

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St Philip Neri with St Bede Catholic Primary School**

Mansfield

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122821

Headteacher: Mrs H Booton

Lead inspector: Mr P. Belfield

Dates of inspection: 7 – 10 March 2005

Inspection number: 264937

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 422

School address: Rosemary Street  
Mansfield  
Postcode: NG19 8AA

Telephone number: 01623 489010  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Rev P Ziomek

Date of previous inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> May 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Philip Neri with St Bede's is a large primary school, with 422 boys and girls on roll, situated in Mansfield, in the East Midlands. Seventy-one children attend on a part-time basis in the nursery. The vast majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds, with three pupils of Chinese and three of Indian heritage. Seven pupils are of mixed race or from black African or black British backgrounds. Three pupils at an early stage of learning English. Attainment on entry is broadly average but covers a wide range. Ten per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is also average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the normal time is above average with a significant number joining the school in Years 4 and 5.

The school is involved in the *Neighbourhood Renewal* initiative and has the following awards *Activemark*, *Healthy Schools*, *Investor in People*, an *FA Chartermark* and *Basketball England*. The school is registered to provide out-of-school care and does so for four hours a day for 16 children.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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16892	Julia Elsley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Design and technology, History, Music
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

St Philip Neri with St Bede's Catholic Primary School provides a **satisfactory standard of education** and gives satisfactory value for money. The leadership and management of the school and the quality of teaching are satisfactory overall. By the time they leave the school, the pupils attain average standards in English, mathematics and science.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good
- More able pupils could do better if there was greater challenge in lessons but pupils with special educational needs achieve well
- The provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and the standards achieved are below average
- There is a lack of consistency in the marking of the pupils' work and the guidance they receive about how they can improve
- Key staff are not sufficiently involved in leading and directing school developments and the co-ordination of foundation subjects is not well enough developed
- The pupils have very good attitudes to school, they behave well and the school provides very well for their spiritual and moral development
- Pupils achieve good standards in music and physical education
- The support provided by teaching assistants is very good and they make a strong contribution to the quality of the pupils' learning

There has been satisfactory improvement since the school was last inspected in 1999. The leadership of English and mathematics has improved and the pupils' progress is carefully tracked. Assessment procedures have been improved but assessments are not used well enough when planning work for more able pupils. Standards are similar to those found during the last inspection. Teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated closely and, although teaching remains satisfactory overall, there are more lessons of higher quality than at the time of the last inspection. The school has the capacity to continue to build on these improvements.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Taken overall, the pupils' **achievement is satisfactory**. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well. However, achievement of the more able pupils varies from class to class and is unsatisfactory overall. Most children in the Foundation Stage achieve satisfactorily and are likely to reach the goals expected of them in the six areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. A majority are likely to exceed the goals in their personal, social and emotional, and physical development. The achievement of the more able pupils in the reception class, in the development of their writing skills could be better. The results of the 2004 national tests for Year 2 pupils were well above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that the standards in the current Year 2 are above average in reading, below average in writing and average in mathematics.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	C	A	A
mathematics	E	C	C	C
science	D	C	C	C

National test results for pupils in Year 6 in 2004 when compared with all schools and similar schools were well above average in English, and average in mathematics and science. The work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are average in all three subjects and overall achievement is satisfactory. There are more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6, which contributes to the lower standards in English, but the lack of challenge for more able pupils in almost half of the classes also depresses achievement, and standards should be higher by the end of Year 6. The standards achieved in information and communication technology are below average. In music and physical education the pupils achieve above average standards.

The pupils are polite and courteous. Their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good**. They have very positive attitudes to school, behave well and feel secure in an environment in which they are valued. The attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall** and varies from very good to poor. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but the expectations of the older, more able children in developing their writing skills are not high enough. The teaching across the rest of the school is satisfactory overall with learning at times being very effective, sometimes pedestrian and occasionally not good enough. The majority of pupils make steady gains in their learning but the pace of some lessons is sometimes too slow and the challenge for more able pupils too limited. The evidence from the pupils' work reveals the marking of their work to be inconsistent and it does not always provide sufficient guidance on how the pupils can improve. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to the pupils' learning and their support for pupils with learning difficulties is a strength of the school.

The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory and is enriched through visits and the very good sporting provision. The pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to carry out personal research nor to take responsibility for their own learning. The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good, although insufficient account is taken account of their views. There are good links with mainly supportive parents, who make a positive contribution to their children's learning. Links with the community and with other schools are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** In the short time she has been at the school, the headteacher has introduced key changes that are already improving the quality of education provided. She has developed the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and set a clear agenda for improvement. There are weaknesses in the way key staff have carried out their leadership role but this is being addressed and there is now greater understanding of how they should contribute to addressing the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher's vision has strong support from the staff and governors who work with a common purpose and a clear commitment to further improvement. Governance is satisfactory and financial control and routine administration are good. The governing body is supportive and fulfils its statutory obligations.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school has a strong relationship with parents. Most parents have very positive views of the school although some were concerned about the levels of homework. However, the



evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that the homework provided is appropriate and it makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Ensure all teachers have high expectations of what more able pupils can achieve
- Improve the provision for information and communication technology and raise the standards of achievement
- Consistently provide guidance to pupils on how to improve their work
- Improve the leadership of key staff and the co-ordination of foundation subjects

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Overall, standards in English, mathematics and science are average and most pupils achieve satisfactorily. Across the school the achievement of more able pupils is variable and overall is unsatisfactory.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in English, mathematics and science could be higher if there was a greater level of challenge for more able pupils
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well
- More able children in Reception do not achieve as well as they should in their acquisition of writing skills
- Standards in information and communication technology are below average
- The pupils achieve well in music and physical education

#### **Commentary**

1. The pupils' attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is broadly average and they make steady progress as they move through the Nursery and Reception classes. By the end of the reception year the majority of children are likely to reach the expected goals in four areas of learning and likely to exceed them in their personal, social and emotional, and physical development. The expectations of what the more able children can achieve in writing in the reception class are not high enough and they underachieve in this aspect of their learning.
2. From the time they join the school the majority of pupils make steady progress in English, mathematics and science. The standards by the end of Year 2 in writing and mathematics have declined over the past two years resulting in an overall trend of improvement that is below the national trend. The inspection evidence confirms that the lack of challenge for more able pupils contributes significantly to these lower standards. The standards in the current Year 2 are below average in writing and average in mathematics. Reading is well taught resulting in above average standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.0 (16.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.6 (14.4)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.9 (16.3)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 63 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. In the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6, the standards when compared to all schools and similar schools were well above average in English and average in mathematics and science. The school exceeded its targets in English but failed to reach them in mathematics as a significant number of pupils did not reach the expected level 5. The trend of improvement has been above the national trend. Inspection findings confirm that the standards in all three subjects are now average. At the time of the inspection there was a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. This is having an impact on the overall levels of attainment. However, the evidence in the pupils' books and discussions with the pupils, together with the evidence gained from the observations of lessons, indicates that there is the lack of challenge for many able pupils in Years 3 to 6. Across the school the girls do better than boys in English and there is no specific teaching focus that targets the boys' learning. A similar picture is evident in science and the standards would be higher if the pupils were allowed more opportunities to investigate independently and if the expectations of the more able pupils were higher.

***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.8 (26.7)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.0 (27.0)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.1 (28.6)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 65 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Strengths in the provision of music and physical education ensure that the pupils' achievement in the two subjects is above average. The pupils become very skilled in ball games and in dance and make good use of the sporting facilities. A broad music curriculum is offered and the pupils have good opportunities to perform and celebrate their achievements. The standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have declined since the last inspection and insufficient time is devoted to utilising the resources available in the school. The use of computers to support work in other subjects is limited and the pupils' progress in the acquisition of skills is slow. Some equipment is outdated and teachers do not make sufficient use of the computers in their classrooms. Standards in design and technology and history are broadly average and the inspection of the pupils' work indicates that achievement in these subjects is generally satisfactory. The school's schemes of work for the foundation subjects are unclear about progression, particularly in relation to the development of the key skills and concepts and this leads to some shortcomings in the continuity of learning and building on prior learning. Overall, the work could be more demanding and standards could be higher.
5. The inclusive ethos of the school helps those pupils with special educational needs and those at an early stage of acquiring English to good levels of achievement. They are very well supported by the adults that work with them and, as a result, are included in all activities. A strong feature of the school is the way that Learning Support Assistants work closely with the teachers to ensure that the targets in the pupils' individual education plans are met. The school has yet to cater formally for the gifted and talented pupils by

producing a policy that sets out the school's approach to their learning. Consequently, these pupils do not make sufficient progress.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

This is a strength of the school. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and behaviour is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good. Social and cultural development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils feel secure within the school environment and are keen to learn
- Relationships between children and adults are very positive thus establishing a good learning environment
- All achievement is valued and celebrated

### **Commentary**

6. The school is a friendly and welcoming community. In conversations with pupils, it is evident how secure they feel and how much they appreciate the good things which are on offer including school clubs and visits to interesting places. The headteacher, staff and parish priest and successfully promote the strong Catholic ethos of the school. Good behaviour and respect for others is an expectation and these attitudes permeate the life of the school. Incidents of inappropriate or aggressive behaviour are rare and none were seen during the inspection. Visitors are made to feel very welcome and are treated with courtesy by pupils, staff, parents and governors.
7. The promotion of pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good. Well planned daily assemblies encourage pupils to consider issues such as truth and fairness and good questioning leads them to express their thoughts with confidence. They learn to speak up firmly for what is right and to show compassion for those who need help. In many lessons pupils demonstrate the ability to listen to each other and to consider views which differ from their own. Pupils respond well to praise and encouragement and show pleasure in achieving the targets which are set for them. Achievement in all aspects of school life is celebrated in displays, stickers in books and during assemblies.
8. Social and cultural development is good. From the moment they begin school, pupils learn to work together in harmony, share resources, assist each other in groups and take care of their own belongings and those of the school. The pupils are eager to take individual responsibility for tasks such as returning registers to the office, handing out or collecting books and tidying away at the end of lessons. Older pupils may apply to become school prefects and then go through a selection process which does involve some participation by their peers. Fund raising events are popular and provide the pupils with an understanding of people's lives beyond the school. Through art, drama, music, religious education, history and geography pupils are provided with many experiences to stimulate their imagination and to develop their appreciation of the diversity of cultures within our society today. A whole school project on studies of art from around the world served to highlight awareness of the variety and richness of the different cultures represented in the present school community.

### **Attendance**

9. The procedures to record and monitor absence are satisfactory: computerised records are updated weekly and unexplained absences are systematically followed up. Most children arrive in good time for school ensuring a prompt start to the school day. Individual latecomers are quickly assimilated into class with a minimum of disruption to other pupils

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.0
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.*

**Exclusions**

10. There were no exclusions in the school year prior to the inspection.

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is a sound curriculum with very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs. The school cares very well for all pupils and good links with parents and the community support the quality of education.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is satisfactory overall.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The expectations of more able pupils are not high enough
- The support for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they achieve well
- Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support teaching and learning
- There are inconsistencies in the way pupils' work is marked and, overall the presentation could be better
- Setting targets for improvement is not applied consistently across the school

**Commentary**

11. A strength in the teaching is the high expectations that the teachers have of the pupils' behaviour. The pupils respond well; they concentrate and are keen to learn. Great emphasis is placed on the identification of learning objectives and sharing them with pupils. In English and mathematics the pupils' progress is tracked very carefully through tests and assessment. The school has introduced target setting so that teachers can plan their lessons to take account of the identified weaknesses in the assessments. This approach has not been firmly embedded in all classes as yet, although great care is taken by some teachers to plan tasks in lessons at different levels of difficulty to challenge all pupils. The inspection of the pupils' workbooks reveals that it is a minority of teachers who demand high standards and plan work that challenges all pupils. Learning in these classes is good and the pupils make good progress. In other classes expectations of what the pupils can achieve are frequently not high enough, particularly for the more able

pupils. Although the quality of the teaching has improved since the last inspection and the percentage of good and very good teaching has increased there is still too much variation in quality across the school.

12. Underachievement by the more able pupils occurs in most year groups and in almost half of all classes. In English, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to write at length and produce more complex writing or to become involved in fully independent writing. Unfinished work is prevalent and workbooks contain parts of a story or incomplete accounts. Written work in other subjects such as history, geography, religious education and science contain too many examples of poorly written accounts and simple captions are accepted in place of work of a better standard and greater depth. In mathematics, many pupils have too few opportunities to experiment and investigate. Teachers seldom set their pupils problems to solve or open-ended questions to investigate. A mismatch of work to pupils' abilities restricts the progress of the more able. A similar picture emerges in science with all pupils often carrying out the same investigation with no extension activity for those that are capable of more demanding tasks.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10 (20%)	12(24%)	25 (52%)	1(2%)	1(2%)	0

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

13. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. There is an appropriate balance of activities between those taught directly by the teacher and those that children select for themselves. Assessment is generally used carefully to build on prior learning but in the reception class the assessments of the more able children are not used well enough to ensure that their writing skills improve fast enough. This particularly affects their achievements in literacy and their rate of progress is too slow.
14. The pupils' work is generally marked regularly but the quality of the marking varies between classes and subjects. There are some very good examples of marking in a class in Year 5 and in both classes in Year 6, which give the pupils very clear guidance on how they can improve their work. This is not the common practice across the school and the teachers' comments on the pupils' work are not always clear about what they need to do next. A similar inconsistency exists in relation to how the pupils present their work and check their spellings. There are too many books where sloppy, untidy and unfinished work is accepted and where there are too many mistakes in the spelling of simple, high frequency words. Marking is often cursory and unhelpful in these books.
15. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Work is planned very carefully to meet their needs and the pupils are supported particularly well by teaching assistants. These staff are deployed very well to meet pupil needs, enabling them to take a full part in lessons and make good progress towards their personal targets. In lessons observed during the inspection the teaching assistants were very clear about what the pupils were to learn and they made sure that they succeeded in meeting learning objectives. The contribution of the pupils is valued and staff encourage them to participate fully in whole-class sessions. The support staff meet weekly with the special needs co-ordinator to discuss the progress of pupils and strategies to adopt in future lessons. Teachers value the support and expertise of their assistants and pupils achieve well and make good gains in their learning.

## **The curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Inclusion for all pupils is very good. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very effective and very well managed
- ICT is not used sufficiently to support learning in all subjects
- Links between the Foundation Stage curriculum and the National Curriculum in Year 1 have not been established
- There are too few opportunities for the pupils to plan their own work and to carry out investigations and independent research in subjects such as geography and history

### **Commentary**

16. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard with some success to improve continuity of learning in all core and foundation subjects. A clear curriculum map outlining the areas of study to be covered by each year group for each term forms the basis for teachers' long-term planning. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are well embedded and there are schemes of work in all foundation subjects which help teachers to plan the work set out in the overall school plan. Although resources in ICT have been improved since the last inspection, their use in the classroom is limited and they do little, as yet, to support learning in subjects across the curriculum. The curriculum provides well for the promotion of the pupils' personal development. The school currently does not implement a sex education and relationships policy because the governing body has decided not to include this in the school's provision.
17. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. The school has very recently completed the integration of nursery and reception classes into one unit. The curriculum has been revised and nursery and reception class children work together regularly. In a short space of time satisfactory progress has been made in establishing a progressive approach to learning across the Foundation Stage. There is an appropriate breadth of teacher directed activities planned across all areas of learning. There are occasions when the very tight timetabling arrangements require the staff to curtail activities before the children have completed their work. This occurs, for example, during the teaching of phonics and in creative activities and prevents the children from extending their learning. Insufficient consideration has been given to the relationship between the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and their links to the subjects of the National Curriculum in Year 1. The school has not yet developed satisfactory procedures to ensure that there is continuity of learning between the stages through good quality assessment and liaison between teachers in the reception class and Year 1. There is evidence of under-achievement of pupils in English as they enter Year 1.
18. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good with clear procedures for the early identification and assessment of pupils. Individual programmes of work are of very good quality and care is taken to ensure that the work provided is closely suited to pupils' needs. Provision is challenging and innovative, including special co-ordination classes most mornings and specific training in social skills. Pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them because work is planned well to meet their needs and they are supported effectively. Pupils know their targets and are aware of the progress they are making towards them.

19. The curriculum is enhanced for many pupils by a good range of extra-curricular activities, clubs and visits. These not only help pupils to develop a love of sport, drama and music, but also widen their knowledge of their own and other communities. The pupils benefit from a residential visit that helps them to learn how to work in harmony with their peers in a different setting from the school. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to take the initiative and responsibility for aspects of their own learning and to carry out research in subjects such as history and geography. Opportunities for presenting the outcomes of their research to the whole class in different ways, visually, orally or through drama are limited.
20. There are a sufficient number of teaching and support staff, with appropriate qualifications, to meet the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation, which is generous, has been further improved since the last inspection, and includes a Foundation Stage unit for both nursery and reception class children with easily accessible and well-equipped, outside activity areas. The ICT suite is new and fully equipped. Resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory overall.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The procedures to ensure the care, welfare and safety of pupils are secure. The provision for support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Health and safety procedures are good
- There is a strong Christian ethos and caring atmosphere
- The induction and transition arrangements are good

### **Commentary**

21. The school provides a safe and secure environment for all its pupils. The governing body meets its statutory requirements in terms of health and safety and has recently reviewed and updated its Policy Statement. An informal audit of the premises is carried out each term by the health and safety governor and the site manager. This report is reviewed, prioritised and resourced by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. On a day to day basis, all staff are vigilant in matters of safety and minor problems are quickly and effectively addressed. All the required safety checks of equipment, including risk assessment, are routinely carried out and systematically recorded. All staff are aware of the school's child protection policy and associated procedures. Playground supervision is alert and vigilant and first aid arrangements are sound.
22. The teachers and other supervisory staff are approachable and know their pupils well. Pupils generally feel they can address staff members to ask for help or to share any concern they might have. Staff are considered by the pupils to be fair and consistent in dealing with matters of behaviour and the principles of rewards and sanctions are widely accepted and well understood. Pupils are encouraged to understand and respect the feelings and needs of others.
23. The procedures for monitoring and assessment of the core subjects are well managed. Pupils generally receive sound guidance in lessons on how to improve their work. The approach to the setting of individual targets for learning and for personal development is

inconsistent across the school. Pupils have some opportunities to take on responsibility. The children routinely undertake monitor roles and there is a well-established school prefect system. However, there are currently no mechanisms, such as a school council, to enable the pupils to have a real voice in the way the school is run.

24. The arrangements for pupils joining and leaving the school are good. The quality of communication with parents on induction and transition is very good. New entrants to the Foundation Stage are well supported, facilitating a smooth start to school life. There are well established links with the main receiving school and, in addition, Year 6 pupils benefit from a programme of liaison visits and taster days which results in a positive experience for the majority of pupils.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The partnership with parents and links with the community and other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good communications between parents and the school helps promote an effective learning partnership
- End of year progress reports could be clearer about how pupils could improve
- There are very good links with the local parish
- Parents' views are not collectively sought

### **Commentary**

25. The vast majority of parents are positive about the work of the school and the information provided for them. The recently revised school prospectus contains useful practical information for new and existing parents about the school's ethos, policies and procedures. All parents are given details each half term of the curriculum and monthly newsletters keep them up to date with other events. Homework diaries are valued as a useful means of communicating about their children's progress on a day by day basis, thus developing a strong learning partnership. Parents also receive a written progress report at the end of each school year. These detail the work the children have covered but they do not indicate clearly and consistently the standards achieved nor specific targets for future development.
26. Parental consultation evenings, school concerts and sporting events are well attended indicating a good level of parental support. A number of parents help regularly in classes and accompany the children on visits. Parents value the before and after school clubs which provide *wrap-around care* and the provision of out-of-school sporting activities for their children. Parents also support the school through three main fund raising events organised by a small but dedicated team of PTA members. The money raised has been used to purchase valuable resources for the pupils such as playground equipment and individual whiteboards. The PTA is committed to expanding its core membership and developing more widespread support within the school community.
27. Parents feel the headteacher and her staff are approachable and they like the open door policy. When individual parents have raised individual concerns, these have been quickly resolved. Parents welcome the occasional opportunities to attend information sessions as it helps them support their children's work at home. However, the school does not formally consult parents about its work nor seek their views on significant matters that have an impact on school life.



28. The school is well integrated into the life of the local parish. Parish Mass is held in school every Thursday morning and a regular number of local parishioners attend. This aspect contributes to the spiritual and moral development of pupils as well as forging important links with the local community. People from the neighbourhood regularly use the school's premises for a range of community education activities and the school supports a number of initiatives, funded by Neighbourhood Renewal, for NVQ training courses open to local people. Occasional visits from members of the local community contribute to the enrichment of the curriculum and to pupils' learning. Furthermore, pupils have the opportunity to go on various visits, including two residential field trips, to learn more about their local environment and the wider community.
29. The transfer of information on pupils to the main secondary school is comprehensive and timely. The school works in close partnership to ensure effective and supportive transition, especially for more vulnerable children or those with special needs. The school forms part of a cluster group of local schools which helps provide greater depth of experience in certain areas of the curriculum particularly sport. Additionally, pupils benefit from very good sporting activities both within and after school through links with West Notts College.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall leadership and management of the school and its governance are satisfactory. The leadership by the headteacher is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a very clear agenda for improving the school
- The leadership of key staff is in need of improvement and the co-ordination of foundation subjects is not well developed
- The governors are highly committed to the school but they do not evaluate effectively the impact of their spending decisions and their monitoring role is underdeveloped
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well co-ordinated and all pupils are fully included in lessons

### **Commentary**

30. In the six months that she has been at the school, the headteacher has introduced key changes that are already improving the quality of education provided. She has developed the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, revised the school management structure and assisted the governors in revising their committees' roles and responsibilities. The headteacher has established very good procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and it has given her a very clear view of where improvements are needed. She has started the process of improvement through the performance management arrangements and training initiatives. Effective tracking systems to measure the pupils' progress and target setting for individual pupils have been introduced, although there is more work to be carried out to make sure that the individual targets are achieved. The two assistant headteachers are not sufficiently involved in the strategic development of the school in devising creative ways to improve performance and procedures and to tackle problems. The impact of their work on the quality of learning and standards is limited and their role in supporting the work of subject leaders is underdeveloped.

31. The impact of the work of other co-ordinators varies. English and mathematics are well led and the co-ordinators have worked hard to improve the quality of learning by improving assessment and providing advice and guidance to staff after analysing pupils' work. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management of this aspect. She has developed a learning environment that is efficient and inclusive. Individual targets are successfully communicated to staff, parents and pupils and are regularly monitored. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has worked hard with the staff to introduce curriculum changes within the newly opened unit. The leadership of foundation subjects requires some enhancement. The co-ordinators are resourcing their subjects appropriately and have carried out an audit to determine what is working well and where improvements are needed. They have had little opportunity to observe teaching and learning and there is minimal monitoring of pupils' workbooks. During their meeting with inspectors they stated that the headteacher has involved them appropriately in the school improvement planning process and they were confident that the planned programme of review would enable to evaluate the quality of learning in their respective subjects.
32. The governors are gaining a better understanding of the school strengths and weaknesses, and an improvement plan, devised by the headteacher, has been adopted. It identifies key developments to raise achievement and improve the quality of learning. The governors make regular visits to the school and they are strongly committed to its improvement. They fulfil all of their statutory duties. They do not yet, however, have a systematic approach to evaluating the effect of their decisions on the quality of education that the school provides and the standards that the pupils attain.
33. The school is carrying forward a significant shortfall in its budget. This is largely due to costs incurred when improving the accommodation. The governors have revised how the budget is set and implemented secure procedures to ensure that they are kept regularly informed of the school's financial position. They have also working closely with the local education authority and the diocesan board to ensure that the deficit will be eradicated in the near future. The limits placed on spending are however, constraining some development work aimed at raising the levels of pupils' achievements.

## ***Financial information***

### ***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	945,973
Total expenditure	998,043
Expenditure per pupil	2,326

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-26,401
Balance carried forward to the next	-52,070

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

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

34. Very few children have had any experiences of pre-school education before they start part-time at the nursery. The attainment covers a very wide range of ability levels on entry to school but is broadly average overall. The children in the nursery make steady and consistent gains in their learning and achieve well. The current reception class children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals that are expected of them by the time they enter Year 1 in all the six areas of learning. Most of the children are likely to exceed the expected levels in their personal, social and emotional, and physical development. The older more able children could achieve more in the development of their writing skills if the work was more challenging. The children with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language are given very good support to help them achieve their targets and they make good progress. The assessment of the children is rigorous and generally used well to plan future work. The frequency of observational assessments does at times restrict the adult levels of intervention to extend the quality of the learning. Good use is made of both the indoor and outdoor classrooms, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The organisation of the day, based on short sessions, sometimes does not allow the children sufficient time to engage in, or to pursue and follow through in depth, some activities to a satisfactory conclusion. This constrains the quality of learning. Parents are welcomed and given opportunities to become involved with school and this helps to promote and support the children's learning.
35. Taken overall, the provision for, and the teaching in, the Foundation Stage ranges from satisfactory to very good and is satisfactory overall.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The nursery children have a good start to school life and make good progress
- Most children exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year

#### **Commentary**

36. The children are happy, confident and secure in coming to school and they are provided with many opportunities to develop their independence. A strong feature of learning is the consistent way in which adults provide the opportunities for the children to make independent decisions when carrying out their own work during the 'free-flow' play activities in either the indoor or outdoor classroom. The children learn to make choices, take the initiative, select the resources and develop personal tastes and preferences. At the end of the session they clear away equipment willingly and have an enthusiastic approach to helping. The children are able to work together on tasks and, during story-sessions in the nursery, they are taught to sit and listen quietly. These skills are further developed in the Reception class when the children are expected to concentrate for longer periods and to listen carefully to other children. The staff establish firm relationships with the children and are attentive to individual needs and consequently the children are keen to participate in all the set activities around them. The children learn to work together, become aware of other children's feelings and begin to understand the

consequences of their actions. They are taught to take turns and share equipment readily. This is obvious in 'role-play' activity, musical activities outdoors, sitting together at 'snack time' and talking with an adult about the fruit on offer.

37. The good level of support provided by staff ensures that there are no significant differences between the responsibilities of boys and girls and of those with special educational needs. Behaviour is good, the children understand right from wrong and the staff place a great emphasis on reinforcing socially acceptable behaviour. The reception class children demonstrate their confidence when changing for a physical education lesson in the hall do so quickly and quietly without the support of an adult. The children make good progress in this area of learning.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most children are making good progress and achieving well in their early reading and communication skills
- Slow progress is made by more able older children in the development of their writing skills

### **Commentary**

38. The staff take every opportunity to develop the children's language skills. The teacher's planning sets out how speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are to be taught. Books are chosen carefully such as *Handas' Surprise* to provide a focus for much of the learning. All the children listen well to instruction and stories. In the small group sessions, the staff give the children good opportunities to express their ideas and opinions. In one session seen, the very good teaching encouraged and enabled the children to speak slowly and extend their responses by focusing very clearly on the use of subject specific language such as, *look at the author, publisher, the front cover, the back cover*. Another good feature of teaching is the way in which the adults correct grammatical errors sensitively and this ensures that the children are keen to learn and develop a sense of pride in their ability to communicate. Similarly, in these small group sessions the adults use mathematical language in the same way to good effect. Words are emphasised and repeated using practical equipment so that the children also see the word visually and learn rapidly. When working in small group activities the children are encouraged to talk about what they are doing and what they can see. The children share books and enjoy singing and reciting rhymes.
39. Adults place a good emphasis on the development of reading skills. The children are grouped according to ability for reading and this good practice helps match learning to the individual's capabilities. As a result, some children reach beyond the expected levels by the time they leave the reception class. The children find books a source of pleasure and have a growing understanding of the printed word. They know that pictures can help to reveal the meaning of the story, a significant number of children in the nursery for example, can already recognise a few letters and words. Many practical activities such as word matching games improve reading skills and, in guided reading sessions, there is a strong emphasis placed on the use of phonics to read unfamiliar words. The children concentrate well and enjoy these experiences. The children regularly go to the school library to change their books and take them home to share with their parents.

40. The children in the nursery are taught the correct formation of letters and many begin to form them fairly accurately. Most children have opportunities for mark making, can write letter strings in their booklets and learn to space out words, They can phonetically spell out unfamiliar words and some can write letters in a consistent shape and size. They make good progress in the early stages of using writing as a means of recording and communicating. The progress in Reception is slower. There are not enough planned opportunities to foster and extend the more able children as writers either through role-play activities or provide stimuli that will encourage children to write in the areas set up specifically for writing. The standards in writing are not high enough by the time the children enter Year 1.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The group sessions for mental mathematics help children acquire a good knowledge of both mathematical language and sequencing of numbers

### **Commentary**

41. Most children are beginning to be confident in counting to 10 and beyond. The children from both the nursery and reception class are grouped according to their capabilities so that work can be planned at different levels of difficulty. The quality of the teaching and learning in these sessions is generally good and many children learn to count forwards and backwards in small steps with the numerals 10 and beyond and can count in twos, fives, tens to a hundred with the aid of the number line. All can correctly recognise and name the numbers 1 to 10 and most can write the numbers fairly accurately. The more able children understand the terms *more than* and *less than* with ease and can carry out simple addition calculations such as that 3 more than 19 is 22. The staff ensure that the children become familiar with mathematical language through, stories, rhymes, discussions and activities. The teaching assistants, working with the youngest children, made good use of number songs and rhymes and actions to support the children's understanding of the numbers 1 to 5.
42. Most children can confidently name different shapes, such as, the triangle, square, circle and rectangle. They can also recognise the difference between the long and short wooden bricks using the terms for example, 'I need a short brick in this space' when building a house. The children are enthusiastic and keen to succeed.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Activities are well planned to promote children's scientific knowledge and understanding
- The children have good opportunities to practise their basic computer skills
- The rigid timetabling does not allow the children sufficient time to follow through an activity to its conclusion

## Commentary

43. The staff provide a wide range of activities to help the children to make sense of the world around them. The children study why things happen and how things are made. All children are being challenged through handling equipment and materials that promote enquiry and investigation skills. Through well-planned activities and the thought provoking questioning by the staff the children explore the properties of a variety of materials. During the inspection they studied fruit and identified different smells, patterns, textures, shape and colour of fruits. The challenging questioning by the teaching assistants promoted good enquiry and exploration skills. Construction toys, playdough, cutting and sticking activities are readily available. There are good opportunities for the children to develop their early computing skills. They handle the *mouse* with growing confidence and control and are beginning to understand the function of icons. In a good lesson observed in Reception, the teacher taught the children how to program a floor robot and then imaginatively linked the work to sequencing activities.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weakness

- Good indoor and outdoor opportunities are planned for the children to improve their physical skills

## Commentary

44. A broad and interesting programme of physical activity is provided. There are opportunities for regular outdoor activities when the children can develop confidence and independence in movement. The majority of children learn to move confidently, imaginatively and with control. As a result, most of the children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals on entry to Year 1. The children have good opportunities to handle both small and large apparatus equipment and develop confidence and independence in their movements. In the hall the Reception children use the space well, show controlled movements and are developing an appropriate understanding of the effects of physical exercise on the body. They have a fair understanding of the need for safety. A very good feature of the provision is the way in which the teachers ensure that other areas of learning are taught in the outdoor areas such as writing and counting. Manipulative skills are enhanced through practical activities such as cutting, printing, drawing, painting and gluing. The children can roll out dough and use tools to cut out shapes and build blocks to considerable height. During the inspection, a *building site* complete with hard hats, tools and detailed plans allowed the children to build walls and work with the building materials. Eye-hand co-ordination is developed when managing pencils, paintbrushes, colouring in a picture, or when using other small tools such as, the knife under supervision of the adult.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children are making steady and consistent gains in creative development through role-play, art and music

## **Commentary**

45. The children are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop skills and techniques and to explore with different materials and equipment. They learn to mix colours and to print. The staff are skilled in relating the work to other areas of learning. During the inspection the children learned art and printing skills and at the same time staff taught them the various properties of shape, size, smell and texture of the fruit used for printing. A music area was frequently visited by the children in the outdoor learning environment and here they had good opportunities to explore a wide range of sounds. Children broke into spontaneous song as they played the instruments and were obviously enjoying the experience together. One of the strongest features of the creative area of learning is the way in which adults participate sensitively, but unobtrusively, in the children's role-play to enhance subject specific vocabulary and to begin to foster collaborative learning, for example, when acting out the story of *Handa's Surprise*. However, the time for creative learning is sometimes too short, and this restricts the pupils' progress.

## ENGLISH

Provision overall in English is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although attainment is broadly satisfactory by the end of Year 6, pupils' achievement in writing could be higher
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is very effective
- Standards of presentation in pupils' work are inconsistent across the school
- The coordinator for English has a good understanding of areas for development within the subject

### Commentary

46. Inspection evidence indicates that there have been some improvements in the teaching of English since the last inspection. The national literacy strategy is firmly embedded in teachers' practice and planning now encompasses a much wider range of purposes for writing. The teachers work hard to ensure that pupils are given plenty of practice in the basic skills of English and, as they progress through the school, most pupils develop a sound understanding of grammar, are able to distinguish nouns, adjectives and verbs, and use capital letters and full stops correctly. They learn how to plan a story, are able to talk about characters and settings and understand that there should be a beginning, middle and end. However, in some classes, too little time is spent in putting these learning experiences into practice. Pupils are not being given sufficient opportunities to produce finished work of increasing length and complexity or of being able to become involved in fully independent writing. There are too many examples of parts of a story or an account being written and too many books which contain pieces of unfinished work. Younger pupils, especially those of higher ability, are not provided with appropriate dictionaries and word banks which would enable them to attempt to write independently and more frequently. Expectations of what the higher ability pupils are capable of achieving are too low in many classes throughout the school and the work which is planned for them offers too little challenge. This is especially evident in written work in other subjects. Although it is laudable that most teachers are aware of the need to practise the skills of language to record their work in history, geography, religious education and science, there are too many examples of poorly written accounts and the use of simple captions being accepted from pupils who are capable of producing work of a better standard and greater depth. In classes where the best teaching is observed expectations were consistently high and pupils respond very well to the challenge.
47. Reading is well taught and there are a significant number of pupils who achieve standards which are above the national average. Children are confident in their use of phonics and the practice of group reading sessions is helping to improve their expression when reading aloud. Working as a group, pupils help each other to understand the meaning of the text and they become confident in answering questions and discussing ideas. There is a good supply of books in the school although the way they are stored is not ideal. The non-fiction books are presently housed in a corridor in plastic boxes, many of which are on shelves that are out of reach for most pupils. Fiction books for Year 3 to 6 pupils are kept in the library in the entrance hall and this is frequently locked. Neither of these areas is at all inviting and there are no tables or cushions where pupils might sit and browse. The method of grading the books by their level of difficulty does not prepare pupils for transition into the next phase of education; to understand how books are normally catalogued or to encourage pupils to become independent in their learning. In



Years 1 and 2 there are small book corners in each classroom where pupils are able to sit comfortably on chairs or cushions to choose a book to read.

48. Pupils make good progress in their speaking and listening skills. Teachers are skilful in directing questions at the right level to enable their pupils to be able to answer with confidence. A popular feature in a number of lessons is the way pupils willingly take their place in the 'hot seat' and answer questions posed by their peers. Teachers stress the importance of listening carefully to what is being said and insist on questions being asked in well-constructed sentences.
49. Handwriting is taught from the time pupils begin school and many pupils develop a pleasing cursive style. However, standards of presentation and spelling are inconsistent across the school and vary from poor to very good depending on the expectations of the class teacher. Marking is often cursory and unhelpful in these books. There are also many fine examples of very good presentation in those classes where teaching is good or better and work is carefully marked and evaluated. The subject coordinator is aware of the problem and there have been several attempts to improve the situation. As yet, they are not having sufficient impact on improving standards in all classes.
50. During the inspection the quality of teaching was mostly good and in some classes very good. However, there was also some poor teaching observed. Teachers demonstrated good understanding of the literacy strategy and showed confidence in delivering it in most lessons. Good relationships between pupils and teachers ensured a pleasant working environment and good or very good behaviour in most classes. The subject coordinator is very well organised, has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and is fully committed to raising standards further. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and the learning assistants, who carry out much of the work outlined in the individual education plans for these children, are successful in ensuring good progress is made by the pupils.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

51. Some aspects of language and literacy are used well across the curriculum. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are in evident use in all subject areas. Reading skills are also well used in research in many topics. However, writing skills are not used enough in some classes and much greater depth could be demanded of the most able pupils. Good writing in history and religious education is observed in both classes in Year 6 and in one of the Year 5 classes. The development of writing skills within other subjects is evident in a minority of classes but overall this is an area for improvement.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory but more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should
- Not enough use is made of ICT to help pupils' learning
- Very good support is given to pupils with special educational needs, so they achieve well
- Pupils do not undertake enough problem-solving or investigative activities
- Some marking is inaccurate and teachers written comments do not always indicate how work could be improved

## Commentary

52. Standards in mathematics are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and 6. This represents a decline since the last inspection in Year 2 and similar standards in Year 6. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good and very good teaching observed during the inspection. In the best lessons more able pupils are effectively challenged by a mixture of precise and persistent questioning and the use of open-ended tasks. They are encouraged to assess their own progress. However, in many classes while the most able pupils are always given different work, it is not always sufficiently challenging and underachievement is clearly apparent. Too often the work is mundane, repetitive and rather unexciting.
53. Teaching assistants work very hard to ensure that pupils with special needs understand their work and are particularly alert to any difficulties that arise. They work in a very good partnership with teachers to provide the extra learning opportunities necessary to ensure good achievement.
54. The teaching of mental number work at the start of lessons is very good in some classes but lacks pace and pupil interaction in other classes. Where this part of the lesson is taught well pupils are becoming very adept at the quick recall of important number facts. This is helping them in other areas too and is boosting confidence. Pupils enjoy these lessons and talk about mathematics being fun.
55. Some teachers are particularly skilled at using other adults to maintain interest and motivation when pupils are undertaking quite challenging work. In a Year 2 class, management of teaching the assistant's time was particularly effective, with the teaching assistant withdrawing a specific group of pupils for an intensive consolidation session of their earlier learning. This ensured that all pupils concentrated on their work and allowed those pupils that remained with the teacher to be fully challenged. Relationships among teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are very good. In Year 2 pupils have good knowledge of place value. In one well taught lesson pupils used games, puzzles and playing cards very effectively to help them learn about large numbers. The use of these resources to support their learning and the teacher's high expectations meant that the pupils were interested and motivated, achieved well and reached good standards. While these methods are well used in some classes, many pupils miss frequent or sustained opportunities to experiment and investigate in mathematics. Teachers seldom set their pupils problems to solve or open-ended questions to investigate. Accordingly pupils do not have enough time to become absorbed in their work, or to feel the excitement of drawing conclusions or finding solutions. The school does not use the talent and expertise of the very best teachers to develop the teaching skills of colleagues.
56. Although pupils have opportunities to use mathematical software in the computer suite, there is very little evidence of programs being used to support learning in the classroom. At present the school lacks the range of software required to enable pupils to make the best use of their ICT skills in all areas of the mathematics curriculum.
57. The subject is well led overall. Assessment has been improved and targets are set for pupils and carefully recorded. Pupils know their targets but most pupils are not well informed about how they can improve their work. In the majority of classes the pupils' workbooks have very few written comments from teachers, are occasionally inaccurately marked and many lack positive reinforcement or encouragement.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

58. The daily mathematics lesson based on the guidance of the National Numeracy Strategy is well established throughout the school but there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills as they learn other subjects. Pupils produce some graphs and tabulated results in science and most investigations involve an element of measuring. There are a few opportunities for measurement in geography and design and technology and the use of mathematics is not yet sufficiently integrated into all subjects and there is no overall plan to support this development.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong emphasis is placed on pupils carrying out practical investigations
- The work lacks challenge for more able pupils

### Commentary

59. The school has worked hard to overcome the weaknesses that were identified at the time of the last inspection. Teaching is now satisfactory. The curriculum provision has been reviewed and pupils in different year groups no longer follow the same topics that resulted in repetition of previous work. There is a clear progression to the planned learning across the school and an appropriate emphasis on providing the pupils with opportunities to plan and carry out their own investigations. The scrutiny of the pupils' work, and discussions with them, show that they have a sound knowledge and understanding of science by the time they leave the school. The pupils make predictions and justify them and design fair tests. This was evident in a lesson in Year 6 when the pupils investigated the rate at which different materials dissolved. They worked in well organised groups and co-operated readily in deciding who should act as scribe or time the investigation. The arrangement worked very well and all of the pupils were able to participate.
60. Discussions held with pupils show that they are motivated and interested in science. They cover a wide range of work in lessons and record investigations in their workbooks. There is little variety to this recording and the outcomes of their experiments are usually set out in simple descriptive terms. The use of charts, graphs and tables and computers to present information in a variety of formats is minimal and the opportunities to develop the pupils' writing skills through science are missed. The presentation is at times untidy and results in a lack of clarity in showing how conclusions have been reached.
61. It is evident from the pupils' work and confirmed during the lessons observed that a weakness identified at the time of the last inspection still persists. Teachers frequently do not take sufficient account of the varying abilities of the pupils when planning work. Usually, all pupils cover the same work at the same level. Although pupils of lower ability are well supported by teaching assistants and successfully complete the tasks set the expectations of what the more able pupils can achieve are not high enough. Teachers seldom provide extension activities or tasks that require them to apply their knowledge and understanding to more complex scientific ideas. The co-ordination of the subject is currently unsatisfactory. The monitoring of the pupils' learning is minimal and insufficient

emphasis is placed on ensuring that that more able are provided with work that extends them.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Computers are not well used to support teaching and learning in other subjects
- There is insufficient opportunity for pupils to practise their ICT skills in the classroom
- ICT is not yet firmly enough rooted in teachers thinking and planning
- Pupils are beginning to gain maximum benefit from the computer suite
- There have been good recent improvements in staff expertise and confidence

### **Commentary**

62. Since the last inspection standards in ICT have declined, and are below average at the end of both Year 2 and 6. The infrequent direct teaching of skills and the restricted use of computers to support work in other subjects results in limited progress for pupils. The youngest pupils have few opportunities to reinforce language and number skills and there is an absence of spreadsheets and databases in mathematics and science.
63. The curriculum has too narrow a focus with insufficient use of ICT to control and model physical events. The school recognises many of these weaknesses and is taking important steps to remedy the situation. A number of the existing classroom computers are quite old and are inadequate for some aspects of the curriculum. Currently, teachers do not make sufficient use of the computers they have in their classes and they are left idle for lengthy periods of the day.
64. Although there is some identification in teachers' planning of how computers will be used, the gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge indicate that these planned activities do not always happen and are often ineffective. Teachers have yet to consider how they can regularly incorporate computers into their teaching of literacy and numeracy.
65. The computer suite is now well used and great care has been taken to ensure that all pupils have as much time as possible using the good quality computers in the suite. Very good use is made of the interactive whiteboard in the computer suite. The teaching of specific skills in the suite is often good but the positive impact of the teaching and learning that takes place in the suite has not yet had the time to make an impact on overall standards. The skills learned in the suite are not generally practised or developed further in the classrooms. In a good lesson observed, pupils used the board confidently to make 'PowerPoint' presentations on the history and geography of Egypt. They made slides, imported pictures and added animations and sound.
66. Staff confidence and expertise have risen recently, particularly since some interesting, practical in-service training and judicious spending of national funding on laptops for teachers' use. This has enabled them to develop their own understanding and confidence, and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has successfully organised training for staff that has improved both confidence and expertise and has recently introduced assessment procedures.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. At present ICT is not used consistently within the classroom. There is limited use in literacy, science, mathematics and art and design lessons. Pupils do not have the opportunities to practise skills learned in the computer suite in other lessons. This constrains standards. There is insufficient software, particularly for the classroom computers, to ensure that other subjects are suitably supported.

## HUMANITIES

68. Two lessons were observed in history and one in geography. In history inspection judgements are based on the two lessons, examination of pupils' work and discussion with pupils and teachers. It is not possible to make judgements about provision, standards, achievement, teaching and learning in **geography**. Teachers' planning was examined and work was inspected in pupils' books and on display around the school. In Year 2 the pupils have contrasted the amenities of an island environment and those in Mansfield. The Year 6 pupils have a secure knowledge of rivers, water supply and erosion and they are able to recognise the differences between their own locality and Eyam, a village in Derbyshire. The work scrutinised indicates satisfactory provision in the subject but there is an overuse of mundane worksheets in infant classes. Appropriate use is made of the local environment and visits to enrich the curriculum.

## HISTORY

The provision for history is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average by the end of Year 6
- The school makes good use of local resources to support pupils historical skills and knowledge
- Opportunities to develop literacy skills through the subject are missed

### Commentary

69. It is not possible to report on the standards at the end of the Year 2. The teacher's planning, the displays and samples of work seen show an appropriate coverage of the curriculum. There is a considerable volume of work in the pupils' work books in Years 3 to 6 and discussions with the pupils indicate that they have a good understanding of chronology and they are able to recall in some detail the topics that they have studied over time.
70. In a lesson observed in Year 3, the pupils learned about life on the banks of the River Nile in Ancient times and pupils had the opportunity to improve their reference skills. The lesson was satisfactory and the pupils discovered how Egyptians utilised the *skiff* and the *shaduf*. A rigorous and lively introduction to a very good lesson in Year 5 set the scene for the pupils to consider the impact of European settlers on the indigenous population of North America. The teacher's penetrating questions engaged the pupils and prompted perceptive responses that led to good historical enquiry during the lesson. Teachers seek the support and help from the grandparents when life and events in the twentieth century are studied. The real life memories enhance the quality of learning and the raise the

pupils' interest and curiosity. Visits to places such as the local library, the mining museum and a Victorian House enriches the curriculum provided.

71. The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator gives advice and support to colleagues and ensures that there is sound curriculum coverage. There is, however, insufficient monitoring of the quality of the children's work or to establish the standards achieved across the school. Assessment in the subject is underdeveloped. At present insufficient attention is given to the use of literacy skills across the curriculum and the use of ICT to enhance the quality of the curriculum provision.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

72. During the inspection only one complete lesson was seen in art and design. Three lessons were observed in design and technology and physical education and two in music. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about the overall provision in **art and design**. However, discussions with the subject co-ordinator, the inspection of long term planning and evidence from work displayed on the walls and in the art files indicate that work in art and design involves pupils in experiences across a good range of interesting activities. It is an important cross-curricular subject in the school. Pupils' skills are well used to enhance and illustrate work in all subjects across the curriculum
73. Work on display around the school demonstrates that pupils are given experience in using a wide range of media and that basic skills are well taught. Crayon, pencil, charcoal and paint are used to produce lively portraits in Years 1 and 2 and there is evidence of how drawing techniques improve by the end of Year 6. In the lesson observed in Year 2, pupils demonstrated their ability to study buildings in the neighbourhood and to design houses for a class collage. They are able to choose appropriate materials to cut and stick when making up their designs. Level of interest in the task is very high.
74. The subject co-ordinator seeks to increase awareness of the art of other cultures around the world. An interesting collage on display in the entrance hall required the collaboration of all classes. It contains examples of Maori masks and headdresses, decorated Polish plates, patchwork designs from America, Indian hand painting, designs for Greek vases, African fabric prints, Aztec designs and Peruvian pots. There are also paintings of the Irish countryside. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the standards being achieved and is keen to develop the subject further. Resources for supporting the curriculum are good.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

The provision for design and technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making steady and consistent gains in their joining techniques, planning and design, and use of tools and materials
- The final evaluation process is an area for further development

### **Commentary**

75. Standards seen by the end of Year 6 are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. It is not possible to report on the standards achieved by the end of Year 2 as no lessons were seen in the infant classes. However, the displays and samples of work seen show an appropriate coverage of the curriculum. The pupils are making satisfactory progress in the juniors. Of the three lessons seen, two of these were taught by the same member of staff whose expertise in the subject is very good. The pupils were being taught good joining techniques and to be selective in their choice of materials. A very strong focus was placed on safety when using tools and support was provided by the teacher when necessary. The task of making a prototype slipper was challenging and the constant level of questioning by the teacher ensured that the pupils gave due consideration to selecting the best materials. The thought provoking questions enabled the pupils to reflect on their work and to discuss and evaluate their choices with their peers as they worked. The key skills in the subject are not taught progressively and consistently across the school and the pupils struggled when sewing and cutting materials. The teacher encouraged the children to help each other and with perseverance the majority of pupils achieved a reasonable degree of success. In the other lesson seen, the work on food technology was linked suitably to the personal, social and health education as the pupils prepared their healthy sandwiches.
76. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Samples of pupils' good work have been collected together from each year group as examples of the range of work that can be covered and the quality to aim for. It also reveals that the curriculum requirements are met and that the pupils have planned, designed, and made a range of artefacts. However, the final evaluation of the finished products is underdeveloped and the opportunity for the pupils to practise their writing skills in another context is missed.

## **Music**

The provision for music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils achieve above average standards in music and make good progress in singing, composition and individual playing of musical instruments by the end of Year 6

### **Commentary**

77. The standards of music have improved since the last inspection. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, have good opportunities to listen to a wide range of music from all over the world. The quality of teaching is good and staff are supported by the headteacher and visiting musicians and this ensures good opportunities for the pupils

to sing and perform their musical compositions and play instruments. The standard of the older pupils' individual instrumental achievements is good. The lessons provided enable the pupils to have a very good foundation in the basic rudiments of music, a good understanding of musical learning and mastery of their instrument. They are given good opportunities to perform and celebrate their achievements. There are a high number of pupils involved and a wide range of instruments such as, recorder, violin, trumpet, and woodwind instruments are taught.

78. The quality of the singing in assemblies and hymn practice is good and due to the staff emphasising the importance of posture, breathing, diction, rhythmic pattern and dynamics in their teaching. Good attention is given to the flow of the melody and phrasing, and to pitch accuracy when tackling the intervals between notes. The singing practice is led by good quality adult singing and the starting notes of the songs are well pitched to ensure that they are within the vocal range of all the children. Consequently, the singing is of good tone quality and the children enjoy their singing.
79. In the two composition lessons seen the learning was well-planned and organised so 30 children at a time worked in small groups on their compositions. They were taught effectively and competently. Towards the end of the lesson, the pupils performed for other groups and offered views and opinions on how to improve each other's compositions. By the end of the lesson the pupils were able to combine sounds to make different textures using a visual image of a sunset as a stimuli. In both lessons the pupils thoroughly enjoyed their musical experience. The subject is co-ordinated satisfactorily by the new subject leader and she is ably supported by other specialist musicians on the staff. The local community and parents hold the musical performances of the children in very high regard.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

Provision for PE is **very good**.

- The broad range of activities available to pupils and the good accommodation ensures that pupils are encouraged to develop a full range of skills.
- Dance and games skills are very well taught
- The involvement of outside specialists to work with pupils helps motivate them and strongly develops their physical skills.

## **Commentary**

80. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and 6 and there are particular strengths in dance and games. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The accommodation, including a very large hall and a specialist sports court are very well used. These excellent facilities have a direct impact on raising achievement.
81. The pupils in Year 1 demonstrate good awareness of shape, can climb, balance, jump and land safely. They know the importance of warm-ups to ensure muscles and joints are ready before beginning physical activities. They use space well in straight and zigzag pathways and create different symmetrical shapes effectively. In the lesson observed good analysis by the teacher helped to refine pupils' movements and made them more aware of others. By the end of Year 6 pupils abilities in games are high and for some individuals exceptional. They demonstrate very good co-ordination in ball games and in routines to improve their passing skills. In such activities the high level of skill enables



successful team games to take place. Passing is consistently accurate, the ball is caught regularly and levels of sporting behaviour are high.

82. Pupils achieve good standards in dance. Year 1 pupils move rhythmically reflecting the tempo of the music played to them and are very creative when required to be interpretative around a given theme. Pupils are able to observe and analyse the performance of others.
83. There are many examples of good teaching. In a Year 1 dance lesson, the teacher made good connections between previous learning and new challenges. Her teaching ensured that all pupils were fully engaged and highly motivated. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher used pupil demonstration well to model specific coaching points that were quickly followed and used by others in partner situations. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject, write clear learning objectives and are aware of the importance of teaching a progression of skills. They communicate a high level of enthusiasm. All lessons are well organised with a warm-up and cool down and there is an expectation that the pupils will maintain a brisk pace throughout the activities.
84. The pupils enjoy lessons, sustain high levels of effort, co-operate well in pairs and groups and are ready to watch and comment appreciatively on the performances of others. Their awareness of their own bodies and the quality of the teaching enable them to talk confidently about what they have to do to improve their skills.
85. The curriculum is very broad with an impressive range of activities offered to the pupils. Pupils can participate in team, group and individual activities and all are included. The extent of extra-curricular activities is equally good with pupils having the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of sports and other physical activities. The local Further Education College offers good quality, sports experiences to pupils in Years 3 to 6 on a regular weekly basis. Pupils practise a wide range of games skills and play sports such as hockey and basketball. The sessions are delivered with enthusiasm and a great sense of fun.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

86. Only one discrete **personal, social and health education** (PSHE) lesson was seen during the inspection, so no judgement can be made about the overall quality of the provision. However, the school does follow a programme of work that is carefully planned and co-ordinated. Adults in school encourage pupils to resolve disagreements by looking at alternatives, making decisions and explaining choices. The good relationships between staff and pupils inspire confidence and self-assurance. The pupils' personal and social education is central to the school's philosophy, which underpins all aspects of its work. In some classes it is taught through a series of carefully planned and co-ordinated topics and themes. In other cases it is linked closely to areas of the curriculum and taught through the topics such as, in history, design and technology, science, religious education and art and design. In the lesson observed, the positive attitudes and the respect the pupils showed for their peers when talking about themselves with a partner was impressive. They listened carefully and valued each other's views and opinions.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	4

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