly spelt. Children make very good progress with their writing because letter sounds are taught on a regular basis through a range of interesting activities. For example, in one of the reception classes, a group of children enjoyed packing a suitcase with items beginning with the letter 's', such as soap.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is very good.

Main strengths

- Well-chosen, interesting activities help children to develop a wide range of mathematical skills
- The use of practical tasks makes learning fun
- By the end of the reception year, children count confidently and record numbers accurately

Commentary

42. In the nursery, adults skillfully take frequent opportunities to encourage children to count and explore number during their play. Very effective questioning by the staff enabled children to count and recognise numbers to ten when they were enjoying fishing with nets for plastic spiders in the water tray. Children explore squares, rectangles, triangles and circles through printing, drawing, making shape characters and using the computer. In the reception classes, children's knowledge of shapes is reinforced and extended to finding out about three-dimensional shapes. In these classes, the children enjoyed estimating each other's length by using crayons as a measure. The teacher extended the children's language well by encouraging them to make comparisons of different sized objects. By the

time that they enter Year 1, children have explored telling the time, measuring and weighing and using pennies. A number of children add and subtract to twenty and count to fifty.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths

- Imaginatively planned experiences help children to learn a lot about the world around them
- Interesting practical activities encourage the children to explore and discover for themselves

Commentary

43. The teaching in the nursery for this area of learning is outstanding because of very good planning and the use of stimulating activities. A very effective blend of direct teaching and opportunities for children to explore and discover for themselves encourages very good learning. As a result, the children are totally engaged in their work and gain a very good knowledge and understanding of the world about them. For example, the children watched a snail race and then explored the features of a snail by using a digital microscope and information books. They reinforced their learning by making models and paintings of the snails. In the reception classes, good teaching enables the children to make comparisons between different parts of the world by exploring holiday destinations and the local area. During their time in the nursery and reception classes, the children are provided with an extensive range of opportunities to learn about the world. They cook frequently, grow plants, experience a variety of foods and celebrate different religious festivals. They make regular visit to places of interest such as the butterfly farm, and visitors make a very good contribution to extending the children's knowledge. Children use computers with growing confidence to support their learning across the curriculum.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of practical activities develops children's physical skills effectively
- The outside areas are used regularly, but there are too few opportunities for the children to develop the full range of physical skills

Commentary

44. Careful planning ensures the children have regular opportunities to use the outside areas. In the nursery, children use wheeled toys, large building bricks, chalk, water and sand play to learn to develop their co-ordination skills. The school has plans to develop the garden area further but, during the inspection, the children had too few chances to climb and clamber and extend their imaginative outdoor play. Children's fine co-ordination skills are developed well because the staff ensure that they are taught the necessary skills. In a reception class, children used scissors confidently and accurately to cut out the lengths of Jack's beanstalk. Tools and equipment are labeled and easily accessible for the children to use. In the nursery, children designed their own butterflies using glue, felt tips and a range of decorative materials. In the reception classes, children have experience of modeling with recycled materials and have designed their own sunglasses. All children benefit from regular physical education lessons.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is very good.

Main strengths

- Children's skills are developed very well through a wide range of musical and artistic activities
- Interesting and purposeful role-play areas develop the children's imaginative play very effectively

Commentary

45. Imaginative play is very well planned so that children act out their ideas in the role-play areas and use small toys to make up their own stories. In the nursery, the staff extend the children's play skillfully by asking questions and modeling possible events and actions. In the reception classes, the children enjoyed using the 'travel agents' and making up their own stories about being ship wrecked on a desert island. There is a very good range of resources for this area of learning and adults use them effectively to extend the children's skills. For example, the children use colour mixing, pastels, printing with potatoes, painting, modeling and collage to explore different artistic techniques. Children's work is celebrated through stimulating displays. Children enjoy singing and using musical instruments. In the nursery, adults supported the children in clapping games to develop a sense of rhythm.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is very good.

Main strengths

- In Year 2, standards in all aspects of English are well above those expected for pupils' ages
- Pupils show a keen interest in reading and have well developed preferences in what they choose to read
- Teaching provides a very good range of challenges to pupils of all abilities, with very effective support from teaching assistants to help pupils meet them
- Lessons contain very good opportunities for independent and teacher-led work

Commentary

46. Results in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 2 were well above average when compared with all schools, and similar schools. Results in reading were in the top five per cent nationally for the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3. Results in writing were better for girls than boys, though boys' results were above the national average. Standards in the current Year 2 are well above average in all aspects of English. Pupils of all levels of attainment achieve very well owing to a very effective curriculum and very good teaching. Teaching assistants provide help in the classroom that is carefully targeted to benefit individual pupils, and particularly those with special educational needs. Careful planning, and a focus on boys' attainment in lessons, have been effective in raising boys' standards in writing this year. Pupils join Year 1 with above average standards in English and they achieve very well in both years.
47. Pupils develop their speaking and listening skills very well. Very good opportunities in lessons and assemblies encourage pupils to speak and exchange ideas and information. In a Year 1 class, the pupils were invited individually to improvise sentences stimulated by pictures of events in the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'. Sentences were well formed, contained interesting vocabulary and were clearly communicated to classmates. In paired work in Year 2, pupils negotiated purposefully and independently when discussing photographs taken on a school visit to decide best how to use them when designing a leaflet. Assemblies provide very good opportunities for pupils to speak in public. During the inspection, in an assembly for the whole school, Year 2 pupils presented clearly and confidently information about Islam and the Qur'an.
48. The development of reading skills is a high priority. Pupils learn to value printed texts through teachers' enthusiastic presentations of big books to the whole class. In this way, the technicalities of reading are regularly reinforced. Teachers and teaching assistants coach individual pupils in reading very thoroughly, and parents readily play their part in furthering their children's confident progress. In Year 2, readers of all abilities read very well and achieve very well from their different starting points. They show a good understanding of sentences and punctuation, read with understanding, and reflect dramatic moments and dialogue clearly. They say what sort of books they like, distinguish between fiction and non-fiction, and use contents pages and glossaries confidently. In response to the stimulus of being read to in school by men, such as a firefighter and policeman, boys' reading has improved and is better than was reported in the 2004 tests. Pupils talk enthusiastically about what they read, have good recall of detail and show lively imaginations when predicting what may happen next. Very good book resources, which stimulate their interest, are a benefit to pupils' progress.

49. Challenging teaching and the school's very good understanding of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy result in very good achievement in writing. Because teachers know pupils' learning needs so well, they present developments in writing in a systematic and gradual way for every pupil. A careful mixture of guided and independent writing allows pupils to show their understanding and provides a clear indication of what needs further reinforcement. In Year 1, pupils compile dictionaries of words with similar letter patterns to develop their facility for spelling. They develop fluency by tackling a wide range of writing, retelling stories and writing imaginatively. They achieve precision in sentence structure and practise basic punctuation. They improve their vocabulary, for example by finding alternative words to 'said'. By the end of Year 1, pupils produce substantial work that in precision and presentation is well above that normally expected for this age. By the end of Year 2, pupils are well practised in skills such as compiling a visitors' guide to a traditional local village, incorporating such refinements as subheadings and selecting key words and phrases from a longer text. Other challenging tasks successfully tackled include devising dialogue and writing instructions, for example for brushing your teeth. Joined writing is introduced and practised in Year 2, but is not used routinely after that. Pupils are encouraged to, and do, take pride in their work, but the celebration of their achievement is reflected in limited displays of written work. Good opportunities exist for pupils to use ICT in the preparation and presentation of their work.
50. Teachers enable pupils to learn very well by planning thoroughly for pupils of all abilities. Topics are interesting and work is always challenging. Lesson objectives are appropriate and made clear to the class. These are supported by very good books and other resources. Relationships between all staff and the pupils are friendly and purposeful, creating a stimulating learning environment, but one where no pupil is too timid to contribute. Teachers ask searching questions, in different ways, so that pupils of all abilities are involved well in learning. Lessons contain a carefully-calculated mixture of teacher-guided and independent work. Marking is supportive and focuses clearly on the objective of each task. Pupils respond very well to teachers' high expectations and learn very effectively. They are keen to learn and work together in pairs and groups purposefully. They carry out sustained, independent work readily from an early stage.
51. Leadership is very good, showing an awareness of the needs of pupils, national requirements and current national teaching initiatives. Management is very thorough. Schemes of work are challenging. Documentation is detailed and provides very good guidance for teachers, including links between English and other subjects, which allows any supply teachers to grasp immediately what is expected of them. Day-to-day organisation is very good, as are the suitability and quality of resources. Good resources for ICT include programs carefully selected for their relevance to individual topics. The work of support staff is very well managed enabling them to play a very effective role, particularly in providing for individual pupils over the whole range of ability. The English curriculum is considerably enriched by visitors and visits and events such as an annual book week.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. The use and development of literacy through other subjects is very good. Teachers include in their planning many opportunities for discussion and writing. Pupils read objectives, instructions and key words as a matter of course. In history, in Year 2, a class had compiled a book on ancient bicycles following a visit to a museum, where they had inspected and photographed examples. A visit to Chesterfield Parish Church served as a stimulus to some accomplished descriptive writing in individually-written booklets.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils make very good progress because high-quality teaching encourages them to enjoy their work and ensures they learn a lot in lessons
- By the end of Year 2, standards are well above those expected for pupils' ages
- In lessons, both teachers and teaching assistants provide a very good level of support and challenge, which helps pupils of all abilities to achieve very well
- Whilst pupils cover a good range of work, they are given too few tasks that encourage them to use and apply their skills
- Very good management seeks out relative weaknesses in teaching and learning, and takes decisive action to raise standards

Commentary

53. Results in the Year 2 national tests, and the standard of work seen in the current Year 2, are both higher than at the last inspection. The 2004 national test results were well above average compared with all schools, and much better than those gained by similar schools. Almost all the pupils reached the expected standard and about half exceeded it. Although comparative data for 2005 are not yet available, results are at least as good as in 2004.
54. Work in the current Year 2 confirms the picture of well above average standards. Almost all of these pupils have a good grasp of calculations with numbers to 100, such as finding the change when spending amounts up to £1.00. They add and subtract accurately and are beginning simple multiplication and division. About half are confident with higher numbers and simple fractions. Almost all pupils have a good understanding of a wide range of work about shapes, measuring and handling data. Whilst the quantity and quality of work in these aspects of the subject are impressive, there are too few activities that encourage pupils to develop their skills in using and applying mathematics, which would provide additional challenge. In one good example of this type of work, a more able child found lots of calculations with the answer 100, including 3000 divided by 30 and 5×20 , which extended his use of number.
55. When the children start school, overall attainment is about the same as expected for their ages. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress and, by the end of Year 2, pupils' achievement is very good. Teachers ensure that pupils achieve very well in most lessons by providing well-matched tasks for pupils of differing abilities and by giving good support to the less able, including those who have special educational needs. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson, the pupils learnt how to tally information and draw a block graph by throwing a dice a number of times and recording the results. By varying the number of throws and the recording required, and providing more adult support for the less able pupils, the teacher ensured that all had the right level of challenge and were successful. Pupils' past work shows that tasks are usually matched well to ensure they can take the next step in their learning.
56. The quality of teaching is very good. Precise planning for lessons identifies very clearly what the pupils will learn, as well as the activities they will complete. A very strong focus on pupils' learning is clear in the way teachers share the learning objective at the beginning of the lesson, remind pupils during the activities, and return to the objective at the end of the lesson to check it has been achieved. Lessons have a productive structure, with a good balance of whole-class teaching and independent work. The whole-class sessions, including lots of mental mathematics activities, are lively, interesting and taught at a very good pace, and so they capture and hold the pupils' attention. For example, a very good Year 2 lesson began with counting in 10s to 100 and back again. Lots of questions about counting on and back in 10s, from various starting points, challenged the pupils and they were eager to work out the answers to the problems. Teachers provide lots of good resources to support these sessions, such as small white boards, number fans and 100

squares, which all help the pupils to calculate and to show their answers. This strategy also enables the teachers to assess how well the pupils are learning.

57. Teachers explain the main learning for the lesson very clearly and, through carefully targeted questions, they challenge pupils of all abilities and check understanding. Interesting, practical demonstrations get the pupils involved. For example, in Year 1, the teacher asked pupils to take shapes from a bag, and their choices were used to compile a block graph. The teacher also checked the pupils' knowledge of two-dimensional shapes, which was a clever way of using one activity to fulfill two purposes. Group activities are well organised. Teaching assistants are very skilled in working with groups of pupils, often the less able, making sure they get the most from the work. Although most tasks are well matched to help pupils take the next step in their learning, in a few cases, the more able pupils were not challenged enough. Throughout the school, the pupils are keen to learn and take part enthusiastically in activities. On occasion, however, pupils are not involved sufficiently in the final part of the lesson where teachers check on learning. Marking of pupils' work is thorough, but only the best examples indicate what pupils can do to improve.
58. Since the last inspection, planning of the curriculum and systems for assessing pupils' progress have improved considerably and are now very good. Teachers set pupils individual learning targets and the school is continuing to refine and develop this approach to focusing pupils' learning. The maths club provides extra challenges for Year 2 and more able Year 1 pupils. Leadership and management of the subject are very good, with a very clear understanding of what is done well and what needs to improve, based on analysis of pupils' work and the quality of teaching. For example, the school has identified the need for more activities that require pupils to explore patterns in numbers and shapes, particularly to challenge more able. In most lessons, ICT was used well to support and extend pupils' work. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards have risen steadily and the quality of teaching is better. Despite this success, a great strength of management is that it continually seeks ways of improving pupils' achievement even further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Pupils' use and development of mathematical skills in other subjects are good. For example, throughout pupils' science work, there are good examples of counting, measuring, recording in graphs and tables, and interpreting results. In other subjects, teachers also take opportunities for pupils to count and measure. Teachers make good use of incidental opportunities, such as when taking the register, to strengthen pupils' skills in counting and calculating.

SCIENCE

60. It is usual to report on overall provision in science because it is a 'core' subject of the National Curriculum. In this case, however, no science lessons were taught during the inspection, owing to the way in which the school chooses to organise the curriculum, and it is not possible to make a fair judgement about the quality of teaching and learning from other evidence alone. Pupils' past work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and staff have been used to make the judgements in this section.
61. Results in the Year 2 national assessments and the standard of work in the current Year 2 are about the same as at the last inspection. In 2004, teachers' assessments of Year 2 pupils' attainment showed that almost all pupils gained the expected Level 2, and just less than a half reached the higher Level 3. The results were well above the national average and much better than those gained by similar schools. Although comparative data for 2005 are not yet available, results are at least as good as 2004.
62. Pupils' work in the current Year 2 shows above average attainment, because there are very few pupils working at a level below that expected for their age. A sound range of work in all

the factual aspects of science shows that pupils have good knowledge in the subject. There are, however, few pieces of work that develop the pupils' skills in experimenting and investigation and, in this aspect of science, standards are not as high as the teachers' assessments suggest. For example, the pupils have investigated the question "Who can jump the furthest?" and found out how muffling ears with various materials affects hearing. This work shows they are starting to think about predicting outcomes and discussing ways in which experiments can be carried out in a fair way. They measure, and record their results in a simple table, but they draw no conclusions based on their scientific knowledge. There are too few opportunities for more able pupils to put forward their own ideas about how to find the answer to a question or to carry out experiments for themselves, with support. Discussion with a group of more able Year 2 pupils confirmed that they have only a tentative grasp of how to carry out a fair test and are not yet clear about the scientific process of posing a question, predicting the answer, carrying out an experiment and drawing conclusions. Despite this weakness, and taking into account the average attainment when pupils start school, achievement by Year 2 is good.

63. The curriculum is well planned. Since the last inspection, a new scheme of work has been put in place that provides good guidance for teachers in planning lessons and helps the pupils to make good progress across the school. However, part of the reason why pupils' science work does not show consistent attention to the skills of being a scientist is the way in which the curriculum is taught. Most subjects other than English and mathematics are taught through 'topics', which include a range of work. This provides good links between subjects and, for young children, the school believes it is sensible to organise learning through similar content rather than splitting it into subjects. As a result, however, the science work seen in most classes is rather fragmented and does not build science skills systematically enough. In contrast, science work in one of the Year 1 classes is organised separately, is far better in quantity and quality, has a strong emphasis on experiment and investigation, and shows that these pupils have made very good progress.
64. Stimulating visits to places of scientific interest, such as when Year 1 went to a wildlife centre, enrich the curriculum considerably. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed well by their recording in science. Good systems for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress are in place, but teachers are not always accurate enough in assessing the level pupils have reached and ensuring that future work is appropriately challenging. Leadership of the subject is good and provides considerable expertise to support the planning of work and teaching. Management is good and, through constant checking on the quality of teaching and pupils' work, has identified the aspects of learning that need to improve, particularly the need for an increased emphasis on experiment and investigation. Increasing the use of ICT within science has been a priority and this is beginning to bear fruit. Resources are very good, and the spacious classrooms and interesting grounds provide very good facilities and opportunities for science. Since the last inspection, satisfactory progress has been made in improving pupils' achievement in science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use the improving resources well to support pupils' learning
- Good leadership and management have ensured good improvement since the last inspection and helped the staff to be confident to teach ICT
- Short ICT lessons result in teaching and learning being rushed

Commentary

65. By the end of Year 2, standards are about the same as those expected for pupils' ages. In Year 1, pupils learn to word process by exploring the font, punctuation and space keys, and they change the colour of text. They learn how to write and send an e-mail, and use tools for drawing such as the diffuser and spray tools. In Year 2, this is built upon when pupils learn to use the spell checker, save and retrieve their own work and begin to understand how to use appropriate words to request a search on the internet. Year 1 pupils use programmable toys to learn how to give commands and follow instructions. With support, Year 2 pupils begin to learn how to program a series of commands into the computer to draw a square. The pupils cover a good range of work, often linked to tasks in other subjects.
66. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Good teaching of basic skills in the Foundation Stage gives pupils a good basis to make at least satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. Very good adult help ensures that pupils who find ICT skills more difficult are appropriately supported. In a Year 2 lesson observed, the skills of the more able pupils were developed well when they were given the challenge of following a series of instructions to find an unknown shape.
67. In the three lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good in two and satisfactory in the other. Teachers ensure that the pupils know what they are going to learn and show pupils the ICT skills required. Instructions and expectations are made clear to the pupils so that they concentrate and behave well. The pupils work well collaboratively with their partners on the computers. On occasion, the lesson was rushed with limited time for pupils to practise their skills. This was exacerbated when programs did not work as quickly as the teacher expected. At the end of lessons, there was too little time for the pupils to reflect on what they had learnt.
68. The school has a good, detailed scheme of work to support the teaching of ICT. This ensures coverage of all aspects of the ICT curriculum. Good systems are in place to assess pupils' attainment and to monitor their acquisition of skills. The school has suitable measures in place to protect the pupils when they are using the internet. Recent investment in ICT to provide a computer suite, interactive white boards (large, wall-mounted computer screens) and a part-time technician means that the school has built significantly on the level of facilities noted at the last inspection. There is a good range of resources. They are well used to develop pupils' learning because teachers and teaching assistants have received good support and training to enhance their own ICT skills and develop their confidence. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinators are given opportunities to monitor their subject and have completed an appropriate action plan to seek further developments in ICT.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. Teachers use ICT effectively to support learning across the curriculum and make good use of the interactive white boards to support pupils' learning. For example, in a geography lesson, Year 1 pupils used a program to help design their own city by dragging and placing the appropriate elements of a city on a map. In mathematics, pupils use a range of programs to practise and develop basic skills in calculating, such as when Year 2 pupils added coins and found change. Year 1 pupils used ICT to compile a simple data base and generate block graphs. During the past year, the use and development of pupils' ICT skills in science have been a focus for improvement with an increase in the number of activities where ICT is used to support learning.

HUMANITIES

70. Only two lessons were observed in each of geography and religious education, and no lessons were seen in history because it was not being taught during the inspection. As a result, it is not possible to make judgements about overall provision in any of these

subjects. As part of the planning for the inspection, however, it was decided that geography should be a particular focus because it was the main emphasis for the pupils' current 'topic' work. For all three subjects, the report relies mainly on examples of pupils' past work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. The overall picture is that pupils receive a good curriculum in each of these subjects, enriched by an excellent range of experiences outside lessons.

71. In **geography**, standards in Year 2 are above those expected for pupils' ages. Both lessons seen made very good use of first-hand knowledge of the local area. In Year 1, pupils drew careful maps, following a walk locally. They recorded physical features of the area on maps, learning about scale and the relative position of roads, houses and other features. In Year 2, pupils made rural and urban comparisons following visits to the village of Tideswell and the centre of Chesterfield. They considered in thoughtful discussion the relative importance in each place of shops, the post office and the bus service. Both lessons were very well organised and made very good use of photographs from the visits. Geography is led and managed very effectively. Very good documentation includes lesson plans that help teachers to have high expectations of pupils of all abilities, and ensures that, over the two years, pupils achieve well in all the required aspects of geography.
72. In **history**, the scheme of work has recently been revised and plans to evaluate it are set out clearly. Statutory requirements are met and suitable procedures for assessment are in place. A portfolio of marked work to assist teachers in fixing their level of expectation and in evaluating pupils' work is being compiled. High standards of written work are evident in a booklet devised by a Year 2 class on 'The Bike', and historical aspects of pupils' study of Chesterfield. A project on Louis Braille gave pupils good opportunities to develop their moral and social understanding of problems associated with blindness.
73. In **religious education**, pupils' past work shows that the curriculum provides a good range and balance of content and meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. As at the last inspection, standards in Year 2 are about the same as those expected for pupils' ages. In Year 1, pupils learn about well-known Bible stories such as Joseph and his coat of many colours. The moral themes of these stories are often usefully extended to help pupils reflect on their own lives, such as when the story of David and Goliath is followed by work on being brave. Good links are made with personal and social education when the pupils think about friendship and what it is like to be a good friend. The pupils also learn about faiths such as Judaism, finding out about its special festivals and traditions. Teachers use discussion to explore many of these themes, and the pupils also complete an appropriate range of recording in pictures and writing.
74. In Year 2, the curriculum continues to provide a good range of experiences. A visit to Chesterfield parish church is exciting because the pupils climb the tower and ring the bells, but they also find out a lot about the features of a church. Bible stories, and the way people lived at the time of Jesus, are important features of pupils' work, but they also find out about other religions. Particularly impressive was the pupils' understanding of Islam, shown in their work and in an excellent assembly seen during the inspection. The pupils have a good grasp of the beliefs, traditions and festivals of Islam based on a wide range of work, from thinking about Muslim prayer to drawing traditional patterns that decorate a mosque. As in Year 1, themes are often extended to help pupils reflect upon their own lives, as when they thought about, and wrote prayers celebrating, things that make them happy.
75. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching was very good in one and good in the other. In Year 2, the teacher explored the difficult theme of what happens when we die using a very appropriate story about a badger who wants to leave gifts to his friends before he dies. The pupils were totally engrossed by the story and discussed aspects of the topic

very maturely. A challenging theme really made the pupils think. In Year 1, inspired by the story of Jonah and the whale, pupils talked about what makes them scared and who helps them when they feel alone. The teacher managed the discussion very skillfully, which allowed all of the pupils' an opportunity to express their views thoughtfully. Work in religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including their understanding of other faiths and cultures.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. Only one music lesson was observed, and no lessons were seen in art and design or design and technology. As a result, it is not possible to make judgements about overall provision in any of these subjects. Physical education was not inspected. The pattern of observations was largely owing to the way in which the timetable is organised, with some subjects not taught during the inspection. In addition, only art and design was selected by the school as a focus for the inspection. A good selection of pupils' art work was available, and so it was possible to make judgements about standards and the quality of the curriculum. For all the subjects inspected, pupils' past work, teachers' planning and the views of subject leaders were taken into account. The overall picture is that the school provides an appropriate curriculum for each of these subjects, with art and design being particularly strong.
77. In **art and design**, the school has built very successfully on the good quality work noted at the last inspection. Standards are now much better than expected for pupils' ages. The teachers have considerable expertise in the subject and this shines through in the quality of the pupils' work. In both classrooms and shared areas, attractive displays of pupils' art work enhance the learning environment considerably and exemplify the range and quality of their talents. Pupils experience a very good curriculum, completing a wide range of work, which helps them to build their skills very effectively. A good feature of pupils' learning is the way lessons are planned to focus on developing skills in using a particular medium before encouraging pupils to be more expressive. As a result, pupils have very good mastery for their age of materials such as pencil, paint and pastel, which is reflected in the high quality of their work. For example, Year 1 pupils' work in the style of Monet uses thick paint to capture the textures, and they have been taught this technique carefully. Their finished pieces, such as a barge on a canal, show they looked very closely at how his paintings are composed, and are outstanding compared with painting normally seen for this age. Similarly impressive work in the style of Van Gogh shows very good skills in applying paint in a variety of ways. Collage inspired by *The Silver Swan*, oil pastel drawings of an African village, and carefully observed pencil drawings of daffodils and fruit, all of high quality, show the breadth of the pupils' work and their very confident skills in using a variety of media.
78. Pupils take these skills into Year 2, where they continue to develop them in a wide range of art work. Particularly impressive is the way in which pupils are encouraged to develop the same idea in a variety of media. For example, taking the subject of a vase of flowers, Year 2 pupils have captured it in oil pastel, water colour, crayon and fabric appliqué, with all these being brought together to form a stunning display in the hall. Oil pastel portraits in the style of Klee, using bold cube shapes to form the faces, show that pupils continue to be influenced by famous artists. Drawings of musical instruments, flowers and lanterns, in a variety of media, are of high quality and show that the pupils are taught very well to observe carefully and capture the detail of the subject. The pupils use media such as oil pastel with a confidence rarely seen for this age, which shows the depth of experience built whilst they are at the school. Almost all the pupils produce good work, which is why standards are much better than normally found. Pupils who have special educational needs often excel in art, even though they find it difficult to be successful in other subjects.

79. The rich curriculum is enhanced further by special events such as an art and craft week, with visiting artists broadening the range of pupils' experiences. Work in art makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Leadership and management of the subject are very good, with effective support for teachers' planning and assessment, for example through the very good scheme of work and a high-quality portfolio of pupils' work, which shows the standards pupils can reach. Observation of lessons helps management to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and to take action, when needed. High-quality resources encourage high-quality work. Based on the current standard of pupils' work, improvement since the last inspection has been very good.
80. In **design and technology**, very little evidence was gathered. There is a detailed scheme of work to support teachers in their planning. This ensures that an appropriate curriculum, with opportunities to design, make and evaluate a range of products, is taught. Pupils in Year 1 learn to design using different materials, including making Diwali pots out of clay and papier mache balloons. In Year 2, pupils make clay heads, moving vehicles and winding mechanisms. The co-ordinator is involved actively in monitoring design and technology and has drawn up an appropriate action plan for the subject.
81. In **music**, the scheme of work is detailed and reflects national requirements well. Planning provides practical guidance for teachers. Resources are good and conveniently stored for easy movement between rooms. Singing in assemblies is robust and tuneful and is supportively accompanied. Pupils listen attentively to a wide range of music as they assemble, and they learn the names of composers. Whole-school singing sessions take place regularly. Year 2 pupils were due to attend a music party for massed singing at a local school at the end of inspection week. Teachers readily use their voices to lead singing in the classroom. In the one lesson seen, Year 1 pupils devised sound effects for a story about 'Our Teddy'. They discussed their intentions, chose percussion instruments and practised and refined their contributions constructively. Pupils thought out and expressed their ideas and reactions with considerable care in this effective lesson. This led to good language development. All aspects of music are very well organised.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

82. Only one lesson was seen in this subject and there was no past work completed by the pupils that could be used to evaluate the standards achieved. As a result, it was not possible to make judgements about pupils' achievements or the quality of teaching and learning. The curriculum section of this report evaluates provision for pupils' personal, social and health education as very good.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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