

INSPECTION REPORT

HILLOCKS PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Sutton in Ashfield

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 112563

Headteacher: Ms Louise Regan

Reporting inspector: Mrs Rowena Onions
18354

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th July 2001

Inspection number: 194408

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary and Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Unwin Road
Sutton in Ashfield
Notts

Postcode: NG17 4ND

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Michael Gillott

Date of previous inspection: May 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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18354	Rowena Onions	Registered inspector	Mathematics Religious education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
18919	John Kerr	Lay inspector		Partnership with parents and carers, Pupils' welfare, health and safety
12373	Margaret Dickinson	Team inspector	English Music Physical Education Special Educational needs	
10144	Mary Marriott	Team inspector	Geography History Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
15409	David Whalley	Team inspector	Science etc Art and Design Design and technology Information and communication technology Equal Opportunities	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hillocks Primary and Nursery School is a school of above average size, with 234 full-time and 66 part-time nursery pupils on roll. This is 20 greater than at the time of the last inspection. The school takes pupils from the age of three to eleven, with a broadly equal number of boys and girls. All but four pupils are of white UK heritage and none have English as an additional language. The school is situated in Sutton in Ashfield. It is situated in a mixed commercial and residential area. The local housing is a mixture of council, privately rented and privately owned property. The percentage of pupils taking free school meals is above the national average at 26 %. The percentage has dropped by 10% since the last inspection although there has been no noticeable change in the background of the pupils. The current free school meal take-up does not fully reflect the degree of social deprivation in the area. The children enter the nursery class with a range of attainment, but overall this is well below average especially in aspects of communication, language and literacy skills. Thirty two per cent of pupils are on the school's special educational needs register. This is high when compared with the national picture. One in five of these pupils does not live within the school's designated catchment area but has been admitted to the school on the request of either parents or of the local education authority. A small number have been suspended from other schools. Two pupils have statements of special educational need.

Over the last five years the school has experienced considerable turbulence. There have been three headteachers and two fairly lengthy periods when there were acting headteachers in post. There has been difficulty in recruiting teachers and there has not been a full permanent staff in place during this time. A full permanent staff is now appointed for the September term following the inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Currently, the quality of teaching and learning in the school is satisfactory overall. Standards have risen significantly over the last five years in Key Stage 2, but remain well below average. Behaviour in the school is good and pupils generally display good attitudes towards learning. The quality of the management of the school is now satisfactory overall and the current headteacher has shown good leadership since her appointment. When taking into account the backgrounds of the pupils and their attainment on entry to the school, the school is effective and is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Although still too low, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 has shown a significant improvement over the last few years.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good. Although satisfactory overall, the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage has many good features.
- The leadership of the newly appointed headteacher has been good and has provided the school with a clear vision and a determination to improve the quality of education provided and the standards pupils achieve.
- The school provides a warm atmosphere in which the pupils feel secure. They like coming to school.
- Relationships in the school are good. Pupils are taught to respect each other and the adults with whom they work.
- Overall, pupils show good attitudes to their learning and their behaviour is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English and mathematics remain too low in both key stages. Pupils' language skills are underdeveloped. This inhibits their progress in many subjects.
- The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory and this causes pupils to make too little progress.
- The curriculum lacks balance and relevance. Too few links are made between English and mathematics and other subjects. The curriculum in information and communication technology does not meet statutory requirements.
- Aspects of management, including the role of subject co-ordinators and the monitoring of the work of the school, are not sufficiently influencing school improvement.
- The assessment of pupils' achievements is not sufficiently well developed or used.

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

Although giving an acceptable standard of education overall, this school has serious weaknesses because the pupils are not attaining high enough standards and because the teaching in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory overall.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1999. Since that time, despite the lack of a permanent headteacher for almost a year, the school has successfully implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and these have had a positive impact, particularly in Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching has improved significantly in Key Stage 2. Standards dipped in both key stages in 2000, but are improved this year (2001) and, in Key Stage 2, are now back on the course of improvement seen prior to this. Over the last five years, results in English have improved by twice the national improvement, those in mathematics by three times and those in science by four times the national improvement. They are not yet, however, good enough. Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is now satisfactory and in many respects good. Aspects of management have improved, including the quality of the school improvement plan, the role played by subject co-ordinators and the way the school monitors its own work. In all of these, however, there remains considerable work to be done. Overall, given the short length of time since the last inspection, and the disruption during this period, the school has made satisfactory improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	E*	E*
mathematics	E	D	E	E
science	E	D	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Pupils enter the nursery with well below average attainments. The assessment conducted on entry shows that these children have very impoverished language and poorly developed social skills. Few can converse in phrases or sentences. In most aspects of their development, despite the secure progress they make in the nursery and reception classes, pupils are still operating at a level that is below average when they enter Key Stage 1. Their attainments in communication, language and literacy and mathematics are well below average, but their personal and social development nears average.

In 2000, eleven-year-old pupils attained well below average standards in mathematics and science, both when compared with pupils nationally and with those from similar schools. In English, standards were low, being in the lowest five percent of those attained nationally. Key Stage 1 reading standards were similarly low, writing standards were well below average when compared nationally and both were well below average when compared with similar schools. In mathematics in Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments were well below average when compared nationally and below average when compared with other similar schools. Over the last five years, standards at the end of Key Stage 2, despite being so low, have risen significantly. The school has met its targets for the last two years, but needs now to aspire to higher standards. The general trend in results in Key Stage 1 has not been as positive. Although there have been years when results have been better, and indeed results in 2001 show an increase on those in 2000, overall results have not increased significantly over the last few years. This is a matter for concern. There is underachievement in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, pupils now achieve in a satisfactory way in both English and mathematics, but could be achieving much more if they had had a better grounding in the past. In science in Key Stage 2, pupils are currently attaining average standards and they are achieving well.

Pupils' attainments in most other subjects are below average. However, they attain average standards in singing and in physical education. They attain above average standards in athletics. Achievement in religious

education is satisfactory overall. In other subjects, pupils make progress in a suitable way in most lessons, but there is overall underachievement in aspects of music and in geography, history, art and design and design and technology because pupils are not taught these subjects often enough. Attainment in ICT is poor. Pupils do not achieve well enough because they have not been taught the full curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils like school and are keen to join in with all its activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils conduct themselves well in class, around the school and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	The quality of relationships is good, pupils are usually keen to please adults and they work co-operatively with them and with each other. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is well below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Good

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall. It was satisfactory or better in 86% of lessons seen, 28% of lessons were good and a further 12% very good. 14% of lessons were unsatisfactory or worse, with one being poor. The teaching of English, including literacy, is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. In mathematics, including numeracy, teaching is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The needs of pupils of higher ability and those with special educational needs are met in a satisfactory way in Key Stage 2 but are not sufficiently well met in Key Stage 1.

In the Foundation Stage, teachers provide a warm, calm environment in which young children feel relaxed and comfortable. There is a good range of purposeful activity offered. The satisfactory teaching the children receive enables them to mature and to settle into the life of the school. In Key Stage 1, teaching is unsatisfactory in English and science overall and in too many lessons in other subjects. In all, 34% of lessons were unsatisfactory and one of these was poor. The key areas of weakness are related to the quality and effect of the teachers' planning, the expectations that teachers have of the standards pupils can achieve and the ongoing assessment and evaluation of the pupils' work. In addition, some literacy skills, for example phonics are not taught systematically enough.

In Key Stage 2, teaching was good in 53% of lessons, including some 14% of very good teaching. Some of the weaknesses identified in Key Stage 1 remain, but teachers' good general teaching skills help them to design lessons that are stimulating and interesting and encourage pupils to want to learn. The activities they plan more closely meet the current needs of the pupils and key literacy and numeracy skills are more consistently and effectively taught. Pupils are generally well managed in both key stages, but the quality of this management is more consistently good in Key Stage 2.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. Not enough time is devoted to information and communication technology and statutory requirements are not met in this subject. The curriculum as a whole is unbalanced and is in need of review.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for the majority of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The provision for pupils with more complex difficulties, however, is unsatisfactory because staff have not been provided with sufficient specialist advice.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school is successful in helping pupils to become mature. The provision for their social and moral development is good. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The school provides pupils with a warm and secure place in which to work and play. Pupils are well known to adults and good support is given to many who have troubled background or who face difficulty in controlling their behaviour. They are assisted to become increasingly mature in a safe and caring environment. However, the use of assessment to raise standards is poor.

The school has a satisfactory partnership with the parents. Most parents are supportive of the school and welcome opportunities to help their children. The school makes good efforts to inform and include parents. A few parents do not support the school by bringing their children to school regularly.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Currently satisfactory. Until very recently, the management of the school was unsatisfactory because there had been too much instability caused by the number of headteachers and acting headteachers who have been in post over the last five years. This has prevented the school moving forward at the required rate. Since her permanent appointment two terms ago, the current headteacher has shown dynamic leadership and has established a firm foundation of good relationships and a clear understanding that standards must rise substantially and quickly. This places the school in a good position to move forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors fulfil their statutory duties. They have good knowledge of the school and are very supportive. They have not, however, been sufficiently questioning about why the standards are not as high as they are in similar schools.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The potentially effective measures for monitoring the work of the school put in place by the current headteacher, have not had time to take sufficient effect.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The priorities identified by the school have been appropriately supported. Good use has been made of specific grants.

There is a satisfactory number of qualified teachers and a good number of support staff. The school building is of adequate size and is well maintained. The provision of learning resources is satisfactory overall, but they are unsatisfactory in history and music. A lack of books in the library restricts pupils' breadth of reading. The staff and governors ensure that they receive best value for the money they spend, but have not yet fully extended this to evaluating the value for money that purchases provide or the value for money provided by the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That children like the school • That the school expects children to work hard and the progress the children make • The quality of the teaching • The approachability of the school • The way the school helps children to become mature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organisation of the homework pupils are given • The information they are given about their child's progress

The inspection team agrees that homework should be better organised. Parents have access to a wide range of information about their child's progress, including informal and formal verbal reports and written reports of suitable quality. The team agrees that the school helps pupils become mature, that the school is approachable and that teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is, however, unsatisfactory and pupils in this key stage do not make sufficient progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In 2000, end-of-key-stage tests for eleven-year-olds showed pupils to be attaining well below average standards in mathematics and science, both when compared with pupils nationally and with those in similar schools. In English, standards were low, being in the lowest five percent of those achieved nationally. Key Stage 1 reading standards were similarly low, writing standards were well below average when compared nationally and both were well below average when compared with similar schools. In mathematics in Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments were well below average when compared nationally and below average when compared with similar schools.
2. Over the last five years, standards at the end of Key Stage 2, despite being so low, have risen significantly. In English, they have risen by twice the national increase, in mathematics by three times this and in science by four times the national increase. Standards dropped in the 2000 end-of-key-stage tests but have risen again this year. In science, which has been a focus of the school, in 2001, pupils attained standards similar to the national average in 2000. Standards in English and mathematics have not risen as much, but nevertheless, they fall in line with the generally upward trend. The school has met its targets for the last two years, but needs now to aspire to higher standards. The general trend in results in Key Stage 1 has not been as positive. Although there have been years when results have been better, and indeed results in 2001 show an increase on those in 2000, overall results have not increased significantly over the last few years. This is a matter for concern. The school has taken care to monitor the attainment of boys and girls. Although there is some underachievement amongst boys in Key Stage 1, there is no such gap in achievement year on year in Key Stage 2. In some years, boys' achievement exceeds that of girls and in others, the reverse situation exists.
3. Pupils enter the nursery with well below average attainments. The assessment conducted on entry shows that most children have very impoverished language and poorly developed social skills. Few can converse in phrases or sentences. In most aspects of their development, despite the secure progress they make in the nursery and reception classes, pupils are still operating at a level that is below average when they enter Key Stage 1, in most aspects of their development. Their attainments in communication, language and literacy and mathematics are well below average, but their personal and social development nears average. This presents a considerable challenge to the school to raise standards from such a low base. This challenge has not yet been successfully addressed in Key Stage 1. The current quality of teaching and learning in English is unsatisfactory and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those of higher ability, do not achieve enough as they move through the key stage. Pupils develop some basic skills in reading and writing, for example learning to link sounds with letters, but the development of these skills is not sufficiently regular and systematic to ensure that pupils remember and use what they have learned. Too little attention has been given to the very important area of the development of language for speaking and thinking and their lack of ability to structure thoughts into sentences greatly inhibits pupils' ability to write fluently. In Key Stage 2, pupils make better progress in English. They achieve the standards of which they are currently capable, although their achievements could be higher if they had a better grounding in Key Stage 1. Standards are rising. At the end of the key stage, more pupils are attaining the expected level (Level 4) in reading, although too few are gaining a higher level. Standards in writing are still not as good, with only one third as many pupils reaching Level 4 as do nationally. Twice as many meet this standard in reading. As in Key Stage 1, too little focused attention is given to the development of language for thinking and talking and pupils' achievements in this are too low.
4. In mathematics, the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy with its clear structure and expectation has improved the quality of education provided in both key stages and pupils are beginning to become more capable and fluent mathematicians. They gain an increasing facility with number and the ability to use this skill when solving simple problems. Pupils develop suitable knowledge of other aspects of mathematics, for example being able to measure and to describe the properties of shape. Pupils' poor language skills are an inhibitory factor. Pupils in both key stages find it difficult to talk about their work. Their lack of language makes it difficult for them to remember what they have been taught. In addition, in a laudable attempt to hold high expectations of the pupils, work is not always planned sufficiently well to take them from their current low starting point. As a result, pupils, including

those with special educational needs, are sometimes unable to take full advantage of the teaching. These factors are depressing standards particularly in Key Stage 1. As a consequence, although progress in most lessons is satisfactory, there remains underachievement by the end of Key Stage 1 and, although pupils are now achieving in a satisfactory way in Key Stage 2, their achievements could have been better if they had received a better grounding.

5. In science in Key Stage 2, pupils attain average standards and their achievement is currently good. Pupils gain knowledge at a good rate and they develop sound skills and understanding of how to investigate in science. Pupils learn to structure investigations and to draw conclusions from them and they achieve well in this aspect. Skills and knowledge are not, however, sufficiently rigorously developed in Key Stage 1 and pupils in this key stage do not achieve as well as they should and their attainment at the end of the key stage is well below average. In history, geography, art and design and design and technology pupils attain standards that are below average when they complete both key stages. When taking into account the very limited creative abilities and knowledge and experience of the world children have, both when they start and finish the Foundation Stage, pupils generally learn appropriately in lessons but, over time, they do not achieve enough because they have too few opportunities to study these subjects. Pupils have suitable opportunities to study religious education and, given their current level of language skills, they achieve appropriately. Standards are below those set out in the locally agreed syllabus, however, because pupils' language skills inhibit their learning and consequent attainment. In physical education and in singing, pupils attain average standards and achieve in an appropriate way. They attain good standards in athletics. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are low and pupils have not achieved enough. This is because, until very recently, the school has not had sufficient computers for pupils to have had opportunity to cover the full National Curriculum in the subject.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. In the main, pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour in and around school are both good. This is a continued improvement since the time of the last inspection. The youngest children settle quickly into the school's routines and establish a positive approach to learning. In all areas of the school, pupils are happy within the school environment. They like school and join in with the activities provided. There is good attendance at optional after-school and lunchtime activities. The school's nursery and reception provision develops a very smooth link for pupils from one stage of education to the next. Most pupils are well motivated and respond well to positive praise and further encouragement offered by staff. In only a few instances, do a small number of pupils find some difficulty in sustaining their attention and motivation. This occurs mostly when the planned activities are either not clearly enough explained or are too difficult for them.
7. Throughout the school, however, there are some marked differences between the attitudes of some boys and those of girls. On the whole, teachers have to work much harder to motivate boys than they do girls. This is generally effectively done but, where lessons are not as successful, there are small groups of boys who respond with what is most accurately described as 'laddish' behaviour. Whilst teachers are mostly able to deal with this and there is no evidence of boys' attainment being affected in this school, attitudes are evident that may affect their learning in the future. The staff are very aware of this situation and efforts are made to both show boys the value in what they are doing and to try to change the attitudes, but efforts need to be strengthened. In general, however, pupils are well motivated and eager to share their work with teachers, other pupils and visitors. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to school and are well integrated within the school community. The relationships between pupils and adults are good and pupils gain quickly in confidence when answering in class. They wish to please their teachers.
8. In the main, behaviour is good. Pupils settle to their tasks and behave in a responsible and helpful manner. On occasions, in their eagerness to participate in some class activities, a small minority of pupils forget to put up their hands and call out to offer opinions. Teachers deal with this in a very positive manner by reminding of class rules and the correct way to respond. Pupils generally show regard and concern for each other. Occasional instances of unsatisfactory behaviour occur in classes being taken by a teacher who is not their regular teacher. This is largely because the school's behaviour policy is not sufficiently overt for the pupils to be sure it will be consistently applied by these teachers. Behaviour around the school is good. No aggressive behaviour was noted during the

inspection and, although boisterous at times, behaviour in the playground is good. The school has provided a quiet seating area shaded by low growing shrubs for the less energetic or more nervous pupils to occupy at playtime and this is well respected. There have been a relatively high number (30) of exclusions from the school in recent years, but these have been largely restricted to a small number of boys in Year 6. The school is noted locally for its ability to deal with the most difficult pupils and a significant number of these temporary exclusions are associated with pupils who have been excluded from other local schools and accepted by Hillocks. The school works closely with these pupils to support and improve their behaviour. In the main, pupils respond well to the school's expectations of their behaviour.

9. The personal development of pupils is satisfactory throughout the school, with older pupils accepting greater responsibilities. Pupils act as monitors for their class. They help staff and tidy away their own desks and the classroom. Older pupils assist younger ones with reading and other activities, for example making a box lid in Year R/1, older pupils willingly helped the youngest pupils in the class. Pupils are encouraged to work together and most show responsible attitudes when engaged in such activities. The school is very tidy and free from litter and graffiti. This is due in part to pupils' sense of ownership of the building and grounds. Relationships are good between adults and pupils and between pupils themselves. Most show the same amount of respect to catering and supervisory staff as they do to their teachers.
10. Attendance is unsatisfactory as it is well below the national average. It has shown little improvement this year, remaining at 93% as it has been for the last three years. Unauthorised absence is well above the national average. Poor attendance is a contributory factor to the underachievement of a small number of pupils. The school is now working with a new Education Welfare Officer who is well aware of the attendance record and the need to co-operate with the school and parents to improve it. Pupils are punctual in the morning, which allows classes to register efficiently and to make a good start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching and learning of pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. It is good in the aspects of personal, social, emotional and creative development and in communication, language and literacy in the nursery and in the reception classes. Teaching is unsatisfactory for children in the mixed reception and Year 1 class because the work planned does not meet their needs closely enough.
12. Teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory in English and science overall and there are too many examples of unsatisfactory lessons in other subjects. This is a serious weakness for the school to address. On the whole, teachers have suitable knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and take care to ensure that they have the required facts at their fingertips. There are, however, some areas where teachers do not have sufficiently up-to-date knowledge, for example not all are sure about the latest thinking about the way phonics is most successfully taught. Despite this, due attention is paid to the teaching of basic skills. The use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has ensured that appropriate focus is given to skills such as phonics, grammar and punctuation in English, but the teaching of these is not sufficiently systematic to ensure that pupils learn these basic skills sufficiently fast. The development of numeracy skills such as counting, addition and subtraction in mathematics is somewhat more successful, but here too there is considerable room for improvement. The overall quality of teaching of mathematics is, however, satisfactory.
13. The key areas of weakness in Key Stage 1 are related to the quality and effect of the teachers' planning, the expectations that teachers have of the standards pupils can achieve and the ongoing assessment and evaluation of the pupils' work. Although teachers plan conscientiously, the planning does not sufficiently take into account the level of previous attainment that the pupils have. Teachers too often plan from the expectations as set out in the national schemes of work for pupils of average prior attainment. The pupils in Hillocks Primary School currently have well below average attainment and thus there is often a mismatch between the level of expectation and a realistic evaluation of what pupils will be able to learn in lessons. Sometimes pupils manage to complete activities because they are 'spoon fed' by adults; on other occasions, pupils complete very little of the set work and assumptions are made that this is because they did not work hard enough. This has an adverse effect on their overall learning. Because there is virtually no ongoing evaluation of the pupils' learning,

teachers are too often unaware of the true level of pupils' attainments and, therefore, when they plan subsequent lessons, this unsatisfactory element of teaching is perpetuated. Additionally the planning often centres on what whole classes of pupils will do instead of clearly identifying what different groups of pupils will learn in a lesson. As a result, teachers are unable to move all pupils forward at an appropriate rate for their ability.

14. In most classes, pupils are appropriately managed and discipline is satisfactory. There are occasions, however, when there is insufficient direction given to the pupils to allow them to understand what they have to do or how they will know when they have completed the task. In one lesson, for example, pupils were given clocks to set at various times. They were unsure as to what they should be doing and, having played for a few minutes with the clocks, began to wander about the classroom, disrupting the learning of others. Teachers try hard to make sure that pupils work hard and make good use of the time available. Where tasks are of a suitable level, pupils respond well and complete the set work. Teachers use some of the methodology suggested in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. There is suitable use of whole-class teaching as well as group and individual work. There are occasions, however, when pupils are seated listening to the teacher for too long and their concentration and motivation wanes. There is too little use of the interactive methods suggested as part of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This affects the resultant quality of learning.
15. In Key Stage 2, teaching and learning is good overall. Although some of the weaknesses identified in Key Stage 1 remain, in particular the quality of planning and ongoing assessment, other aspects are good and, in general, the quality of the teachers' generic teaching skills enables them to overcome the weakness in the planning of lessons. In this key stage, teachers are meeting the challenges presented by the low attainment of the pupils well. They have implemented a number of regular activities to try to improve literacy skills, including spelling, handwriting and numeracy, and good attention is paid to detail in lessons. Throughout the school, however, although the poverty of pupils' language has been recognised and steps taken to try to improve vocabulary, too little attention is given to the direct teaching of speaking and listening to ensure that pupils develop this vital skill at an optimum rate. In Key Stage 2, the teaching of English is satisfactory and the teaching of mathematics is good. Although not always shown in planning, activities in Key Stage 2 classes are mainly suitably adapted to the pupils' needs. This aspect, however, remains in need of further thought, because the lack of clarity in the written planning sometimes means that teachers lack precision in explaining to pupils what it is they should be learning.
16. In Key Stage 2, pupils, including those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, are normally very well managed. Because not all the pupils come from an environment where education is valued, teachers have to be particularly skilled in motivating the class. Teachers deal with pupils in a lively, humorous way. The good discipline ensures that in most instances lessons can be conducted in an orderly atmosphere in which pupils can concentrate on learning. There are instances of very good pupil management, particularly of some of the older boys who, at present, occasionally display negative attitudes to learning that are more usually associated with much older pupils. In one Year 6 religious education lesson, for example, a handful of boys were inclined to be dismissive. Because the lesson was very well structured, integrating playground dilemmas with the teachings from the Bible, these pupils were 'won over' and displayed genuine interest in the Bible story they were read. Teachers are lively and present most tasks in an interesting way. Once pupils are used to a teacher, they relax and become interested in most of the work. The odd instances of unsatisfactory behaviour are almost always associated with pupils being taught by teachers that do not normally take their classes. On these occasions, the school discipline policy is not sufficiently consistently applied to ensure that the teachers can manage all pupils well.
17. In this key stage, good use is generally made of time, lessons are conducted at a good pace and pupils are expected to complete good amounts of work. Consequently, pupils' books show that they have covered a good deal of ground in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. There is often too little work in other subjects, but this is associated not with unsatisfactory teaching, rather with too little teaching in each subject. In both key stages, teachers make good use of the teaching assistants who work with them, however better targeted tasks could further improve the impact of the good teaching skills of these teaching assistants. All teaching assistants in the school are committed and enthusiastic. They have a good rapport with pupils and encourage them to try hard and succeed. Prior to the inspection, a number of parents expressed concerns about the homework set for pupils. Although some use is made of homework to extend learning in class, it is not well organised. Pupils

are not sure when they will get homework or how much time they should be spending on it. This reduces the impact it can have. This is a matter already identified by the school and steps have already been taken to remedy this.

18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils do not learn sufficiently well. In this key stage, teachers do not always plan suitable tasks for these pupils. There were, for example, occasions during the inspection when pupils with special educational needs did not have enough support to help them with their writing. This meant that most wrote very little indeed and some wrote little more than the date. In other lessons, teachers do not address questions to lower-attaining pupils, asking more-able pupils instead. In these lessons, pupils with special educational needs have little opportunity to become involved in the learning activity and they begin to lose interest and concentration. In Key Stage 2, pupils' learning is satisfactory. In many lessons in this key stage, teachers use teaching assistants effectively to give carefully targeted support. These assistants are aware of the main learning intentions of the lesson and help the pupils to persevere and work hard. Nevertheless, there are occasions, as with Key Stage 1, when tasks are too hard for the pupils.
19. Throughout the school, but particularly in Key Stage 1, a small number of pupils with more complex needs, including some with very difficult behaviour, do not receive suitable teaching. Teachers and teaching assistants have not received the training and support they need to provide suitable education for these pupils. Pupils are too often taught outside classrooms and are too seldom taught by their teacher. This severely inhibits their learning and the progress they make.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

20. The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory. It meets the requirements for the Foundation Stage and the needs of the children in these classes. The curriculum provided for the very small number of Foundation Stage children in the mixed-age reception and Year 1 class is unsatisfactory because it does not pay sufficient attention to the requirements for children of this age and it does not sufficiently meet the needs of the children in this group.
21. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum is broad and covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum. Sex education is taught effectively through the science curriculum in Years 5 and 6. At the time of the inspection, there was a weakness in the curriculum for ICT. As a result, pupils do not have opportunity to study the full range of the curriculum and the statutory requirements for this subject are not being met. The school has recognised this issue and has already purchased resources and undertaken training to address this. The school has decided to concentrate on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills to raise standards in these key areas of the curriculum. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been successfully introduced into the school.
22. In the commendable desire to raise standards in English and mathematics and in the light of the current national focus on literacy and numeracy, there has been an understandable increase in time devoted to the teaching of these very important areas of study. This strategy has had some positive impact in the rising standards seen. However, opportunities to extend and consolidate literacy, numeracy and ICT skills through work in other subjects have not been identified. Opportunities to consolidate knowledge gained in other subjects through careful choice of text in literacy lessons have also not been sufficiently exploited. Not only has this not made optimum use of time, it has also meant that opportunities have been missed for pupils to understand the relevance of what they are learning in English and mathematics. The way time is currently allocated means that there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to develop key skills and knowledge in art and design, design and technology, history and geography. Overall, although done for the best of reasons, the quality of the curriculum as a whole has been diminished and its balance and relevance is currently unsatisfactory in both key stages.
23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Most pupils receive a suitable balance of in-class support and additional help when they are withdrawn to work in small groups with teaching assistants. However, some pupils with more complex special educational needs are withdrawn too frequently for additional support. This means they miss important parts of lessons. Teachers are aware of pupils' individual needs but the planned activities are not always closely enough aligned to the specific objectives on pupils' individual educational plans. In other respects, however,

the school provides good equality of opportunity for pupils. Suitable monitoring of pupil's attainment with respect to gender and social grouping has been undertaken and care is taken to ensure that all but the small group of pupils with complex difficulties have good access to the curriculum provided.

24. The school offers a satisfactory range of extracurricular activities that make a positive contribution to pupils' social and academic skills. A well-attended lunchtime games club enables pupils to consolidate literacy and numeracy skills through play. During the inspection, the football and netball clubs had to be cancelled due to inclement weather. Observation of lessons in physical education show that the skills developed by pupils through their attendance at these two clubs help to enhance their games skills.
25. The planned programme for pupils' personal education is satisfactory. Pupils' personal and health education is covered in a programme that includes sex education and drugs awareness. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to discuss issues concerning their health, safety and, for older pupils, aspects of their life outside school hours.
26. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual development is sound. Occasions when the school provides a spiritual dimension are mainly confined to assemblies, when pupils can reflect on their experiences and explore their self-knowledge. Assemblies meet requirements. They follow a mainly Christian ethic and include very lively and effective assemblies led by representatives of the local clergy and community. Recent innovations such as the school production of 'Joseph' provide pupils with a broader knowledge of their beliefs and further insight into their spiritual awareness. The provision for promoting pupils' moral development is good. The school's aims promote a good moral sense. Teachers support these aims and there are positive role models throughout the school. This is particularly so in the strong team of teaching assistants. As a result of the promotion of the school's aims, pupils are well able to distinguish right from wrong.
27. Provision for pupils' social development is good. The quality of relationships in the school is good. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitude to their social behaviour and self-discipline. Pupils are expected to interact well and to be considerate towards each other. Good opportunities are provided for collaborative work. In a Year 3/4 science lesson, for example, pupils were expected to work together to separate a mixture of solids. They needed to work collaboratively to do this successfully. This type of classroom activity promotes an ability to show regard for others. The school has started a 'playground peacemaker' scheme. In this initiative, selected Year 6 pupils are trained to help pupils who are in dispute in the playground to resolve their differences. This creates a sense of fair play and is a good example to all. Responsibility is developed by the culture in which older pupils regularly help younger pupils, for example by hearing younger pupils read. Even the youngest children in the nursery class are expected to clear up after activities. For example these children were expected to collect the number of balls that they had been playing with (10) and, with help, check that they were all there. Pupils of all ages accept responsibility for routine school duties willingly. Older pupils say they would welcome more opportunities to take responsibility.
28. The school's provision for cultural development is satisfactory and has appropriate impact on pupils' knowledge of their own culture. Pupils learn about their local culture through involvement with the local community and visits to places of interest. Visits are mainly limited to local events and venues. There have, for instance, been visits from local people such as the grandfather of a pupil in Year 3 who came into school to give an additional perspective on their local history studies. They have visited a local butterfly park as part of their work in science. Productions such as 'Joseph' are extending cultural provision. Pupils learn about the art, music, literature and religions of a variety of different cultures, but this work is unco-ordinated and somewhat haphazard. The provision made by the school to further pupils' understanding of Britain as a multicultural society is not well developed and they have, not therefore, had opportunity to develop knowledge and interest in the lives of others in this wider community.
29. The school has cultivated close links with the local community and its involvement in aspects of school life is encouraged. This is demonstrated by the financial and other support for school visits and activities given by a number of local businesses. In many cases, this provides pupils with worthwhile experiences which might not otherwise be available. Members of the older generation are interested in the school and their support is also valued. Good links are maintained with the school at which pupils continue their secondary education. Visits made to this school include a programme of events

organised by teachers and secondary pupils. These give Hillocks pupils an insight into life at the secondary school and this helps them to make a smooth transition to this school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The provision made for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is satisfactory overall. There are, however, some very positive features. The school provides pupils with a warm and secure place in which to work and play. Pupils are well known to adults and good support is given to many who have troubled background or who face difficulty in controlling their behaviour. There is a strong ethos of inclusion. Pupils with extra difficulties are accepted into the school and are provided with security and a structure that allows them to remain within the education system. A small number of pupils have been accepted into the school after they have failed to settle in other schools and have been suspended from them. These pupils are given good support and are thus provided with a very valuable 'second chance'. The vast majority of pupils feel comfortable in school. Younger pupils trust their teachers and older pupils place confidence in their advice. In almost all classes, behaviour is well managed. Attendance has not been well managed in the past, but is now receiving much more focused attention. Parents find it easy to approach teachers with matters concerning their children's welfare and are very happy that such matters are dealt with well.
31. Procedures for monitoring attendance have been underdeveloped and, even though they are now being revised, are currently unsatisfactory. The school does not take prompt enough action if a pupil does not come to school in the morning and the strategies for involving parents in matters of regular attendance are underdeveloped. The new Education Welfare Officer is now working closely with the school. All are now aware of the strategies needed to improve the rate of attendance and the reporting of absence, but these have still to be fully implemented.
32. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are satisfactory and in many respects they are good. The permanent staff have high expectations of good behaviour and there is consistency in the way this is managed, especially in Key Stage 2. Adults foster good manners and a sense of self-discipline amongst pupils. However, where teachers do not regularly teach a class, the behaviour of some pupils is sometimes not acceptable because the behaviour management strategies in use in the school are not consistently enough applied. The strategies in use are not sufficiently public for pupils to know that systems of rewards and sanctions will be used by all, including temporary teachers. Teachers use praise well. Some awards are offered for good behaviour, attitudes and academic achievement, but there are few overt signs of adults' pleasure in pupils' achievements. In the 'good work' assembly held during the inspection, it was clear that pupils greatly valued the certificates they were given and younger pupils in particular could gain pleasure and greater understanding from the use of more overt systems of reinforcing positive behaviour or good work.
33. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Teachers deal effectively with incidents when they occur and involve the headteacher as appropriate. Records are kept of incidents and parents are involved at an early stage. In cases of prolonged poor behaviour which may involve temporary exclusion, the school works to a suitable education plan. Minor conflicts are resolved by teacher-led discussion. Recently, selected Year 6 pupils have been trained as 'playground peacemakers'. The scheme is already showing signs of success in developing pupils' social skills and offering good peer role models to younger children.
34. Procedures for child protection are good. Two members of staff are responsible for the well being of pupils. All, including temporary staff, are aware of the procedures. Staff and governors carry out routine checks of the premises and equipment and defects are correctly remedied. Accidents and injuries are treated promptly, records kept and parents informed. Health and safety matters such as the playground surface have been identified for action in the near future.
35. The school has a satisfactory range of procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs. It works in conjunction with representatives from support organisations within the local education authority. However, staff in the school have had very limited support to help them with some of the more specialised aspects of supporting children with complex learning difficulties. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly but the quality of the teacher's record keeping varies. In some cases, pupils' targets are specific and it is clear how they are going to help the pupils achieve them; in other cases, they are too broad and vague. This is particularly noticeable in the case of targets relating to literacy

and numeracy skills. This makes it difficult for teachers to plan suitable tasks for these pupils and therefore makes their progress less secure than it could be. Although just fulfilling the statutory requirements, annual reviews for pupils with a statement of special educational needs are of poor quality. For instance, they do not always include a note of the progress made in relation to the objectives on pupils' statements, neither do they set clear targets for the coming year.

36. In the nursery class, the children are carefully assessed to find out what they know and can do. Because the staff are very sensitive to individual needs, this information is used effectively to help children to improve their knowledge and understanding. Teachers undertake a baseline assessment of pupils in the reception year. This gives information about attainment in a number of key areas. However, it is not sufficiently well analysed to enable teachers to use it to assist individuals make the best progress. As yet it has not been used to provide a measure against which the subsequent teaching and learning can be measured and evaluated.
37. The school has not identified any teacher to take responsibility for assessment. There is a lack of awareness of how assessment information can be used to help teachers to improve standards. The newly appointed headteacher is very aware of the inadequacies of the school systems, has made good plans for their improvement and has already undertaken some training. There is a wealth of data from tests given to pupils throughout the school. In the past, a range of tests has been introduced without sufficient consideration of the value of the information they give. The statistical data gathered from these tests is comprehensive, but is not in a form that can be easily used to find out what pupils know and can do related to the requirements of the National Curriculum. This results in data that has not been sufficiently useful in identifying curriculum strengths and weaknesses or in informing strategic curriculum development.
38. Although there is no lack of will, many of the teachers are unsure as to how best to assess their pupils' attainment and progress. Systems have been introduced in English and science to assist teachers with this, but as yet there is too little agreement about how and when these assessments should be made. Teachers do not routinely review what pupils have learnt so they cannot use information from informal assessments to inform their future planning. There are, as yet, no procedures to help teachers improve the accuracy of their own assessments. The new headteacher has good plans to start a system where teachers bring samples of pupils' work to assess together, to ensure a greater consistency in making judgements. This, however, has not yet started. Both the procedures for assessment and the use of assessment information are poor and adversely affect standards throughout the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. The school tries hard to foster a working relationship with parents. A small representation of parents who attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting were very happy with the education provided for their children. Generally, parents are very appreciative of the dedication of the staff and they find teachers very approachable. A small number are concerned with the standards of behaviour but they say this has improved lately. A relatively small number of pre-inspection parent questionnaires were returned, but these showed that some parents had concerns about the homework that pupils get and the information that they receive about their child's education.
40. The school keeps parents regularly informed through newsletters and notices. However, they are not made aware of the parts of the curriculum their children are studying. In this aspect, the team agrees with some parents that they are not well enough informed to enable them to give good assistance. In other respects, the team feels that parents get good information about their child. The annual reports to parents are well worded and personal, they are critical if necessary and comments on personal development are often very perceptive. There are regular meetings with parents when parents are able to discuss their child's progress and parents are made welcome at the end of the school day if they have matters they wish to discuss.
41. The school is situated in an area of considerable social deprivation in which there is little tradition of children moving on to higher education. This presents the school with a challenge in raising the profile of education in the home so that pupils can receive more encouragement and support and hold higher expectations of themselves. The school is taking an increasing number of opportunities to invite parents into school to become more involved with their child's education, welfare and attendance. This

is beginning to pay off in terms of relationships and greater understanding. Several parents help in school on a regular basis and recently a group of parents have trained to become involved in a 'Better Reading Partnership' with pupils. This project entails parents' coming into school over a number of weeks to support a particular child with their reading. This not only benefits pupils' social development but also makes a very valued contribution to reading standards.

42. Parents in the lower school are now supportive of the home-school reading scheme and a good number hear their child read with some regularity. Some older pupils read at home under the guidance of their parents but there is not a strong reading culture in Key Stage 2. The team agrees with parents that homework is not well enough organised for parents to be sure when and what to expect. The school is aware of this and, prior to the inspection, a questionnaire had been sent to parents to begin the process of improvement. Although the largest proportion of the parents are positive about the school, not all are sufficiently supportive of their child's education to ensure that they attend school regularly. Overall, the effectiveness of links with parents in supporting their child's education is satisfactory.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. Over the last five years, Hillocks has had few periods of stable management. There have been two long periods of acting headships and at no time has the school had a full permanent staff. There has been a very significant turnover amongst staff and this has made the structured management of change very difficult. As a result, until recently, the management of the school has been unsatisfactory and it has not improved from the time of the last inspection in the way that it should. The current headteacher has been in post only two terms and, due to a shortage of staff, has had a full-time teaching commitment during one of these terms. Despite this, she has made a good start to reviewing the needs of the school and in beginning to establish systems to provide a secure foundation for future developments. The current management of the school is satisfactory. The new headteacher is dynamic and energetic and has a determination to ensure that standards rise significantly and quickly. She is already working with the appointed deputy headteacher designate and, as a team, they are very well placed to move the school forward. Productive efforts have been made to appoint suitably experienced and qualified teachers and the school is due to have a full permanent staff in the term following this inspection.
44. The school's aims and objective are firmly and correctly rooted in the raising of standards, as well as in developing pupils' personal qualities. Recent work has begun to move the school towards the fulfilment of these aims. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 has improved and standards are rising. There is an urgent need to ensure that this success is extended to Key Stage 1. Good emphasis is given to equality of opportunity. Relationships within the school are good and, under the present leadership, staff are working together to the benefit of the pupils. Staff have a shared commitment to the school and are committed to improving the quality of education provided. The roles of the subject co-ordinators, which until recently have had unsatisfactory impact, are now developing. Co-ordinators have not always had sufficient knowledge of the education provided in their subjects to have identified key weaknesses. The unsatisfactory nature and impact of the teaching of English in Key Stage 1 has not been identified by the English co-ordinator. The headteacher has correctly identified the need for further training in order for co-ordinators to lead their subjects more effectively. There is now an on going programme of in-depth training for co-ordinators and greater expectations about the role they will play in the school. Subject leadership is beginning to have some positive effect. English and mathematics co-ordinators have worked successfully with colleagues to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and more detailed analysis of the work being done in a number of subjects has been started. When a subject has been well led, standards have risen pleasingly. In science, for example the in-depth work initiated and carried through by the co-ordinator has led to the significant rise in standards seen. Overall, key staff demonstrate a capacity to successfully meet the challenges of the situation in which they are now placed.
45. Monitoring of work in school has begun. The procedures for this are now good, but are so recently introduced that they are not yet effective. The Headteacher and co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work on a regular basis, but too little has yet been done to share good practice or to improve areas of weakness. Although there was a growing awareness that standards were too low, there had been insufficient in-depth analysis of teaching and learning to identify where and why this is occurring. Although the school had large amounts of statistical data about the attainments of the pupils in English and mathematics, this has not been used to set year-on-year individual and cohort targets

for improvement except for the end of Key Stage 2. There has also been insufficient analysis of the data to pin point areas of weakness in either teaching or pupils' learning.

46. As with many areas of management, school development planning has suffered from the number of managers that have been in post and is not as well established as it should be. The present school development plan has been successful in providing the direction for work, but lacked precision in the detail of criteria for success and in the identification of how spending would be linked and evaluated to the outcomes of initiatives. This development plan also lacked a vision for developments beyond the current year. A new format for development planning has been drawn up by the current headteacher that, if used, should begin to address these deficiencies. The priorities identified in the current school development plan were, however, appropriate to the needs of the school and work on these priorities has been accomplished as set out, having a positive impact on aspects of the school such as numeracy and science.
47. Over the last five years, and in the period since the last inspection, the governors have taken an increasingly effective role in the school. They are very knowledgeable about the school because they spend good amounts of time in school gathering first hand information. They have good knowledge of the development plan and know where the school stands in relation to this. Because this plan lacked detailed targets, they have not been able to be sufficiently precise in their monitoring of ongoing work, but are well aware of the extent of the work being done. They are now playing a satisfactory part in planning future developments. The governors are aware of their role as a 'critical friend', but have not always put sufficient emphasis on the 'critical' part of this role. Governors have, for instance, compared the performance of the school to others of a similar type, but have not been sufficiently challenging in pursuing the reasons why the school's performance does not measure up to the performance of others. The governors are now fulfilling their statutory obligations. Although the ICT curriculum does not meet statutory requirements, the governors have recognised this and have provided the funds to increase the number of computers, to train staff to use them and have an action plan that should ensure that the requirements are met in the forthcoming term.
48. The stated priorities of the school have been appropriately financed and headteacher and governors have had an eye to the aspects of 'best value' that are associated with competitive purchasing. There are, however, not yet rigorous procedures to enable governors to make objective judgements about 'best value' in key areas such as staffing. Funds have been well used, for example in developing the professional roles of co-ordinators, and in the development of the ICT suite. Specific grants have been used for their designated purposes, for example funds to improve teacher expertise in ICT have been used well to prepare teachers for the use of the new suite. Once again, the lack of precision of the development planning has made it difficult for staff and governors to decide whether they have had good value for the money spent.
49. Day-to-day finances are appropriately managed. A number of matters were raised by the school's last audit report. These have been fully addressed. The financial matters relating to the school are now appropriately maintained using new technology. However, the school's general use of such technology to promote teaching and learning has been very limited and is unsatisfactory overall.
50. As identified above, although the school has a sufficient number of teaching staff and a good number of teaching assistants, for the last five years it has lacked a stable staff. As a result, the delegation of responsibilities and the allocation of staff to classes have often been governed by who was in the school rather than by teachers' qualification and experience. This has not always been productive. The headteacher, for example, has been acting as special educational needs co-ordinator. She has extensive experience of co-ordinating special educational needs, however she has not been able to devote as much time to this recently, having taken on a full-time, class-teaching role in addition to that of headteacher. As a result, she has not had as much opportunity to monitor and oversee teachers' records for pupils with special educational needs. Some responsibilities, such as carrying out annual reviews, have had to be delegated to class teachers, which means there are inconsistencies in how well targets are drawn up on individual education plans, and the extent to which annual reviews fulfil statutory requirements. Additional to this type of pressure, staff have not always been able to stay in one area of the school long enough to establish themselves and to ensure that the pupils benefit from their experience. In the term following the inspection, the school is due to have a full permanent staff for the first time for five years. There is an urgent need to reconsider the best use of experience and

qualification and to base the delegation of responsibilities, including the allocation of classes, on this review.

51. The amount of accommodation available for teaching is good. However, this accommodation is in three buildings and this causes difficulties when pupils need to move about the school, particularly in inclement weather. Year 3 and Year 6 pupils, for example, do not have easy access to the school library and the Foundation Stage is split by the accommodation, because reception-age pupils are housed in the main school building away from the nursery pupils. Successful efforts have been made to improve the condition of the buildings and provide a stimulating atmosphere for learning by the use of good displays. The building is well maintained by the site manager and cleaning staff. The new headteacher has been very proactive in attracting funds to improve the facilities provided. A new sports hall is shortly to be established, and improvement to the playground and facilities for nursery pupils are to commence very soon. At present, however, pupils in the reception year do not have adequate access to secure outside play facilities and they do not engage in physical activity sufficiently often. The location of the school office inhibits the capacity of the office staff to extend a welcome to visitors and parents and therefore to play a part in promoting close community links.

52. In most subjects, resources for learning are adequate for the current demands of the curriculum. They are now good in ICT. Resources are, however, inadequate in music and history. The school library is unsatisfactory because it does not contain sufficient books in either the fiction or non-fiction categories.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to further improve the quality of the education provided and the standards achieved by the pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve attainment in English and mathematics by
 - planning for and implementing a programme to develop speaking and listening skills in order to provide pupils with language skills for working in all subjects; (paragraphs 64,67,77,78,84,119)
 - ensuring that key skills in reading, writing and numeracy are regularly and systematically taught and that they are consolidated and extended through work in other subjects; (paragraphs 12,64-66,68-69,74,101,104,122)
 - using data more accurately to set and monitor individual and cohort targets. (paragraphs 37-38,45,82)

- (2) Improve teaching throughout the school, but particularly in Key Stage 1 by:
 - ensuring that planning, both for units of work and for lessons, shows clearly what pupils of different ages and abilities in a class will learn; (paragraphs 13,18,72,86)
 - ensuring that the expectations for pupils' learning are high, but that they reflect the current level of attainment of the pupils; (paragraphs 13,72,80,86)
 - improving day-to-day and end-of-unit assessment to inform these expectations; paragraphs 13,37-38,73,80,82)
 - ensuring that teachers use a good mix of interesting and interactive methods when teaching; (paragraphs 14,72,80,86)
 - providing teachers with the training, advice and support they need to teach pupils with more complex special needs; (paragraphs 19,23,35,122)
 - organising homework to maximise its effects. (paragraphs 17,80)

- (3) Make further improvements to management by:
 - extending the roles of co-ordinators so that they more effectively lead the raising of standards in their subjects; (paragraphs 44,75,82,92,97,101)
 - improving the monitoring by the headteacher, key staff and governors of the work of the school and taking action to share strengths and improve weaknesses; (paragraphs 45,47,75)
 - ensuring that the school improvement plan is sufficiently precise in identifying actions and success criteria to allow it to be used to lead and monitor ongoing improvements and to show whether these are enabling the school to provide value for money. (paragraphs 46,47,48)

- (4) Improve the balance of the curriculum provided by:
 - ensuring that the provision for information and communication technology meets statutory requirements; (paragraphs 21, 107-110)
 - organising opportunities for study in all subjects that occur at frequent enough intervals for pupils to be able to build on what they have already learned. (paragraphs 22,90,95,101,102,106)

Other issues which should be considered by the school:

Work to improve the attitudes of some boys to their learning. (paragraph 7)

Improve attendance at the school by:

- working with parents to encourage greater co-operation from the minority who do not bring their children to school regularly;
- investigating and implementing some of the strategies used successfully by other schools;
- working as closely as possible with the Educational Welfare Service. (paragraphs 31,42)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	12	28	46	12	2	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	33	234
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	65

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	79

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.9
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	22	19	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	10	18
	Girls	15	16	17
	Total	23	26	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	56 (75)	63 (86)	85 (93)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	18	14
	Girls	16	17	16
	Total	26	35	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (82)	85 (89)	73 (89)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	12	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	11
	Girls	4	5	9
	Total	12	14	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46 (63)	54 (78)	77 (78)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	2	5	8
	Total	10	14	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	38 (56)	54 (78)	65 (85)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	230
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	30	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	25.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	173

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	33

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	538,857
Total expenditure	533,203
Expenditure per pupil	2,748
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,163
Balance carried forward to next year	22,110

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	267
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	38	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	53	3	3	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	55	16	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	40	17	10	16
The teaching is good.	47	47	0	5	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	36	21	7	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	28	3	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	38	0	3	5
The school works closely with parents.	31	45	9	7	9
The school is well led and managed.	43	45	9	3	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	50	5	5	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	59	10	0	3

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53. Children enter the nursery class in the year in which they become three. After a suitable induction period, children attend the nursery part time, and here they spend up to 6 terms. In the term in which they are five, they transfer to the reception classes. All children in one class are in their reception year; in the other class there are a small number of reception children taught alongside Year 1 pupils. The education provided for the children in the mixed-age class is not as good as that provided in the other classes because there is too little attention given to planning an appropriate curriculum for these children. Initial assessment shows that most children enter nursery with attainments that are well below average.
54. Since the last inspection, the provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved. Improvements include better planning and stronger relationships with parents. Links between the nursery and reception classes are improved, although their geographical separation still creates a divide that is not easily overcome. In general, there are suitable resources to support learning in the Foundation Stage, but outdoor play facilities, particularly for the reception classes, are inadequate. These children do not have a dedicated area that is large enough for them to play and take exercise in. This impedes their physical development. After a significant period of staff changes, the current quality of teaching is having a positive impact on children's learning,

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Priority is given to the personal and emotional development of the children. Over the Foundation Stage as a whole, children achieve well and most will meet the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. This reflects the good teaching and provision where young children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve, to form good relationships, to look after themselves responsibly and behave very well. Children have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. By the end of the reception year, they are beginning to play co-operatively and collaboratively in various outdoor activities, for example when rolling a ball to each other down a long slope and in role-play settings, such as the class 'mini-beast hospital'. In the two single-age-group classes, there are well-established classroom routines. Appropriate classroom resources are suitably placed and easily available for use. The teachers and nursery nurses actively encourage children to play well together and show consideration to one another when using a wide range of activities. Adults offer security to the children by their constant, supportive but firm manner that results in a calm and purposeful atmosphere which is conducive to learning.
56. All children take responsibility for personal hygiene, and most put on aprons independently when working with paint and water. Both boys and girls learn the importance of taking turns in games and sharing construction toys, such as large building blocks. They listen attentively to familiar adults and concentrate well. Teachers provided good role models and treat one another and children with courtesy and respect.

Communication, language and literacy

57. By the end of the reception year, despite making satisfactory progress in their learning, most children have still to reach the nationally recognised standards and their attainment is well below average. Speaking and listening skills are still low although all staff concentrate on this area of learning. Many children show immature speech patterns. On entry to nursery, many children have very limited vocabulary and are not yet speaking in sentences and phrases. The teaching of this aspect is good overall, but it is unsatisfactory for the small number of children in the mixed-age class. The greater number, however, achieve well. All staff in the nursery and in the dedicated reception class, place very clear emphasis on the development of language and communication. Listening skills are well taught through songs, games and stories. Children learn to recognise and join in with rhymes and learn the names of colours. They learn to use books sensibly and to know that print carries meaning. Older children are encouraged to develop their language through activities that require them to describe more than one attribute of an object, for example describing a shape as 'a yellow rectangle'. The careful

teaching of spoken language in the reception class provides a very good model for teachers in Key Stage 1 to follow.

58. Towards the end of their time in the nursery, children are introduced to letter sounds and begin to recognise these. Children begin to learn early mark-making skills. In reception classes, children learn to write and to form letters more accurately. Children with higher prior attainment begin to write simple sentences to convey meaning. They begin to use capital letters and full stops correctly and these children exceed the goals set. Teaching is unsatisfactory in the mixed-age class because planning does not clearly identify what the group of children will learn, nor does the management of the class allow for the different level of maturity of the children. As a consequence, these children can become restless and their concentration can deteriorate to the extent that it stops them learning.

Mathematical development

59. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage in developing mathematical understanding, and the teaching of this aspect is satisfactory overall. However, most children have still to reach the nationally recognised standards when they reach the end of the key stage and their attainment is well below average. The children's mathematical understanding is often limited by their poor vocabulary and language skills. In the nursery class, children learn number rhymes and play counting games. They experiment with water and with sand and gain an early understanding of capacity. Children begin to learn number recognition and to match one object to another. The teaching develops the children's understanding of number through topics, stories and games. Nursery nurses are well deployed and make a very good contribution to the progress made. Adults are supportive and praise is frequently used to encourage learning and raise self-esteem. In the reception class, children engage in a good range of practical activities for number work and these are well matched to children's learning needs. Work with sand and water is less well structured as accommodation restricts their use. By the time they leave the reception classes, children of higher ability count reliably to 10 and write numbers to 20. They recognise simple shapes. Other children count to 10 and 'copy write' figures to ten, but these numerals are not yet well formed. Children are unfamiliar with the concept of large numbers. As with communication, language and literacy, and for the same reasons, teaching and achievement in the mixed-age class is unsatisfactory.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. Children's achievements in gaining a knowledge and understanding of the world are satisfactory over the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching in this aspect is satisfactory. However, in all classes the planning for this aspect lacks detail as to how children of different prior experiences will be taught. On entry to the nursery, many children have very limited knowledge about their world, but a few in each class have wider out-of-school experiences and these children do not achieve as well as they could because the activities planned are too general. In the nursery class, in order to assist them to expand their experience, children are provided with a wide range of construction equipment and building materials with which to explore how things work. They use role-play such as enacting the role of a policeman or woman. While most have only a very limited view of a policeman's job, a few demonstrate greater knowledge that is not sufficiently extended by the activities in hand.
61. In the reception classes the breadth and depth of activities is suitably increased, for example, children experimented with small construction equipment to make a mini-beast. They could talk enthusiastically about the number of legs, the habitat in which it lives and the size of a spider, for example. They use areas such as the 'mini-beast hospital' to explore their understanding of the inhabitants of the natural world. Teaching in this class encourages children to think for themselves. Good links with other aspects of development are made, for example as children made models of bees, speaking and listening skills were well developed through co-operative working. Children are developing an understanding of how to use the computer and most can use the mouse appropriately to control simple programs on screen. In most aspects, however, children do not reach the goals set for them by the time they enter Year 1 and their attainment is below average.

Physical development

62. Achievement in the development of physical skills is satisfactory. By the time they leave the reception class, many children are, however, still working within the early learning goals, largely because their control over pencils and tools, such as scissors, is not as developed as is normally seen in children of this age. Their attainment is, thus, below average. Teaching for physical development is satisfactory. In the nursery, children have suitable opportunities for physical activity. There is a small, secure outdoor area for these children. Children in the reception classes use this area only occasionally. In physical education lessons and when using the outdoor area, nursery children moved confidently and with regard for the space available. In outdoor sessions, the use of play equipment was good. The quality of support from nursery nurses was very good. This helped to develop children's imaginative play. Only one physical education lesson was seen in the reception classes. Here, children explored and used skills and actions individually and in combination with others. They made satisfactory gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. In all three classes, children are given good opportunities to develop pencil control. Good care is taken to ensure that pencils are correctly held. In the reception class, handwriting is carefully developed and children are given good opportunities to develop cutting and sticking skills through other activities, for example when undertaking work about mini-beasts.

Creative development

63. By the time they leave the reception class, most children are still not meeting the early learning goals for creative development and their attainment is below average. A few higher-attaining children are, however, working within the early stages of the National Curriculum. Because children have few creative skills when they enter the nursery, and because they are taught well, their achievement is good. Nursery and reception children recognise familiar nursery rhymes and songs and sing them with enjoyment. Children are encouraged to express their feelings through exploring media and materials, music, story making and imaginative play. They have daily opportunities to explore colour through painting and collage. They use a variety of materials with which to explore. Reception children, for example, made mini-beasts such as bees and spiders and used a range of materials well. In many instances, children are encouraged to use their thinking as well as artistic skills. In one reception class, for example, children were asked to design a cover for a magic box. The teacher provided a range of different textures, shapes and coloured materials from which children chose. Good intervention by staff helps to support and extend children's ideas and understanding. However, on some occasions, because materials were already prepared for them, opportunities for children to experiment and develop their understanding of shape and size are missed.

ENGLISH

64. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils attain standards in English that are well below what is expected. In the 2000 national tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' performance in reading was very low in comparison to the national average and fell within the range of the lowest five per cent of schools across the country. In writing, their performance was slightly better, though still well below the national average. In both aspects, the standards reached were well below those attained in similar schools. Even though pupils enter the school with well below average attainments in their communication, language and literacy, they do not achieve enough over this key stage. In the 2001 tests, pupils' performance in reading improved and there was also very slight improvement in writing. However, at the time of the inspection, no data for the 2001 tests was available to compare pupils' performance with a national picture. Pupils have poor attainments in speaking and listening. They listen with varying degrees of attention, but many pupils find understanding more than a simple question difficult and frequently are unable to converse in sentences. These poor communication skills inhibit the progress pupils can make in both reading and writing, as well as in other subjects.
65. During Key Stage 1, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, do not build sufficiently upon what they have already learned in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils learn basic skills such as phonics and handwriting and they write for a variety of purposes, but their progress is not steady and systematic enough. Their knowledge of sounds is not as secure as it should be and this hinders progress in both their spelling and the quality of their writing. Pupils' progress in writing could be better if more were expected of them. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils of all abilities did not write as much as could have been expected and two or three wrote little more than the date. There are few pupils working at even slightly above the nationally expected level in this class and none at the

higher Level 3. In one Year 1 class, pupils do not develop their writing skills in a systematic way because they complete too little written work. Across the key stage, although pupils practise handwriting they do not develop their skills securely. Too often, they spend time copying out extracts of text rather than practising skills such as letter formation, the position of letters in relation to the line and the different ways of joining letters.

66. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of reading, whilst below average, are better than in writing. Currently, standards are slightly better than they have been over the last few years. Most pupils can read or work out many of the words in their reading books, but some use limited strategies, for example using the first letter sound rather than a mixture of strategies, such as looking at pictures, seeking recognisable patterns within words, or using the context of the story to help them. Pupils have a more limited knowledge of books than is normally the case by this age. Pupils' poor language skills limit their ability to understand what they read. Even more-able readers who read every word accurately, sometimes struggle considerably with understanding what a book is about.
67. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, pupils' performance was well below the national average for English. However, standards have improved significantly over the last four years. In 2000 and 2001, pupils' performance was better in reading than in writing. Similarly, many more pupils reach the higher Level 5 in reading than in writing. This year, no pupils are working at this level in writing. Standards in speaking and listening remain low. Pupils do not have a secure grasp of standard English and, even by Year 6, pupils often reply to questions with single words or short phrases and few speak confidently and fluently.
68. Pupils make satisfactory gains in reading and writing during Key Stage 2, but their achievement could be better. Not enough emphasis is placed on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and this inhibits pupils' achievements in the other aspects of English. By the age of eleven, pupils read their books competently but not always with sufficient fluency, understanding and expression. Most pupils can name one or two authors but they generally do not have a wide knowledge of books or a breadth of experience in reading a range of genres, such as fantasy, adventure, non-fiction and poetry. Their range of personal reading is too narrow and they do not receive enough guidance and encouragement to broaden their diet in reading. A contributory factor to this is that the number and range of fiction and non-fiction books in the library is unsatisfactory. There are not enough books to broaden pupils' knowledge and love of books. As with Key Stage 1, pupils often encounter words or phrases in their books that they can read accurately but not understand. This lack of breadth of language hinders pupils' achievement in comprehension tasks. The recent initiative, Better Reading Partnership, is working well and having a positive impact upon pupils' attainment in reading and in promoting positive attitudes to books.
69. By the age of eleven, pupils have experience of writing in a range of styles and for different purposes. These include autobiography, formal and informal letters, diaries and informative writing. They also write pieces where they express a personal opinion or write from their own imagination. However, they have very little opportunity to plan, refine and develop pieces of work over a longer period than a lesson. Consequently, they do not practise the important skills of drafting and re-drafting work. One crucial factor that affects standards is that pupils lack the breadth of vocabulary and turns of phrase that would enliven their writing and increase its fluency and impact. Despite the considerable work put in over the last year, many pupils have insecure knowledge of spelling and sentence structure, as well as of basic grammar. Many, for example, misspell words such as 'could' and 'very', that they should know. Pupils have made satisfactory gains over the year, but have been unable to fully overcome their lack of early training in aspects such as phonics.
70. Pupils of lower ability, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 2. They are often well supported, both in their classes and when withdrawn for additional work in small groups. Teaching assistants encourage them and help them to concentrate on the task in hand. On occasions, the work set for the lowest-attaining pupils is too hard for them and they can only succeed with a lot of help from the teaching assistant.
71. Teaching is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, the teaching of basic skills such as phonics and sentence structure is not sufficiently focused or regular and this causes the learning of these skills to be unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2, the teaching of basic skills is much more regular and structured. In this key stage, there are a significant number of lessons

in which teaching is good or very good. In these lessons, teachers manage pupils very well. They keep the lesson moving at a good pace and keep the pupils on their toes. Expectations of what pupils will achieve are very clear and, as a result, pupils work hard and their learning is effective. In one lesson, for instance, pupils readily put up their hands to answer questions on an excerpt from the book 'Goodnight Mr Tom' because the quality of the questioning made it clear what aspects the teacher was expecting pupils to consider. In this lesson, pupils maintained their concentration well. They learned a lot about how, when descriptive phrases are interspersed with dialogue, the reader gains information about characters. Some teachers have a particularly good range of strategies to enthuse pupils and, when necessary, to modify pupils' behaviour without becoming negative or confrontational. In one Key Stage 2 lesson, for instance, the teacher gave a lot of encouragement and praise to pupils and constantly transmitted her enthusiasm for English. She motivated the pupils very effectively, at one point saying, 'I can't wait for this!' when explaining what she wanted the higher-attaining pupils to do. This made them smile and at the same time look forward to starting work. In both key stages, however, some lessons, do not proceed at sufficient pace. In some lessons, teachers talk for too great a period of time and some pupils begin to lose concentration. Pupils then become restless and do not learn enough. In these lessons, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory.

72. Teachers throughout the school use the National Literacy Strategy framework to plan their lessons. This planning is conscientiously completed, but its quality varies. Overall, it concentrates more on what pupils will do rather than what they will learn. At present, teachers base their planning on the requirements set out in the National Literacy Strategy for pupils of average prior attainment in their age group nationally. Because pupils' standards are below this average, these expectations, although high, are too often unattainable. Activities, therefore, need to be carefully adapted and not all teachers, especially in Key Stage 1, have the required skills to do this. These teachers need more guidance on how the programme for each year should be adapted to ensure that pupils are working at appropriate levels and are developing their skills and knowledge in a systematic way. In the most successful lessons, it is clear that the teacher is aware of the needs of different groups of pupils. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, lower-attaining pupils had a simplified worksheet, which gave them clear guidance on how to tackle a limited number of questions. With tactful support from a teaching assistant, they made good progress. Where teaching is effective, teachers use the teaching assistants well, to support different groups of pupils. In one lesson, the teaching assistant worked well with higher-attaining pupils who were working together on a piece of group writing in response to music. The pupils entered into the spirit of this challenge and produced good work. In other cases, the pupils' differing needs are not as well identified and activities are not sufficiently well targeted, activities do not always relate to the main learning focus of the lesson and this confuses pupils and reduces learning. In a Year 1 lesson, higher-attaining pupils were thinking of questions to ask a volunteer helper to find out the mystery object in a box. Whilst this was a worthwhile activity in itself, it did not follow on from the whole-class work that had preceded it, nor did it relate to the final session when the teacher was pulling the threads of the lesson together.
73. The school is at a very early stage in developing assessment systems and using the information from assessments to help teachers plan the next step for pupils' learning. Assessment is not being used systematically to help raise standards. There is no system in place for tracking each pupil's progress in either reading or writing, in relation to National Curriculum levels. This means teachers cannot be sure that all pupils are making the progress they should in relation what they can already do. Neither can they be sure to what extent individual pupils are working towards the nationally expected levels.
74. Opportunities for consolidating reading and writing skills through subjects such as in history, geography and religious education are missed, and work in these subjects does not make enough of a contribution to developing pupils' literacy skills. In neither key stage is there planning in place for developing speaking and listening and this is a weakness. Teachers do not always grasp opportunities to develop spoken language during lessons, for instance by modelling correct spoken language themselves, or by phrasing questions to encourage pupils to talk more about their ideas or develop their thoughts. This means the chance to broaden pupils' vocabulary and powers of expression is often missed.
75. Much work has been done to implement the National Literacy Strategy and the co-ordinator has played a key role in this. She has a knowledge of areas to be further developed but, because there has been insufficiently precise monitoring of standards and teaching, key weaknesses, including the unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 1, the unsatisfactory development of basic skills in this key stage

and pupils' poor speaking and listening skills, have not been identified. The impact of leadership in the subject is, therefore, unsatisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

76. Standards at the end of both key stages are well below average, both in comparison with schools nationally and with schools of a similar nature. Standards in Key Stage 2 are, however, rising and have increased at three times the rate seen nationally over the last four years. This is a significant and pleasing increase but, even when taking into account the fact that pupils enter Key Stage 1 with well below average attainments, standards are not yet high enough and, overall, pupils are not yet achieving sufficiently well. The school has set realistic targets that have been met. These targets need to continue to rise. In Key Stage 1, results have fluctuated over the last four years, but have not shown the same rise as is seen in Key Stage 2. This is a matter of concern, in part because it means that teachers and pupils in Key Stage 2 are having to work extra hard to try to make up the deficiencies.
77. Inspection evidence shows that standards are rising in Key Stage 2. As a result of consistent teaching, pupils make good progress in lessons and are building skills and knowledge systematically. Despite this, there remains some underachievement by the end of the key stage because earlier deficits have not been fully made up. Pupils gradually gain the ability to use number both mentally and on paper. By the time they are eleven, most can add, subtract, multiply and divide, although a few need to use fingers to help them calculate. Pupils are able to give properties of shape identifying, for example, when these shapes display reflective symmetry. They are able to use a range of measures and select the most appropriate ones for a task in hand. Pupils have more difficulty in working independently on mathematical problems. They require help with structuring their ideas and in explaining what they are doing. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils needed a tightly structured approach to work in which they were investigating pattern in numbers. They found using a developing pattern to predict how the pattern might look very difficult. Throughout the school, pupils lack this ability to think and talk mathematically.
78. In Key Stage 1, pupils' books show that they have covered a good range of work and have been able to complete this at the time of working. Seven-year-olds have demonstrated the ability to add and subtract numbers to 20, with more-able pupils working with numbers to 1,000. They have, for example, found halves and quarters of shapes and small numbers and have learned the names and properties of two and three- dimensional shapes. Pupils find remembering this work very difficult. During the inspection, for instance, pupils in Year 2 were finding halves and quarters of numbers. Despite the fact that this was consolidation of work previously completed, pupils found this work challenging and more than half were unable to complete the work without support. Pupils have gained a range of mathematical words, but their poor general language skills depress their ability to use these to describe what they are doing. As a result, although pupils make progress in a satisfactory way in most lessons, they are unable to systematically build their knowledge and skills and there is underachievement by the end of the key stage.
79. Teaching and learning in mathematics is good in Key Stage 2 and it is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. A good deal of work has been done in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy to the benefit of the pupils. The consistency of the structure of the lessons assists both pupils and teachers in working within a secure setting. Good emphasis is placed on assisting pupils to work mentally in the introductory parts of lessons. These mental sessions, however, often lack pace because pupils are not yet able to work at speed. Pupils do, however, show confidence in trying to answer questions and in trying to talk about their methodology. Good attention is given throughout the school to the teaching of basic numeracy skills. The school has identified a need to promote pupils' mathematical language and good care is taken to introduce and use the correct terminology. The need to combine this with a focus on the development of pupils' overall language skills has not been identified and significantly more attention needs to be placed upon this. In Key Stage 2, pupils are given good opportunities to consolidate the mathematics they have learned in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have used graphs to plot the temperature of a liquid cooling.
80. Particularly in Key Stage 2, pupils are expected to complete a good deal of work during a lesson. They respond well to this and books show that they have covered a good deal of work during the year. Work is planned so that pupils receive a good balance of types of mathematics. Lesson planning, however, often lacks clarity in describing what pupils of different abilities in a class will learn. There is also too

little use made of assessment in deciding the level at which pupils need to be taught. In a laudable attempt to have high expectations of the pupils, teachers sometimes plan directly from the national expectations for average pupils of the age group and work is planned that is too difficult for the current attainment of the pupils. This inhibits learning. Additionally, more-able pupils do not always receive sufficiently challenging work and do not always make the progress of which they are capable. In the best lessons, teachers are successful in interesting and inspiring pupils. Despite the difficulties they encountered, the Year 6 pupils investigating pattern in numbers were interested and involved. This increased the success of their learning. In these lessons, pupils are well behaved and relationships are productive. On occasion, however, pupils in Key Stage 1 become bored during whole-class parts of lessons or with worksheet activities that do not inspire and their behaviour deteriorates to the extent that it slows their learning. Lessons in this key stage are sometimes too long and pupils are unable to sustain concentration. Homework is sometimes used to extend what pupils are learning in class but there is an overall lack of organisation of this work and the impact it has therefore is not as great as it might be.

81. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class and, through this, make appropriate progress. Teachers take good care to provide these pupils with the help they need, often through the use of teaching assistants. The work of these assistants is of good quality and makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
82. The subject has received sound management. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that teachers have received the training they require to implement the National Numeracy Strategy. Over the last two terms, a good start has been made to monitoring lessons, pupils' work and teachers' planning. This work is, however, in a very early stage of its development and has not yet had time to have an impact on the education provided. The school has collected a lot of data about standards. This data is, however, not in a form that is helpful in identifying year-on-year targets of individuals or cohorts of pupils and is not easily used to identify areas of strength or weakness that can be shared or remedied. The use of assessment data has, therefore, been unsatisfactory.

SCIENCE

83. The standards attained by pupils in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 were well below the national average and standards attained in similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels was also well below the average. At the end of Key Stage 1, the attainment of pupils based on assessments made by their teachers is also well below average. However, there has been a steady rise in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in recent years and since the time of the last inspection. The results from the tests taken by pupils in 2001 show another significant rise. The evidence from the inspection is that standards are still below the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and that pupils do not achieve enough. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are close to those expected nationally and the pupils achieve well. The rise in standards is due to the good leadership of the science co-ordinator and the curriculum review that took place during the present school year. This has had a significant impact, especially in Key Stage 2.
84. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have begun to develop some scientific knowledge. Nearly all of the pupils can name the main parts of a plant. They are able to recognise and to talk about common animals. They have a basic understanding of the properties of materials and are able to classify these using very simple criteria. The most-able pupils are able to describe how bulbs work in electric circuits. Pupils have started to develop some simple scientific vocabulary but their undeveloped speaking skills inhibit their ability to think about and communicate ideas. This lack of ability to communicate in written or in spoken form inhibits pupils' attainment. When undertaking scientific investigations, for example, they are able to describe in very simple terms what they see, but they often need adult support to present their findings in a meaningful way.
85. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop a much better knowledge of scientific facts. In Year 4, for example, pupils know that some metals are attracted to magnets, but that some materials are not magnetic. They understand that seeds are an essential part of the life process for plants and that their dispersal is important. In Year 5, pupils know that some reactions are reversible, whilst others are irreversible. For example, they know that water can change to ice and back to water, but that once an egg has been boiled it cannot change back to its original state. They know how sound travels and how it is heard. Pupils in Year 6 have an understanding of electrical circuits and are able to explain the difference

between a parallel and series circuit. Most pupils understand how to separate a solid from a liquid. Throughout the key stage, and especially in Years 5 & 6, pupils have a sound understanding of how to carry out scientific investigations. In Year 6, pupils understand how to carry out a test, making it 'fair'. They use equipment selected by the teacher and make accurate measurements. The recording of experimental investigations shows a good understanding of scientific principles.

86. The quality of teaching and learning is sound overall, but there are significant variations. In Key Stage 2, teaching is good, but in Key Stage 1, teaching is unsatisfactory. The key factor in this is the rigour with which skills and knowledge are taught. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of science is good at Key Stage 2 and they use this effectively in their teaching. Consequently, pupils gain a firm foundation for future learning. Although the teachers in Key Stage 1 have a sound understanding of science, they do not teach the basic knowledge and skills needed for the subject sufficiently systematically and this does not permit pupils to build their own skills and knowledge effectively enough to promote better standards. Throughout the school, teachers plan carefully. The impact of their planning is, however, very variable. The best planning is in Years 5 and 6 and this clearly identifies what pupils are expected to learn. This helps the teachers to be more precise in their expectations of what pupils should achieve and it promotes good learning. Even this planning, however, does not identify what pupils of differing abilities will learn. In some lessons, this results in a lack of challenge for some pupils, frequently the most able. At Key Stage 2, more-able pupils are often challenged in lessons by good quality questioning. However, the lack of identification of what the more-able pupils will learn sometimes results in a reduction in the overall quality of their learning. Throughout the school, teachers do not systematically review what pupils have learnt during a lesson and therefore they do not always have information to help them plan for the differing needs of groups of pupils in subsequent lessons.
87. In most lessons throughout the school, the teachers manage their pupils well. In Key Stage 2, the way in which teachers manage their pupils is very effective and is one of the reasons why pupils learn so well. All teachers have a good relationship with the pupils in their class. This helps to establish a good working atmosphere where pupils feel valued and want to learn. In some lessons in Key stage 1, however, lessons do not move fast enough, pupils become bored and some of their behaviour deteriorates. This has a negative effect on the quality of learning for all in the class. The curriculum provided for science is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. It is better in Key Stage 2 because there is a better balance between the teaching of knowledge and the development of practical investigations. Throughout the school, the curriculum is broad and covers all the required elements of the National Curriculum. All pupils are well included in lessons in science. There is appropriate support provided for less-able pupils by teaching assistants and through adapted work but, as with all pupils, they achieve better in Key Stage 2.
88. The leadership and management of science are good. The curriculum co-ordinator has relatively recently taken responsibility for science. In the short time that she has been responsible for the subject, she has effectively led the staff in developing the subject through example and training. She has received good training herself and this has enabled her to establish a clear vision for the further development of science throughout the school. As a direct result, standards have risen in Key Stage 2. The monitoring of teaching and learning, however, has not been fully established and is currently ineffective. As a result, some weaknesses have not been identified especially in Key Stage 1. The resources for learning are satisfactory and they have been well organised by the co-ordinator. This has enabled teachers to access resources needed easily and, in particular, has helped to promote the development of more exciting and effective investigations.

ART AND DESIGN

89. Standards are below average in both key stages and pupils do not achieve enough. Very little teaching was seen during the inspection, but other information was gained by talking to pupils in various year groups, looking at displays in classes and around the school and at teachers' planning.
90. The reason why overall standards are depressed is that, although pupils achieve appropriately in lessons when they are taught, they do not have enough opportunities to study art and design. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements, but the amount of time devoted to the subject is insufficient to enable pupils to systematically develop the skills and understanding needed to attain higher standards. Key Stage 2 pupils have had good opportunities for recording first-hand observations, for example making close observations of plants. They made good use of these opportunities and their

skills improved over the key stage; however, because the skills of observational drawing have not been taught with sufficiently regularity or with sufficient rigour the outcomes are of less than average standard at the end of the key stage.

91. The evidence from talking to pupils, from lesson observation and from teachers' planning is that teaching and learning are satisfactory in art and design lessons in both key stages. Planning of lessons is careful and detailed, however it lacks sufficient clarity about what skills and knowledge will be developed. This results in a lack of consistent and systematic development of these skills throughout the school. Teachers establish good relationships. They respect the pupils and this helps to ensure good standards of behaviour. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were painting clay models that they had made the previous week. They worked well together in their small groups, sharing resources such as brushes and paints. This good working environment helped all pupils to make good progress.
92. The leadership and management of art and design is unsatisfactory. There has been no development of the subject for several years and this is reflected in the standards of attainment and in the achievements of pupils throughout the school. Although the co-ordinator has appropriate qualifications and a good understanding of how to develop art and design, none of this expertise is presently being used. There has been no review of the subject. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching has not yet started.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. During the inspection it was possible to observe design and technology in only two lessons. These were the same lesson taught in different classes and it was not therefore possible to gain an impression of the breadth of the curriculum. Further evidence was gathered by talking to pupils and through an analysis of teachers' planning.
94. At the end of both key stages, the standards are below those expected and pupils are not achieving enough. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to make simple structures from simple materials. They have limited ability to use tools with the degree of accuracy expected by this age. For example, although they can cut with a degree of accuracy, they are not able to measure, mark out or shape materials accurately. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to select appropriate tools and techniques for making their product within a simple range. The oldest pupils, for example, were making biscuits from their own design, based on a standard recipe. The pupils were able to perform the task with a reasonable degree of accuracy, selecting suitable additional ingredients. The way in which they undertook the task and their ability to shape and form their biscuits was in line with that usually performed by pupils much younger. They are able to evaluate and improve their design within very narrow limits. In the task seen, the ability of pupils to modify and amend their design was restricted by their inability to communicate their views verbally to others within their group. This reduced their achievement in this aspect.
95. Standards and achievement within design and technology are severely restricted by the curriculum, which is unsatisfactory. In order to focus more attention on basic skills of literacy and numeracy, the school made the decision to significantly reduce the time allocation for other subjects, including design and technology. This has had a large impact on the quality of the curriculum. Although teachers ensure that the breadth of the National Curriculum is covered, the quality and range of the curriculum is severely restricted. The impact on learning is that pupils are not given opportunities to develop skills and understanding in a systematic manner. This has an adverse impact on standards.
96. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. Care was taken in the lessons seen to teach pupils the skills they needed to make biscuits and to evaluate the results and pupils made considerable gains during the lesson. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils. They establish good behaviour and work hard to include all pupils, including those whose attitudes are sometimes more negative. For example, in one lesson seen, a group of the older boys began to demonstrate negative attitudes. This included slight misbehaviour and an unwillingness to co-operate. The teacher dealt with the matter very quickly and sensitively, resolving it before it made any impact on learning. This was good. Throughout the school, although teachers work hard to plan activities for lessons, they do not sufficiently often identify what key skills and understanding they expect pupils to learn. In addition, there are presently no procedures where teachers routinely evaluate what pupils have learnt so that they

can use the information when planning further lessons. This is a weakness that makes a significant impact on the overall achievement of pupils.

97. The leadership and management of design and technology are unsatisfactory. The present curriculum co-ordinator has only recently taken up the post and has not received any training. The subject has not been a focus for development for several years. It has declined in importance and this is reflected in the relative lack of prominence in the curriculum. There has been no evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has therefore little knowledge of the relative strengths and weaknesses throughout the school and does not have information to identify strategies to improve standards.

GEOGRAPHY

98. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection, and a limited amount of evidence was available. Work scrutiny and talking to pupils, with the lessons observed, form the basis of judgement. By the end of both key stages, pupils achieve standards which are below those expected for their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress when they are taught geography, but they are not taught geography often enough to allow them to make sufficient progress overall.
99. Pupils in Key Stage 1 gain a greater knowledge of the world and about places in different parts of the globe. Good use is made of 'Barnaby Bear', a bear that accompanies pupils and others associated with the school on holiday. Those that take him away bring back accounts of where he had been. Pupils can, therefore talk a little about such places as Florida, and have a basic knowledge of what the place is like and how hot it is there. Through their study of the lives of children in Leicester and in Delhi, pupils are beginning to understand the different locations and become aware of contrasting localities. Pupils' vocabulary is, however, very limited and this restricts their understanding of different landscapes and weather conditions.
100. In Key Stage 2, pupils have gained information about various places both in this country and abroad. They have knowledge of seaside places such as Blackpool and Mablethorpe and have some awareness of the key geographical features different from those in Sutton in Ashfield. Older Key Stage 2 pupils have studied some aspects of modern Egypt. Other topics such as water have been studied, but in insufficient depth to support satisfactory achievement. During the inspection, pupils in Year 4/5 were studying the environment of the school. They drew conclusions from investigations into such matters as litter around the grounds and used these to make suggestions for improving the school. Pupils are aware of their environment and can express likes and dislikes about the school. However, they find difficulty when giving reasons, in the main because they lack facility with language. Map-making has been studied by most age groups, for example Year 3 pupils have looked at maps of the British Isles and Year 4 those of Egypt. Most pupils in Year 4/5 could draw an appropriately accurate sketch plan of the school and mark on it the areas they wished to improve.
101. Teaching and learning was at least satisfactory in the lessons seen. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and particularly in Key Stage 2, they plan tasks aimed at interesting and involving pupils. Pupils respond well in lessons and participate fully in the activities. As a consequence, behaviour is good and pupils maintain their concentration. They are keen to answer questions. Assessment is carried out at the end of each topic, however, this is not systematically used to inform teachers where to pick up the teaching of geographical skills next time a topic is taught. This makes pupils' progress in gaining these skills too haphazard. Lessons are planned to make effective use of the locality but other learning resources are unsatisfactory. The school does not have enough artefacts, books or maps to provide a suitable breadth of learning. The use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. Pupils have had little opportunity to undertake research using the computer or to be in contact with the wider world through the use of the Internet and e-mail. The short amount of time allocated to geography restricts the time available for making a written record of work. Opportunities to reinforce literacy skills are thus missed. There has been very little development of the subject of late and subject leadership has been unsatisfactory.

HISTORY

102. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. Judgements are based on scrutiny of pupils' work and talking to pupils and teachers. By the end of both key stages, pupils achieve standards that are below that expected for their age. Evidence shows that pupils make appropriate gains in knowledge and skills when they are taught history but that, because a much lower than the national average time is devoted to teaching the subject, they do not achieve as well as they should.
103. In the very limited amount of evidence provided by the school, a scrutiny of work shows that pupils in Key Stage 1 study the Great Fire of London, transport and Remembrance Day. Evidence of teaching chronological understanding or the changes in the lives of their family, themselves and others was not evident. The current levels of pupils' ability to converse meant that, although they were able to talk a little about some things that they had been taught, for example about old cars, they were unable to articulate sufficiently well to provide evidence that they have gained skills such the ability to compare old and new.
104. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils develop their chronological awareness as they study events, people and changes in the past. Pupils in Year 3 discussed with a war veteran every-day events in people's lives during the Blitz and evacuation. They contrasted these with events in life today. In Year 4, pupils discussed the life of Anne Frank and important social implications arising from this period in time. In Years 5 and 6, pupils study Ancient Greece and make comparisons between the theatre then and now. Pupils demonstrated a sound understanding of the Greek Theatre as they acted out Odysseus and the Enchantress. The lesson developed pupils' speaking and listening skills well, and gave them confidence in acting in front of an audience. Pupils thus gain knowledge of different periods of history. They show less ability in the key skills of identifying reasons for historical event and changes and in questioning the validity of sources. There are also too few opportunities for pupils to make a written record of their work in history.
105. There is too little evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, teaching, when it occurs, is never less than satisfactory and it is sometimes good. Where the pace of lessons is brisk and the teacher enthusiastic, the thinking of pupils is challenged as their historical knowledge and understanding develops and history is brought to life. Questioning is well focused to ensure that pupils reflect on the information received. As a result, pupils enjoy history, they behave well and are attentive and positive about their learning. They work well together and in pairs and larger groups and they are considerate of the work of others. Lessons were well prepared with attention paid to historical vocabulary and historical detail. Because of the limited time, pupils are given too few opportunities to research and to select and report information from their research and their skills in this are not well developed. Opportunities for the more able to pursue their own investigations are limited. In addition, opportunities for consolidating and extending literacy and ICT skills are lost.
106. As history is studied in rotation with geography, only two percent of curriculum time is allocated to the subject. This is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is an enthusiastic leader of the subject and has successfully encouraged colleagues to use a good range of teaching methods. Other aspects of management, however, including the monitoring and evaluation of the subject, have been unsatisfactory. Resources, including books and artefacts to further improve learning in history, are inadequate and restrict the ability of pupils to research in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are well below the expected levels at both key stages and pupils' achievement is poor. The school has recognised the deficiencies in the teaching and learning of ICT. At the time of the inspection, a new ICT suite had just been completed, giving pupils access to 16 computers. The urgent need to ensure that teachers have the necessary expertise and confidence to teach the subject has also been recognised and addressed. The majority of teachers have received suitable training and are now well placed to take the subject forward. In the meantime, the picture with ICT is bleak.
108. During the inspection, there was no opportunity to observe the teaching of ICT. Information was obtained by talking to pupils and through an analysis of teachers' planning. Both show that the amount of time

that has been devoted to ICT in recent times is inadequate. The breadth of the curriculum is poor and does not meet the statutory requirements.

109. Even the oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 have not developed secure knowledge and understanding of ICT. They can type text into the computer, but do not have a secure understanding of how to use a word processor. When following instructions from an adult they can enter data into a spreadsheet and use this to produce graphs and charts. Without the adult support, pupils flounder and are insecure about how to interrogate a database. A few pupils are able to use the Internet and to send and receive e-mails. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 use computers infrequently. They are used mainly to support other areas of the curriculum through games. In Year 2, pupils have not yet enough confidence to use computer technology to input text or to help them share their ideas. Knowledge of all other areas of the ICT curriculum is very restricted and pupils have had too little opportunity to use ICT to support learning in other subjects.
110. The leadership and management of ICT have been unsatisfactory, but there are grounds for optimism about the direction of the subject. Although the standards are far too low and the curriculum is unsatisfactory, this has been recognised by the school and good strategies, including teacher education and improved resources, have been implemented to improve the situation. The recent purchase of computers for the ICT suite has improved the resources for learning significantly. These are now good.

MUSIC

111. By the end of both key stages, standards in singing match what is expected by seven and eleven. Pupils enjoy singing and join in well, in lessons, assemblies and extracurricular clubs. By the end of Key Stage 1, they sing confidently. They follow the line of the melody well and some show an understanding of phrasing when both singing and listening. When listening to a performance of 'Frère Jacques' on tape, for example, one Year 2 pupil pointed out that another group of singers started singing after the end of the first phrase. Older pupils in the school sing 'Joseph' with a good sense of rhythm and style, although many do not manage to reach the higher sections of melodies in some of the songs. Several pupils in the school have particularly good voices. They are confident to perform solos and project their voices well when singing in the larger space of the hall.
112. There was insufficient evidence of pupils composing to make a secure judgement on pupils' standards and achievement in composing. A small number of parents identified that pupils had insufficient experience of performing on instruments. This is a correct observation and both standards and achievement are not sufficiently high. By the time they reach the upper part of Key Stage 2, pupils are not sure of the names of the different percussion instruments and lack knowledge of the scope of each instrument in terms of its sound qualities and possibilities. In the Year 5 lesson observed, pupils were using instruments to make sound effects to accompany a poem. Much of this was at a lower level than would normally be the case by this age. In the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1, pupils followed the teachers' hand signs when playing tuned and untuned percussion. They later improvised sounds to portray a snake moving. A few played sensitively and obviously thought about the sounds that would be most appropriate but many just played the instruments loudly, without thinking about the musical effect.
113. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in music. In the lessons observed, teachers had satisfactory subject knowledge and were able to assist pupils to develop their skills progressively. Teachers support pupils' learning in lessons, for example, by suggesting some ways they could play instruments to create different effects, although more attention could have been given to improving the musical quality of pupils' singing. Teachers are starting to make use of a scheme of work that has recently been acquired by the school and this was seen to be used well in a Key Stage 1 singing session.
114. The leadership of music is satisfactory. The subject has not been an area for development, as the school has been focusing on raising standards in core subjects, which is appropriate. Nevertheless, the co-ordinator is clear what needs to be done to improve the provision for music in the school once music becomes a school focus. There is a limited range of classroom instruments to support work, particularly in Key Stage 2. The pupils benefit considerably from the opportunity to take part in the choir and all pupils in Key Stage 2 perform in the school production. During the inspection, 'Joseph' was in its final stages of rehearsal and the pupils' enthusiasm and interest in this production showed it was contributing considerably to their personal, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Standards in most aspects of physical education at the end of both key stages are in line with what is expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. In athletics, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainments exceed the levels expected. As they move through the school, pupils experience an appropriate range of activities, including dance and swimming, and their achievement is satisfactory.
116. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can travel across apparatus in a variety of ways and some have particularly good co-ordination and can balance well. They use their bodies to form different shapes and most can hold their body shape for a little while on a given signal. Some develop their ideas and devise a simple sequence of movements when using apparatus. In Year 1, pupils can control a ball with a bat in line with the expectations for their age. From the beginning of Year 1, pupils learn the importance of warming up their bodies before they exercise and the possible effect on their health if they do not do this. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 take part in a range of athletics activities and most are able to run with co-ordination and speed. Pupils are able to throw junior javelins a good distance and know the different skills needed to throw discus and shot. They have a secure grasp of techniques needed to perform the long and high jump. Pupils learn to swim from an early stage in the school and all can swim the required 25 metres by the time they leave the school.
117. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall, but there are examples of both good and unsatisfactory teaching. In good lessons, teachers used good methods for teaching, for example, they used demonstration to show clearly how to throw a beanbag successfully, as well as giving good opportunity for practice and improvement. The pupils watched the demonstration carefully and then put what they had learned into practice and they made good progress in developing their throwing and catching skills. Insufficient use is, however, made of pupils evaluating their own and one another's work in order to identify good points and aspects that could be improved. As a result, opportunities for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills are missed. In the majority of lessons, pupils are well managed and discipline is good. Teachers place clear emphasis on the need for pupils to be aware of the safety aspects of physical education. They warn pupils about looking out for one another when they are running around the hall and emphasise the importance of warm-up activities. There are occasions, however, when the management of pupils is not sufficiently good to ensure that pupils behave appropriately and work hard. Mostly, time is used in a satisfactory way in lessons and pupils have opportunities to exercise and to learn physical skills. This is not, however, always the case. A weak aspect in one lesson was the lack of opportunity for pupils to engage in energetic activity. They sat and listened to the teacher, or watched other pupils demonstrate, for too great a proportion of the lesson and this limited the amount of time available for developing their skills and movement ideas.
118. The subject is led in a satisfactory way. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of clubs that are well attended. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 benefit from the opportunity to take part in orienteering activities through visiting an outdoor pursuits centre. The school fosters good links with parents and people from the local sporting community, who come into school to share their skills with pupils. Parents, as well as members of Mansfield Town Football Club, help with football coaching and, through the national 'Sport for All' initiative, members of the local basketball team are due to start a club in September. Pupils encounter sport at a national level through visiting Trent Bridge Cricket Ground in Nottingham. These opportunities make a good contribution to their cultural development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119. Standards at the end of both key stages are below those given in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are achieving the standards of which they are currently capable, but their progress is unduly restricted by their underdeveloped language skills. This inhibits them from thinking and talking about the work in hand. It also makes the task of storing and retrieving concepts and knowledge very difficult, and pupils do not remember information that they have been taught relatively recently. All pupils were, for example, told the story of Mary Jones and her Bible in assembly on the Monday of the inspection week. By Thursday, even many Year 6 pupils could not recall more than the barest facts and were unsure what relevance the story had to them. Pupils' work shows that they are taught an appropriate range of facts, concepts and stories of the required faiths but, at the end of both key stages, pupils have difficulty talking about what they have learned.
120. Only a small number of lessons were observed in either key stage. These, together with pupils' work and teachers' planning, show that teaching and learning are satisfactory in both key stages, but that

they become increasingly good at the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers takes good care to be correctly informed about the aspects of Christianity or other faiths that they are teaching. Planning shows that a range of activities is used to interest and inspire the pupils. Teachers use exposition to relate key facts and reinforce these through practical activities. In a Year 2 class, for example, pupils were told the story of Moses and the Ten Commandments and were then given an opportunity to relate this to the Torah by writing a rule of their own life onto a scroll. This reinforced their learning appropriately and assisted them to remember what they had been taught through practical rather than linguistic activity. In the Year 6 class, very good use was made of role-play to assist pupils to relate the Christian ethic of forgiveness to their own lives. By this means, the teacher was able to inspire and interest the pupils to the extent that a small group of boys who sometimes display disaffected behaviour were showing spontaneous and genuine interest in the way the Bible was set out and in the parable they were told during the lesson.

121. In the main, teachers manage pupils well, including most of the pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are careful to demonstrate the respect for the traditions of others and for their beliefs. In response, pupils have gained an awareness of this. They were, for example, able to say why it was important to store the school version of the Koran on a stand away from the floor. There are occasions when the balance of a lesson is wrong, and pupils sit for too long. Restless behaviour results, especially in Key Stage 1, and pupils do not learn as much as they should.
122. Some pupils with more complex special educational needs, including some with more extreme behavioural difficulties are not well managed by class teachers and spend too much of their time outside classes. This has a negative effect on their progress. Although teaching assistants do very good work in providing these pupils with useful work, it cannot replace the advantages of being party to whole-class discussions and activities that promote the moral and spiritual aspects of religious education. Planning is well related to the relatively new scheme of work, which in itself is appropriately adapted to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Planning, however, does not show what specific knowledge or understanding pupils of different abilities and ages in a single class will learn. Consequently, work does not always promote sufficient progress for all pupils. This is more particularly true in Key Stage 1. In addition, teachers do not systematically evaluate what pupils have learned in each lesson. This sometimes means that teachers are unsure about what pupils' need to learn next. Planning also does not show the balance of oral and written work pupils will undertake during the course of a topic. As a result, pupils in some year groups do too little recording of their work and the opportunity to consolidate both learning in religious education and literacy skills is lost.
123. Recently, religious education has had satisfactory management. The co-ordinator has received in-depth training and has a clear idea of her role and responsibilities and, through the monitoring of teachers' planning, ensures that religious education takes its proper place in the school curriculum. Resources for learning are slim, but are satisfactory for current needs and are being appropriately increased as the scheme of work becomes imbedded. This work is, however, not yet having sufficient impact on pupils' attainment at the end of the key stages.