

INSPECTION REPORT

OXLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Shepshed

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119961

Headteacher: Mr L D Richards

Reporting inspector: Mr J G Quinn
15676

Dates of inspection: 26 - 30 June 2000

Inspection number: 188662

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 10 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Thorpe Road
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Leicestershire
LE12 9LU

Postcode:

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr C Lynch

Date of previous inspection: 17th June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
G Quinn	Registered inspector	Religious education Art Design and technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
D Pacquette	Lay inspector		Attendance How well does the school works in partnership with parents? How well does the school cares for its pupils?
T Clarke	Team inspector	English Information technology Physical education Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
A Newman	Team inspector	Science Geography History Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Assessment
J Penfold	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Pupils under five years of age	Provision for pupils' personal development How efficiently the school uses its resources and finances.

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a slightly larger than average primary school situated in the town of Shepshed approximately four miles to the west of Loughborough in Leicestershire.

There are 269 pupils on the school roll between the ages of four and ten all of whom come from a mixture of local authority and privately rented accommodation and privately owned housing in the immediate area. Pupils transfer to secondary school at the end of Year 5. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, based on information collected by the school, is below average at approximately nine per cent. There are 20 per cent of pupils with special educational needs which is similar to that found in most schools but the proportion with Statements of Special Educational Need is above average at three per cent. There are very few pupils from families of ethnic minorities and none who speak English as an additional language. The majority of pupils attend the school's reception unit from age four, prior to beginning full-time education. Many arrive with pre-school experience having attended local playgroups. The attainment of the majority of pupils on entry is broadly in line with that normally found with a proportion that is below average, most significantly in early language and literacy skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Through a combination of good teaching and sound leadership the school is effective in achieving above average standards in mathematics and reading, and satisfactory standards in all other subjects by the time pupils leave the school at age ten. It provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Achieves above average standards in mathematics and reading by the end of Year 5.
- Provides well for children under five years of age which contributes positively to their progress.
- Makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Promotes good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning in its pupils.
- Provides detailed and helpful information for parents.
- Involves parents in the work of the school in a variety of ways.
- Provides good support and care for pupils.
- Makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- Uses its finances well to support educational priorities.

What could be improved

- The consistent use of whole-school assessment to raise pupils' standards of attainment further at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The rigorous and systematic monitoring of the curriculum and teaching.
- The consistent implementation of whole-school policies.
- The quality and consistency of teachers' marking of pupils' work.

The school's strengths significantly outnumber its weaknesses. The areas for improvement will form the basis for the governors' action plan, a copy of which will be circulated to all parents.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996. Since then there has been steady improvement in a number of areas but in others progress has been less obvious. Improvement has been satisfactory overall. Standards are better in mathematics at Key Stage 2 than they were, but those in English are not as good. Pupils' standards of reading remain high. In terms of addressing the key issues from the last inspection progress has been variable. The role of curriculum co-ordinators for English, mathematics and information technology has been developed in line with national initiatives, but in other subjects there has been little change. There is now a greater range of work in information technology throughout the school and in art at Key Stage 2. The school's involvement in concerts and other performances within the community enhances provision in music. Formal teacher appraisal has been re-introduced and the school continues to monitor its links with the secondary school.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	C	A	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	C	B	C	D	
Mathematics	C	B	C	C	

In the most recent Key Stage 1 national tests, pupils' attainment was similar to that found in most schools. Results were in line with similar schools in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. There has been a steady improvement in line with national trends in all three subjects since 1997 but results are not as good as they were in 1996.

Inspection findings show that pupils' attainment is above average in mathematics and reading by the time they leave the school at age ten. In English and science standards are similar to those found in most schools at the end of Year 5. In English, mathematics and science standards are average at the end of Key Stage 1. In religious education pupils achieve in line with the objectives identified in the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. Standards in information technology meet national expectations at both key stages. In all other subjects standards are as expected for the ages of the pupils at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. There was insufficient music observed to enable a firm judgement on standards in the subject to be made. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards targets in their individual work programmes. Children under five years of age achieve well in the important areas of language and literacy, mathematics and personal development. In other areas their achievements are satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to school and to learning. This has a beneficial effect on the progress that they make and the standards they attain in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good overall.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good and the quality of relationships between pupils is a strong feature.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Pupils attend regularly and most arrive punctually at the beginning of the school day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	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 good overall. It was satisfactory or better in approximately 96 per cent of lessons and very good in eight per cent. In less than five per cent of lessons teaching was unsatisfactory. The most consistently effective teaching was for pupils under five and teaching was least effective in a minority of lessons for some of the older pupils at Key Stage 1. The teaching of English is sound and in mathematics teaching is good. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively overall. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs and as a result most pupils learn effectively and make sound progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Broadly satisfactory. Teaching time at Key Stage 2 falls slightly below that found in most schools. Progression in subjects other than literacy, numeracy and science is not clearly established between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The school plans its Key Stage 2 curriculum with the 10+ base at the local secondary school to ensure that statutory requirements for each subject are met. There is good extra-curricular provision for pupils in the performing arts but in physical education and sport it is less satisfactory.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. A strong feature. Individual education plans are well constructed with clear and attainable targets for improvement. The support that pupils with special educational needs receive from non-teaching assistants contributes effectively to their progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is sound overall with good provision for moral and social development. Opportunities for pupils to participate in concerts within the community is a noteworthy feature of the school's work and contributes positively to pupils' personal development. Opportunities for pupils to learn independently and co-operatively are underdeveloped.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a caring environment, which supports pupils' personal development well. Systems for assessing pupils' educational progress are not implemented consistently throughout the school and results of assessment are not used systematically to plan future work.

The way in which the school works with parents is good. Many help in school on a regular basis and The Parents' and Friends' Association provide valuable funds to enhance the education of the pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides sound leadership and is supported by other key staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body supports the school well and fulfils its responsibilities effectively through organised committees, which meet regularly.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors the performance of pupils closely through National Curriculum tests, but the systematic monitoring of teaching, and of policies to ensure consistent implementation, is underdeveloped.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective use of its resources and uses it finances well to support educational initiatives.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall. Music resources are good. Governors seek to provide best value in securing major purchases for the school. The school does not meet statutory requirements in relation to the daily act of collective worship.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• Their children make good progress.• Teaching is good.• The school expects children to work hard.• Behaviour is good.• The school helps their children to become more mature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The information which they receive about their children's progress.• The range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school.• The way in which the school is led and managed.• Provision for pupils in mixed age classes.

The inspection findings endorse the positive views of parents but do not support all areas for improvement identified. The information which parents receive about their children's progress is adequate. The school provides a number of extra-curricular activities but the range is insufficiently broad and does not provide enough sporting opportunities. The school is soundly led and managed. Provision for pupils in mixed aged classes is satisfactory and there is no discernible difference between the progress they make and that of pupils in single aged classes.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 attained standards in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in comparison with similar schools were average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. In science pupils were assessed by teachers as performing above the national average. In English the percentage of pupils who attained the expected Level 2 was broadly in line with the national average in reading and writing with an average proportion that attained Level 3. In mathematics the percentage attaining Level 2 was in line with that found nationally but the proportion which attained the higher level was above average. On the basis of teacher assessments, science results were above average at both Level 2 and the higher Level 3. In all three tests girls performed better than boys. There has been steady improvement since 1997 in all three subjects but results are not as good in 1999 as they were in 1996. There was a very high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the group which took the tests in 1999, including four pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. The results for the current year indicate an improvement on those for 1999, but as there are no national figures available as yet, no legitimate comparison can be made with all schools nationally.
2. Children under five years of age begin full-time education with attainment which is in line with that found in the majority of schools but with a significant proportion that is below average in early language and literacy skills. The children make good progress overall and by the time they are five years of age they attain above the expected outcomes in the important areas of language and literacy, mathematics and personal development. In other areas of learning they attain levels expected for their age.
3. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with that found in the majority of schools in English, mathematics and science. By the time they leave the school at age ten pupils attain standards which are similar to those in most schools in English and science and above average standards in mathematics. This indicates an improvement in mathematics compared with the position at the time of the last inspection. Although attainment in English was judged to be above average in the last report, and is now sound, standards of reading remain above average. Science is as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Despite the difference in performance between boys and girls in national tests, there was no discernible difference indicated in evidence gathered during the inspection. Also, contrary to the perceptions of some parents, there was no apparent difference overall, in the progress made by pupils in mixed aged classes compared with those that were taught as single year groups.
4. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations as they were at the time of the last report and in religious education pupils attain appropriately in terms of the targets identified in the locally agreed syllabus. This too, reflects the situation at the time of the previous inspection.
5. In all other subjects pupils attain levels appropriate for their ages. In the last inspection report standards in history and physical education were judged above

average. Shortcomings previously identified in the art and design and technology curriculum have been addressed and standards have improved as a result. There was too little music observed during the inspection to enable a judgement to be made on standards of attainment.

6. Pupils achieve well in the majority of lessons and make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support which enables most to make good progress towards targets identified in their individual work programmes.
7. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are average overall. Children in reception listen closely to stories and join in with familiar phrases where appropriate. Through the National Literacy Strategy pupils are provided with opportunities for active listening which has a positive effect on attainment. When encouraged to do so, pupils talk readily about their own experiences and matters of immediate interest, often incorporating humour and detail. Pupils in Year 5 contribute to lessons well and listen closely to adults. However a significant proportion are not as forthcoming as they could be in this respect and experience difficulty in responding to the teacher's questions.
8. Pupils' reading skills are above average and pupils make good progress. Children under five develop their reading skills very well and several of the oldest children in reception begin to read simple books confidently and with obvious pleasure. At Key Stage 1 pupils quickly recognise the sounds of letters and groups of letters which they employ successfully to help them read unfamiliar words. Through the National Literacy Strategy pupils become familiar with a greater range of texts of increasing difficulty, which ensures that their skills are reinforced and developed systematically as they pass through the school. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils build on their knowledge and understanding progressively. They read with increasing fluency and understanding. Some of the more proficient readers in Year 5 read accurately but do so with little expression.
9. Standards in writing are average at the ages of seven and ten. Children in reception make very good attempts at writing. Some form many letters correctly. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils use spelling books and dictionaries, to assist them in their written work. Spelling and grammar develop appropriately together with the range of writing. Throughout Key Stage 2 punctuation and grammar are taught systematically as pupils increase their range of formal and informal written work. Many older pupils write fluently and legibly by the time they leave the school in Year 5 but a significant number do not write in sufficient depth or extend ideas logically. Also opportunities for pupils to write extensively or independently in other subjects are limited.
10. In mathematics, standards are in line with all schools at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 5. Children under five count forwards and backwards to ten and in tens to 100. Some are able to calculate simple addition and subtraction sums mentally. Most can name two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes. Pupils at Key Stage 1 build on these skills successfully. They begin to work with more difficult calculations using two and three digit numbers and are increasingly more resourceful in mental computation. As they pass through Key Stage 2 pupils understand a range of methods for gathering and representing data. Pupils in Year 5 know about square numbers and factors and calculate confidently using the knowledge they have gained.

11. Standards in science are in line with all schools at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school at age ten. At Key Stage 1 pupils have a good understanding of the properties of materials and carry out experiments in such areas as floating and sinking and melting. Pupils at Key Stage 2 analyse the properties of different materials and classify living organisms whilst developing a sound scientific vocabulary. They compare plants and habitats successfully and have a good understanding of food chains. Pupils acquire a good knowledge of the subject but skills of scientific enquiry, investigation and systematic recording are less well developed.
12. In information technology standards meet expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and by Year 5. The Key Stage 2 curriculum is planned appropriately with the secondary school to ensure that statutory requirements are met. At Key Stage 1 pupils begin to use the computer for creating pictures and for word processing. The skills they develop in the use of the keyboard and the 'mouse' are satisfactory. Pupils build on their skills as they progress to Key Stage 2 where they change the appearance of their work by using different fonts. They enter information into a database and present findings in the form of a block graph. Pupils begin to use the Internet to send and receive messages and use compact disks to research information in connection with subjects such as English and history. Overall however, information technology is not used enough to support other subjects.
13. In religious education pupils attain targets identified in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1 and also achieve appropriately by the time they leave the school at Year 5. At Key Stage 1, for example, pupils learn about the significance of water in different religious ceremonies. They know that it has a place in Christian baptism and several appreciate the importance of other symbolic items such as the baptismal candle. Pupils also understand that water has an important part to play in the Islamic rituals preceding prayer. At Key Stage 2 pupils identify ways in which man has spoilt creation and suggest features that might contribute to a better world. Pupils in Year 4 and 5 compare aspects of various religions and are able to draw parallels between creation stories from different cultures and traditions.
14. Pupils make satisfactory use of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum although planning does not consistently identify ways in which pupils might develop these basic skills in all subjects. Also the use of photocopied sheets for some subjects such as history and religious education inhibits the wider application of literacy skills.
15. Although there is no statutory requirement to set targets for Key Stage 2 pupils, the school sets appropriate National Curriculum objectives for pupils at Key Stage 1. It also sets appropriately challenging targets in reading and non-statutory National Curriculum tests for pupils at Key Stage 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. The previous report found that pupils were orderly, courteous and relaxed. These good standards have been maintained throughout the school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, demonstrate good attitudes to learning, positive values and generally good behaviour which impacts positively on their overall progress.

17. From the time they enter school in the reception class most pupils are able to sustain good levels of concentration and are interested in what they are learning. Most pupils demonstrate an enthusiasm for work and an eagerness to succeed. Pupils sustain good levels of interest and concentration which enable them to make appropriate progress in lessons, particularly in reading and mathematics. The shared text aspect of the literacy hour and the mental mathematics aspect of the numeracy hour are particularly popular and when given the opportunity, pupils are keen to discuss activities and learning in the plenary sessions.
18. Behaviour is good. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and movement about the school is orderly. A minority of pupils behaves inappropriately in a small number of lessons. The staff actively promote good behaviour and emphasise self discipline. This has a positive effect on behaviour. There have been no exclusions in recent years. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection and discussions with pupils and mid-day supervisors revealed the conviction that any such incidents would be quickly resolved. The behaviour of pupils with special educational needs is good. They respond well to their teachers and to support assistants with whom they work. Similarly the response of other pupils to those with special educational needs is very good. They delight in their success in lessons and occasionally respond spontaneously with applause.
19. Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous to visitors, greeting them warmly, holding open doors and offering directions when asked. Those approached are willing to speak freely about life in school and the local community and to share their experiences. Pupils are generally honest and trustworthy and show due respect for their own property and that of others. Most parents express satisfaction with the school's standards of behaviour and support its behaviour policy. Good attitudes and behaviour are reinforced by the way examples of good behaviour are rewarded and by the consistent and positive support of pupils' efforts by the staff.
20. Throughout the school the quality of relationships between pupils staff and voluntary helpers is good. It is a strong feature of the school and the high level of mutual respect has a significant impact upon the standards achieved. Pupils co-operate very well in lessons and are often observed helping and supporting each other, particularly in reading, and when using the computers. They show respect for each other's ideas and views and are generous in their appreciation of effort; for example when pupils broke into spontaneous applause at the efforts made by a pupil with special educational needs in a literacy session. It was also apparent in the creative writing aspects of English, and in dance in physical education.
21. The personal and social development of pupils is good. Pupils are secure and confident about rules and routines and enjoy undertaking responsibility. Pupils help in assemblies, deliver registers, play a very active role as classroom monitors and a number of pupils train and act as junior librarians. When required to work in pairs or groups in lessons, pupils do so very sensibly. Most co-operate well with each other and share resources responsibly. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning.
22. Attendance overall is good and above the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school and most pupils are punctual. The school has a comprehensive policy on attendance and has implemented a number of effective strategies to maintain good attendance. Pupils' attendance and punctuality make a positive contribution to the quality of learning in the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. Teaching is good overall and contributes effectively to pupils' attainment. This is similar to the position at the time of the last inspection but is an improvement in so far as the proportion of unsatisfactory lessons has been reduced by 50 per cent.
24. Teaching was at least satisfactory in well over nine lessons out of ten. It was good in approximately half the lessons seen and very good in about one lesson out of 12. Teaching was unsatisfactory in less than one lesson in 20. It was best for children under five where it was never less than good in three lessons out of four and occasionally it was very good. Teaching was least effective in a small number of lessons for Year 2 pupils, but in the remainder it was good and sometimes very good in approximately one lesson out of two. At Key Stage 2 the proportion of good or better lessons was similar to that at Key Stage 1 with about one lesson out of nine that was very good.
25. Teaching and support staff are hardworking and committed to providing all pupils with a good standard of education. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Teachers are aware of these pupils and plan appropriately. The well-qualified teacher with responsibility for working with pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need is very effective. In addition, qualified and experienced support staff provide skilled and sensitive assistance to the pupils with whom they work.
26. Teachers throughout the school are secure in their understanding of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and overall they teach them effectively with a sound concentration on basic skills. In all other subjects teachers have good curriculum knowledge which enables them to question pupils incisively. This was apparent in a history lesson at Key Stage 1, for example, where pupils were considering the story of Grace Darling and as a result of effective questioning were making valuable comparisons between sea rescue then and today. In most lessons teachers introduce the subject clearly and move between pupils supporting and advising them as they work. This was apparent, for instance, in an art lesson for Years 4 and 5 where the teacher guided pupils in their use of perspective and appropriate technique in observational drawing.
27. Teachers plan lessons well overall and as a result pupils build on their knowledge and understanding effectively. What pupils are expected to learn is clearly indicated and in the best lessons the activities are detailed, with appropriate assessment opportunities identified to check whether objectives have been met. The best planning was evident in literacy and numeracy sessions where the needs of pupils with differing abilities were acknowledged and planned for.
28. Teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve in their work, and of their behaviour, are high for children under five years of age and are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2. In the best lessons teachers use the correct terminology freely, such as in a literacy session for children under five where the teacher spoke about 'phonemes' confident in the expectation that all would understand the term. Most did, and used the term themselves in their responses. In a minority of lessons teacher expectations are too low and this is reflected in the low level of challenge in the tasks that are set. Photocopied worksheets are used which demand too little of pupils in subjects such as religious education and history.

29. Teaching methods are sufficiently varied and are effective overall, but opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and independently are limited. Lessons generally begin with a short class introduction followed by individual tasks, occasionally culminating in a plenary session, where the whole class comes together to discuss the activities they have pursued.
30. Overall, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. In the majority of lessons teachers use positive strategies, which clearly reflect the five behavioural rules, displayed in classrooms and other areas of the school. This was apparent, for example, in lessons involving reception, Year 1 and Year 3 pupils. In Year 1 the teacher's use of praise and encouragement were positive features of class discipline. In reception and Year 3 the use of musical instruments and songs to secure pupils' attention were unique and effective aspects. Such methods support pupils' self-esteem well. Consequently pupils are encouraged to work hard and apply themselves conscientiously to the tasks that are set. As a result they make sound progress in their knowledge and understanding. In a small number of lessons at Key Stage 1 the management of pupils' behaviour is unsatisfactory. Pupils become inattentive and a minority disruptive. Time is wasted whilst the teacher remonstrates with pupils, the pace of the lesson slows, learning becomes fragmented and pupils do not make the progress that they should. This was also an unsatisfactory element in a small minority of otherwise successful lessons at both key stages.
31. In general teachers use time, support staff and resources effectively to ensure that pupils are encouraged and supported in their learning. Many lessons proceed at a brisk pace. The teacher conveys to the pupils the need to work quickly and of the amount of time remaining. This was clearly evident in a number of lessons for pupils in Year 5 and in a religious education lesson for Years 3 and 4. Here pupils work at a good pace and lessons are productive. Particularly effective use is made of support staff to assist pupils with special educational needs. Non-teaching assistants know the pupils well and make a valuable contribution to their learning. Teachers used resources effectively in a number of lessons such as physical education in Years 3 and 4 and in a science lesson in Year 3. Here support staff were again well deployed to provide assistance and guidance to pupils with special educational needs. Also in a religious education lesson in Year 2 a teacher used a Muslim prayer mat and other resources to capture pupils' interest and to enliven teaching. Similarly in Years 1 and 2 the teacher made good use of religious artefacts associated with Christian baptism.
32. The way in which teachers check whether learning has taken place is inconsistently applied throughout the school. For children under five assessment is good but at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 it is unsatisfactory. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are sometimes used to good effect. This was so in a literacy lesson for children under five where the teacher sat children in a circle to write down the words which she called out, thereby consolidating, reinforcing and assessing the objectives for the lesson. In a significant minority of lessons planned plenary sessions are not productive, and in some they are omitted altogether. The way in which staff respond to pupils' work through marking varies considerably between teachers but overall it is unsatisfactory. There are too few comments to encourage pupils to value what they do and to help them improve. Consequently some previous work is carelessly completed, or left incomplete, with no indication by the teacher that the standard of presentation is unacceptable.

33. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework throughout the school. It is often set as an addition to specific lessons and is used to supplement that which pupils have learnt in class. An example of this was a religious education lesson at Key Stage 1 where pupils were asked to bring in baptismal gifts to show to the class.

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

34. The quality and range of opportunities designed to meet pupils' needs and abilities are broadly satisfactory. The school's curriculum and provision for religious education are sound and meet statutory requirements.
35. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced; however, no specific and discrete curricular time is devoted to information technology, which is taught through a cross-curricular approach. The school has identified the need to monitor the delivery of information technology more closely to ensure that it receives adequate curriculum time. There are also plans to record the results of this monitoring more systematically than at present. Teaching time for children under five and Key Stage 1 is in line with the recommended minimum, but currently, at Key Stage 2, teaching time falls below that found in most schools by approximately one day a year. The school is aware of this and is taking steps to address the shortfall.
36. Planning to deliver the basic skills in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall, though not enough emphasis is placed on developing pupils' referencing and investigative skills to encourage them to become independent learners. The literacy and numeracy initiatives have ensured that there is good progression in skills and learning between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, curriculum planning for other subjects does not give sufficient emphasis to ensuring that pupils experience continuity and progression in their development of knowledge and understanding. For example two science lessons observed during the inspection, for two different age groups, were broadly similar in their objectives and in the expectations of what pupils would learn. There are also inconsistencies between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in history and geography.
37. Planning in the long, medium and short term is generally satisfactory but not all teachers adhere closely to the agreed format in some subjects, which limits the effectiveness of planning overall. Identification of cross-curricular links and themes in teachers' planning is limited and much that occurs does so incidentally. Where learning takes the form of topics such as water at Key Stage 1 different subject areas are incorporated successfully. Emphasis on planning to ensure the delivery of the key skills across the curriculum is underdeveloped; common elements are not consistently identified in teachers' planning in all year groups and thus opportunities to fully exploit pupils' sound literacy and good numeracy skills are missed. This is further constrained by the overuse of photocopied sheets in some lessons which prevent pupils from responding as fully and thoughtfully as they might.
38. There is good extra-curricular provision for pupils in the performing arts and they respond to this with enthusiasm; musical talent, in particular, is carefully nurtured in this way and is a good feature of the school's provision. However, extra-curricular activities are less common in physical education and sport where pupils might benefit from the social experiences as well as the development of physical skill.

39. The caring ethos of the school lays stress on the importance of equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs. This is generally good; teachers are aware of the area where gender issues affect learning and there are signs that the strategies adopted to address this are having a positive effect. The school has procedures in place to track the progress that pupils make in targeted areas such as reading.
40. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs; they are provided with well-constructed individual education plans and the targets set for improvement are clear, attainable and regularly reviewed in order to address specific needs. There is now a closer match between provision and learning objectives in Statements of Special Educational Needs, than there was at the time of the last inspection, and provision is more closely monitored; this indicates that the criticism in the last report has been addressed fully.
41. Appropriate curriculum time is allocated to the delivery of a programme of personal and social health education to encourage pupils to develop a strong sense of self-esteem and self-discipline. Sex education is appropriately delivered as determined by the governing body.
42. There are good links with the local community and the school plays an important part in its social and cultural life through its focus on the performing arts. Pupils make an appropriate range of visits, linked to the curriculum, to sites of historical and geographical interest. Outside organisations are invited to attend assemblies. Visitors to the school widen pupils' experiences, for example, during the week of the inspection a visitor was at the school talking to pupils about his life working in a quarry. Links with local schools, especially with the receiving high school are positive and productive in several subject areas. This ensures that Year 5 pupils receive appropriate provision in Year 6, and that statutory requirements are met in terms of the Key Stage 2 curriculum. Pupils correspond with pupils in a school in Australia with the same name, via e-mail. This venture has enhanced the school's international links.
43. There are strengths in the good provision for pupils' moral and social development. As a result, pupils have a clear idea of the difference between right and wrong. They show respect for each other and adults and rejoice at each other's achievements, in particular those of pupils with special educational needs. The pupils raise considerable amounts of money for a wide range of identified charities each year such as the Barnardo's, Childline and the Children in Need. The school choir has also raised funds for a local hospice. This teaches pupils that they have a responsibility to their local and the wider community. A notable feature of the school's work in this area is the involvement of representatives from the charities, who have spoken to pupils about how their money is spent for the benefit of others. Each class has a good range of monitors who have jobs, such as distributing books and resources and other tasks. The pupils respond well to these opportunities to take responsibility. Older pupils act as librarians and have other jobs that contribute to the school community. Teachers encourage pupils to collaborate with each other in some lessons. For example, in a science lesson Year 1 pupils who were investigating floating and sinking worked enthusiastically, they shared equipment fairly and took turns well. The school's 'Five Special Rules' are displayed prominently in classrooms and provide a suitable code for living in the school community.

44. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory overall. The youngest children in the 4+ unit have a rich variety of experiences to help them appreciate the beauty of the natural world by growing plants from seed. The significance of important events, such as baptism to Christians, is discussed sensitively in religious education lessons. The pupils' own values are respected by adults and stories are used appropriately in assemblies to help pupils learn about values and beliefs. However, acts of collective worship and lessons, such as art and music are not exploited sufficiently to contribute to pupils' spiritual development. The legal requirements for a daily act of collective worship are not met fully because pupils in two classes do not timetable provision for assembly each day. Some of the whole-school and Key Stage 1 acts of worships also fail to meet requirements. In such cases, although assemblies take place, the element of worship is missing.
45. The school helps pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and those of a range of cultures satisfactorily. The contribution of music to this area of pupils' personal development has improved since the last inspection but the art curriculum still lacks a cultural dimension. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in musical and dance events in their local community. The range and use of music heard by pupils has widened. For example, during the inspection pupils entered assembly to Chinese and Japanese music on two days and there was an interesting display of instruments from around the world that pupils used as a matter of course in their lessons. However, displays generally do not celebrate the traditions of other cultures or the contribution that they have made to art and literature.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school has good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. There is a staff member with overall responsibility for child protection and all staff are aware of lines of accountability. Procedures are well established and clear guidelines are available to all staff. Pupils are well supervised and cared for by staff during the entire school day. Most pupils respond very well to the support and care given by staff. The provision for medical care and first aid is good. The school undertakes regular routine checks of the premises to identify any potential hazards with the result that most areas for attention are relatively minor.
47. Assessment of pupils' progress in the reception classes is good but is unsatisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2. Staff in reception observe and record attainment and progress in each of the six areas of learning. Planning identifies pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses and these are appropriately addressed in order to target improvements in the performance of each child.
48. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the whole-school focus on assessment is insufficiently rigorous and is not used consistently to raise pupils' levels of attainment. Standards of assessment and procedures for recording the results of assessment vary between subjects and between classes. For example, there are currently no systems for assessing pupils' competence or understanding in information technology and religious education. Some moderation procedures are in place to help teachers reach a common understanding of expected standards in National Curriculum tests. However, there is insufficient emphasis on developing examples of annotated work at an agreed level to make sure that assessment of pupils' work is both accurate and consistent across year groups and between and within key stages. For instance, the examples of work used to assess pupils' attainment in

science are old and in need of revision. Recording of assessment results is not sufficiently uniform to ensure that it routinely informs the planning of future work and addresses individual weaknesses.

49. Procedures for promoting and monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory. This is provided in class lessons through personal and social education. Parents support the view that the school cares effectively for their children. The school offers good pastoral care for pupils with emotional difficulties, where their needs and views are taken into account. It has recently introduced a system of setting targets for individual pupils, but this is at an early stage of development and its impact has yet to be evaluated. The school has established good links with health professionals, for example, the school nurse holds weekly surgeries at the school where pupils and parents can meet and discuss any health concerns and anxieties.
50. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. They are systematic and well implemented. The school uses strategies such as, monthly monitoring of unauthorised absences and lateness, regular contact with the education welfare officer and informal meetings with parents. These strategies are effective in improving the overall attendance of pupils and their punctuality.
51. The school currently has good procedures for monitoring and promoting acceptable behaviour and eliminating that of an oppressive nature. These have a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviour of most pupils, including those on the register of special educational needs. Self-discipline is promoted through many positive strategies that reward and sanction. The rewards include open praise, stickers and certificates. Rewards are given out at weekly achievement assemblies. The sanctions include referral to the headteacher and involvement of parents. The school has clear rules to ensure good conduct and discipline. These outline in a positive way the school's expectations of pupils' behaviour and make a significant contribution to standards of behaviour throughout the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. Parental views of the way the school helps their children learn and make progress are satisfactory. The majority of parents responding to the questionnaire, and in discussion with inspectors, stated that their children like school and make good progress. A significant proportion of parents felt that they did not receive adequate information about their children's progress. The qualities of the home and school links are well developed and of good quality.
53. Parental links, including the involvement of parents in the work of the school and in children's learning, are good. The school actively encourages parental involvement in the school especially in the 4+ plus unit, where many parents stay with their children until they have settled to the day's activities. Parents and grandparents participate as volunteer helpers in the classroom, organising events and giving presentations to individual classes. The school has a very active Parents' and Friends' Association which organises successful social and fundraising events. This has been successful in raising additional funding for the school, which has been used to supplement the budget by providing additional facilities such as a separate playing area for children under five and funding for educational visits and visitors to the school. Parental involvement has a positive impact on pupils' standards of education.

54. Contrary to the view of a significant minority of parents, the quality of information provided for parents is good and that about pupils' progress is satisfactory. The school has a comprehensive brochure and governors' annual report to parents which are attractive in presentation and meet statutory requirements. Parents receive regular reports, newsletters and are invited to curriculum evenings and other consultative meetings which they find useful.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The quality of leadership is satisfactory overall. At the time of the last inspection leadership was judged to be strong. The headteacher provides clear general direction to the school's work, with the support of other key staff. His vision is of a school that functions even more closely with the community it serves. There is a mission statement, which is recently formulated but it is not included in the school prospectus. It encapsulates important aims for the school in terms of the learning environment for pupils, the partnership between home and school and the intended contribution that these will make towards pupils' academic, personal and social development. There are policies and practices covering most areas of the school's work but not all are implemented fully, such as policies related to marking and assessment, and planning in some subjects which is inconsistent between key stages.
56. Aspects of the school's work are delegated appropriately to senior staff and subject co-ordinators who carry out their functions effectively within the time available for them to do so. In response to the key issue from the previous inspection report related to extending the role of curriculum co-ordinators, that for English, mathematics and information technology has been developed in line with national initiatives but in other subjects there has been little change. In this respect the key issue has only been partly addressed. The special educational needs co-ordinator is experienced, diligent and particularly effective in her role. She keeps detailed records and liaises very effectively with parents and external agencies.
57. The headteacher analyses National Curriculum performance data closely, with the help of the mathematics co-ordinator, and this provides a fairly clear view of the how well different year groups are progressing. The school has recently introduced the setting of targets for individual pupils but this is at an early stage of implementation and has yet to be evaluated.
58. Systems for appraisal and performance management have been re-introduced since the last inspection and incorporate the necessary element of classroom observation. The English and mathematics co-ordinators have effectively monitored the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in all classes. Monitoring of teaching otherwise, and of the curriculum, is underdeveloped and has been incidental rather than systematic. The curriculum has not been sufficiently evaluated in all subjects to ensure that pupils develop skills and knowledge progressively as they pass through the school. The headteacher is aware of what to look for in lessons as a result of previous in-service training. However, he has not fully used valuable skills acquired, to evaluate the quality of teaching across the school regularly and systematically enough to provide teachers with a clear view of the strengths in their performance, in terms of its impact on pupils' learning, and areas where they might improve.

59. The governing body supports the headteacher and staff well and is effective in planning the overall direction for the school. Governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily through well-constructed committees, which cover the areas of strategic planning, finance, curriculum and premises. They keep themselves informed on the strengths and weaknesses of the school through regular reports from the headteacher and through a system of visits on a rota basis by individual governors, who report on their observations to the full governing body at its termly meetings.
60. The school has maintained its strength in financial planning since the last inspection. The quality of financial planning is good. The governing body makes sure that all funds available are spent to support the school's educational priorities and that pupils benefit. For example, funding for pupils with special educational needs is used well. A recent priority has been to ensure that sufficient time and money is used to develop the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator in view of the number of pupils with special educational needs and statements in many of the classes. This initiative has had a positive impact upon the provision for special educational needs. All grants the school receives are being spent appropriately and the developments contribute successfully to the breadth of facilities for the pupils. The finance committee of the governing body scrutinises the school's spending carefully and takes an active interest in deciding how the budget should be allocated at a suitably early stage. The school carried an appropriate sum forward to the beginning of this financial year and the breakdown for this year's spending indicate that suitable plans are in place to ensure that there will be a similar-sized underspend at the end of this financial year.
61. The day-to-day systems for financial administration are good. The headteacher and governors have good access to all they need to make sure that finances are kept in good order. The minor matters raised in the last auditors' report have been dealt with successfully.
62. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily. The prudent management of finances includes seeking competitive quotations for large projects such as those involving building work. The school compares its test results in English and mathematics with the national results each year. There are no regular procedures for finding out parents' views. However the parents were consulted about the content of the recent home school agreement and are also consulted when decisions about how to spend the money raised through the Parents' and Friends' Association need to be made.
63. The overall leadership and management, and the education that the school provides are sound. Standards by the time the pupils leave the school are satisfactory overall and good in mathematics. The funding for pupils is in line with the average nationally. Taking these factors into account the school gives satisfactory value for money.
64. The school has a satisfactory number of teaching staff whose qualifications and experience broadly match the demands and range of the National Curriculum. Appropriately there are co-ordinators for all subjects, special educational needs, and assessment. Effective use is made of senior and experienced staff to act as key stage leaders who co-ordinate and manage core subjects and special educational

needs. Responsibilities are generally well matched to the interests and specialisms of the teachers. All teaching and support staff have agreed job descriptions.

65. A strength of the school is the provision of a very experienced teacher specifically to support pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need, and support staff who are informed, skilled and effective. They work closely with the teachers and provide high quality assistance, particularly when supporting literacy and numeracy. The school secretary carries out administrative duties very efficiently. The conscientious caretaker maintains the school in good order and the dining staff, mid-day supervisors and cleaners are all valued members of the school who perform their roles in a friendly capable way.
66. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are satisfactory. They are overseen by the headteacher and senior management and reflect both the identified needs of the school and the personal needs of the staff. Documentation and discussions confirm that teaching and non-teaching staff regularly attend a wide range of relevant courses. The school has satisfactory procedures for the induction of new staff to the school under the supervision of identified mentors. The school has good and effective provision for the training of new teachers.
67. Appropriate use is made of the range of information technology available to schools both in classrooms and in administration of the school. The school is linked to the National Grid for Learning and the Internet.
68. The accommodation is adequate for the numbers on roll and allows for the curriculum to be taught effectively. However, the concern expressed in the previous report about the suitability of the mobile classrooms still applies. The rooms are cramped for the pupils involved. The school has adequate playground space and access to a large grassed area. Although the school uses this area on occasions the arrangement is not satisfactory as it is also used by members of the public for a variety of activities including the exercising of dogs. In general the buildings are well maintained and clean.
69. Learning resources throughout the school are overall, sufficient for the school's curriculum and the range of pupils. Resources for the under-fives are good. Recently the school has made significant purchases to support information and computer technology and this has a positive impact on standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. The governing body, headteacher and staff should address the following:
 - (1) Ensure that systems to assess how well pupils learn, are firmly established and used consistently in order to raise further the attainment of pupils at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. (*see paragraph 48*)
 - (2) Introduce rigorous and systematic measures for monitoring the following:
 - continuity of the curriculum in all subjects to ensure progression between classes and key stages; (*see paragraph 58*)

- the quality of teaching in terms of its impact on pupils' learning. (see *paragraph 58*)
- (3) Take measures to ensure that whole-school policies and agreed practices are implemented consistently throughout the school. (see *paragraph 55 and 58*)
- (4) Improve the quality and consistency of the way in which teachers respond to pupils' work through marking, in order to provide pupils with a clear indication of how well they have done and what they need to do to improve further. (see *paragraph 32*)

In addition to the key issues identified above the following minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- consider ways to extend the range of extra-curricular activities to include those of a sporting nature; (see *paragraph 38*)
- increase opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively and independently; (see *paragraphs 21, 29 and 36*)
- ensure that statutory requirements are fully met in terms of the daily act of collective worship. (see *paragraph 44*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8	51	37	5	0	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-Y5
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	NA	269
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	NA	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y5
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	NA	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	NA	54

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	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	35	17	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	28
	Girls	16	16	17
	Total	42	43	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (95)	83 (93)	87 (98)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	33	32
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	44	50	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (93)	96 (96)	94 (96)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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	0	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-Y5

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.5
Average class size	33.5

Education support staff: YR-Y5

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	284

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	442,927
Total expenditure	450,451
Expenditure per pupil	1,627
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,354
Balance carried forward to next year	11,800

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	280
Number of questionnaires returned	161

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	44	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	47	7	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	53	10	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	48	14	2	2
The teaching is good.	45	44	8	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	36	19	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	37	9	4	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	43	6	2	3
The school works closely with parents.	40	39	9	7	4
The school is well led and managed.	30	44	11	10	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	47	9	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	37	14	12	14

Other issues raised by parents

Concern that teachers are not able to meet the needs of all pupils in mixed aged classes.

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

71. Children join the 4+ unit on a part-time basis in the term after they reach the age of four. Almost all have had some pre-school education at local playgroups and nurseries.
72. The children make good progress in their learning as a result of the good provision they receive. The quality of teaching is consistently good, and all staff work together well as a team. The children settle into school quickly as a result of the very good procedures put in place by the school. A strong feature of the provision lies in the way in which children are prepared for their National Curriculum studies by skilful teaching which introduces them to the more formal methods in Key Stage 1.

Personal and social development

73. Children make good progress in this area of their learning as a result of the good provision. They form positive relationships. By the age of five they play happily and co-operatively with one another in the role-play areas and with small toys. Role play helps the children to make sense of the world. They are very keen to learn and are beginning to challenge themselves to do better. They concentrate well on their activities. The arrangements at the beginning of the day help children to settle to their learning quickly. All are secure and happy and they listen very well to adults tell stories from their earliest days at school.
74. The teaching in this area of learning is good and ensures that the children quickly become independent. This is a priority for the school. Adults make it very clear how the children should behave in a school setting, and plan a good range of experiences in which children make decisions for themselves and take initiative.

Language and literacy

75. By the age of five, standards are above those expected of children of this age. Most are working within the National Curriculum at Level 1. They make very good attempts at writing. Some can form many letters correctly and their attempts at writing words often include some of the correct letters. They use prompts, such as letter tiles and charts, well to help them in their writing. Children love listening to stories and often join in when they can. In a session when the younger five year olds listened to the story of The Gingerbread Man they spontaneously mimed the fox's jaws snapping shut on the gingerbread boy. Many children speak confidently in large and small groups and listen well, but a few children still tend to call out to gain adults' attention. Reading skills develop very well and more than the expected proportion are able to read simple books, using pictures and their knowledge of letter sounds to work out unknown words.
76. The teaching in this area of learning is good. Teachers plan very carefully to ensure that all children are taught to listen and join in with stories, to recognise simple words and to use their phonic knowledge to read and write. They give very clear explanations and tasks have a good level of challenge. The teaching of phonics is

given a high priority but children are also taught to love books and to distinguish between different types of books, such as fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

Mathematics

77. By the age of five children have a very good understanding of number. They can count up to and back from ten and they count in tens to 100. Some children are able to count aloud the odd numbers to ten. They add two numbers and some can solve simple subtraction problems mentally. For example, given a number of objects they count the set and are then able to work out how many have been hidden. All count small numbers of objects accurately to 20 and some count beyond this. Most can name shapes such as cones, cubes and cylinders as well as common two-dimensional shapes. They achieve well in exceeding the expected outcomes for their age by five.
78. The teaching of mathematics is good. Careful planning ensures that the oldest children are learning at the right levels. Children love the first part of their lessons, in which they practise counting. Teachers and support staff make the learning fun, for example in one lesson children went outside into the playground to make three-dimensional shapes such as cones using their bodies. The practical nature of this introductory task helped them to appreciate the properties of shapes. As a result the children achieved well in the rest of the lesson as they tackled tasks in which they discussed and named shapes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79. By the age of five, children are able to bring their knowledge of their own families and backgrounds to their imaginative play. They produce recognisable cakes using play dough. When working with construction toys they make wheeled vehicles. Children are beginning to learn about maps by watching adults draw an imaginary journey they describe in a music session. They use computers to support their learning in mathematics and can operate a simple cassette recorder to listen to a story. They achieve the expected outcomes for their age by five.
80. Teaching in this area is good. Staff provide a wide variety of activities that interest children. The 4+ unit is full of displays that help children to learn about living things. Each of the six groups is growing tomato plants which they water and measure regularly. They grow salad plants such as lettuces, runner beans, mustard and cress as well as flowers like Sweet Williams and Cornflowers. Teachers make sure that children using computers are clear about what they have to do when they use simple mathematics programs. Resources are always carefully prepared so that children are able to explore sand, water and malleable materials such as play dough in order to find out more about them.

Creative development

81. Children achieve the expected outcomes for their age and are learning at a satisfactory rate. They paint colourful and well-proportioned pictures to re-tell the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. They love playing with small toys such as cars and aeroplanes to recreate an airport, co-operating very well with each other as they do so. They use their imagination in music, learning to use the sounds made by untuned percussion instruments to create an imaginary walk in a park or through fields and woods.

82. Suitable opportunities are provided for children in this area and their learning is sound. The role-play area is very popular with children and its theme is changed throughout the year. For example it becomes a home corner, a school, a café and a 'Nativity' corner at Christmas. A wider range of contexts in which children can use their imagination in role play is not yet in place. The teaching of music to children in small groups is good. Children enjoy making decisions about how they will represent sounds heard on an imaginary walk. Adults play alongside children as they extend their imagination in the café.

Physical development

83. Children manipulate small equipment, such as pencils, scissors and rolling pins with the expected control for their age. Paintings show that they improve their use of brushes from the time they join the 4+ unit. They fill containers carefully with sand until they are full. They show a good degree of confidence when using apparatus set out in the hall and are learning to perform stretches as they clamber over and along climbing frames and benches.
84. Teaching and provision in this area of learning are good. The facilities for outdoor play have been improved since the last inspection. There is now a large tarmacked safe area in which they can run and play without disturbance from older pupils. They climb on outdoor apparatus that is the correct size for their age, but there are no small-wheeled vehicles for children to push, pull and ride in order to improve their physical development. More formal sessions take place in the school hall and these are of good quality. Adults ensure that children are safe at all times and plan a good range of activities to help them gain increased control when climbing, moving and balancing.

ENGLISH

85. In the 1999 national tests for pupils at Key Stage 1 results were in line with all schools. They showed that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and the higher Level 3 in reading and writing was similar to the national average. Trends over the three years 1997-1999 shows an improvement in line with the national trend. When comparing the school's results with other similar schools across the country they were average in reading but below average in writing during 1999.
86. This inspection finds that at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5 standards of attainment in English are average overall. At the time of the previous inspection standards were above average. Reading standards remain above average as they were at the time of the last inspection.
87. Within the current Year 5 cohort a significant number of pupils achieve higher than average. Additionally 12 of the 38 pupils in the year group are on the school's special educational needs register, many for specific learning difficulties in language and literacy.
88. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of informed, structured teaching and skilled, experienced support. The targeting of pupils using the Additional Literacy Support scheme and the use of the Phonological Awareness Training programme has had a very positive impact upon reading standards. In the

previous inspection in 1996 pupils were judged to have made satisfactory progress. The school has, therefore, improved its provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is no obvious difference in the attainment of boys and girls in either key stage.

89. The school has fully implemented the National Literacy Strategy, and as a result there have been clear gains in reading standards. However, the improvements in speaking and listening and writing are not so marked because pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise what they have learned in the literacy lessons. Whilst the school's overall curriculum plan does identify these aspects and some sessions are given over to extended, and creative writing, the opportunities for writing for different purposes, and in connection with different subjects, are limited.
90. Pupils' standards in speaking and listening are average by the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5. The literacy hour provides many opportunities for pupils to listen carefully and in some instances the teachers' emphasis on encouraging active listening has a positive effect on this aspect. However, the plenary sections of literacy lessons are often hurried and do not allow the pupils to speak to the whole class about what they have done and learned. Consequently, their ability to reflect upon their own learning and communicate ideas to others is limited. When encouraged, pupils are able to talk about their experiences and can discuss matters of immediate interest to them with humour and detail. During the inspection pupils talked easily and readily with inspectors about many topics including their pets, travels abroad and favourite books and television programmes. At the end of Year 5 many pupils willingly contribute to lessons and listen well to adults. However, a significant proportion of pupils do not take an active role and appear to have difficulty responding to the teacher's questions. Teachers' short-term planning does not identify tasks to extend skills in speaking and listening and as a result opportunities are incidental rather than systematic.
91. Standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5 are good with many pupils achieving above expectations. During Key Stage 1 pupils extend their reading skills with a strong emphasis on phonics recognition and word building. Year 1 pupils increase the range of frequently occurring words they can recognise on sight. Throughout the key stage, as a result of the literacy strategy, pupils are introduced to a range of texts through which skills are systematically developed and consistently reinforced. These skills are further reinforced when discussing with adults what they have read in the guided reading sessions. Most pupils, and many at Key Stage 1, understand terms such as 'character', 'author', 'illustrator' 'contents' and 'index'. Pupils enjoy talking about books and most Year 4 and Year 5 pupils can discuss favourite books and authors. Most average and higher attaining pupils read competently, with increasing fluency and understanding from the satisfactory range of books available. However some of the most able pupils, whilst reading accurately do so with little expression. Pupils are encouraged to take books home to practise their reading skills and share their books with parents. Opportunities for pupils to use their above average reading skills to support reference work in other subjects is underdeveloped.
92. The school uses a battery of tests to assess regularly pupils' reading ability and keeps details of pupils' progress. The results of these tests indicate that pupils of all abilities have made good progress.

93. Attainment in writing is average at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 5. Pupils make appropriate use of spelling books, word banks and dictionaries. Spelling is taught through structured phonic work, which emphasises links between reading and writing. Many pupils spell common monosyllabic words correctly and some recognise simple spelling patterns. When pupils mis-spell words they often do so in a way that is phonetically sound. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 add interest to their writing by introducing direct speech, a wider range of adjectives and alliteration when completing an exercise linked to Little Red Riding Hood.
94. Throughout Key Stage 2 grammar and punctuation are taught systematically and pupils extend their range of formal and informal writing. Year 3 pupils understand the conventions of beginning and ending letters and use them correctly when expressing their opinions of a story in a letter to the author. Year 4 and Year 5 pupils are encouraged to use metaphors and similes in a creative writing session using the poem 'The Way Through the Woods' by Rudyard Kipling as a stimulus. They compose a range of alliterative poems, and write an epilogue to 'The Whale's Song' by Dyane Sheldon. By the end of Year 5 pupils plan and draft their work to improve content, punctuation and style, and through direct teacher intervention become increasingly aware of how different authors use words to hold the reader's attention. A minority of pupils write good quality compositions using a wide and effective vocabulary to add excitement and interest in their writing. However the writing of many pupils often lacks sufficient depth and ideas are not logically developed. The focus of most literacy lessons has been to improve reading skills and this has been successful. As a result writing has not been given the same priority and, whilst there are examples of good extended creative writing, past work indicates that pupils are not encouraged to write independently or extensively in other subjects. Many pupils write fluently and legibly, and progress is sound throughout the school. Information and computer technology is used appropriately for drafting and producing final copies of creative writing and poetry.
95. Generally pupils' attitudes to English and behaviour in lessons throughout the school are good. They enjoy their lessons. All pupils respond well to the structure and organisation of the literacy hour and take part enthusiastically in the shared aspects. They are generally positive about their work and prepared to discuss it with adults. However, partly as a result of the literacy hour structure, some pupils when working in groups on non-focused English tasks either fail to complete them, or produce less than that of which they are capable. Overall the relationships between staff and pupils are good and contribute significantly to pupils' good behaviour.
96. Teaching in English is sound overall and in one lesson out of two teaching is good. There is a small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. At the time of the last inspection teaching was at least satisfactory and frequently better. All staff have a secure knowledge of the content and requirements of the English curriculum, and of the literacy hour. This enables teachers to make good use of questioning to develop understanding and extend learning. Teachers pay careful attention to using correct vocabulary such as 'phonemes' which has a positive effect on pupil confidence and interest. Other characteristics of the good teaching are lively well-organised lessons and brisk pace. Teachers show good management of pupils and support staff, have high expectations and use praise well to encourage pupils to work hard. This has a positive impact upon learning and progress. In the one lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory shortcomings in managing pupils' behaviour, and inappropriate expectations contributed to a slow pace in pupils'

learning. Whilst good examples of on-going assessment are apparent in some lessons the use of assessment of pupils' work to plan lessons is not generally well established. Marking is not used consistently and systematically to inform pupils of their learning or how they might progress. Also the plenary sessions at the end of lessons are sometimes too rushed to allow teachers to assess whether lesson objectives have been met.

97. The management of English is good. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership through her monitoring of teaching and planning. She has been central in the development, planning, assessment and resourcing of English. The policy is informed and well constructed. Recently revised long and medium term plans are detailed and appropriate, as are the procedures for assessing and recording pupil progress. All staff have received individual observations and guidance on the literacy hour, which the school hopes will lead to consistency and consolidation of good practice. The analyses of periodic, standard and national tests informs the medium term planning to meet the needs of the pupils; as in the school's decision to focus on improving standards in writing. The use of home-school diaries is an effective, regularly used method of involving parents and carers in pupils' learning, and helps motivate pupils to higher attainment.
98. Overall resources for the teaching of English are satisfactory and they are used well. The library is an attractive area and provides a good resource for learning, however it is underused by pupils to carry out independent research.

MATHEMATICS

99. In the 1999 national tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, results were average with an above average proportion attaining the higher Level 3. When results are compared with the results of pupils from similar types of schools they are also average. The picture over the last four years since the previous inspection shows that the school has maintained its standards in comparison with the national average at Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the good provision for their learning. The last inspection judged standards to be average at the age of seven and ten. Standards have improved since then and inspection evidence shows that they are now above average by the time the pupils reach the end of Year 5. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards are similar to those found nationally. No discernible difference was found in the attainment of boys and girls during the inspection.
100. Pupils across the school learn well and are developing good numeracy skills as a result of the school's careful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. They make good progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make appropriate progress.
101. Year 1 pupils understand the difference between two and three digits numbers and are beginning to explain what they have learned during the plenary part of their lessons. Seven year olds can quickly call out the number needed to be added to a multiple of ten in order to make 100. They record the results of mental calculations such as $60 + 50$ correctly, using words such as total. They show a good range of methods for calculating such as rounding numbers up and adjusting the answer at the end. For example one pupil in a Year 1/2 class worked out the answer to $60 + 30$ mentally by using the fact $70 + 30 = 100$ and then subtracting ten. Ten year olds

in Year 5 exceed the expected levels for their age. They know about square numbers, and can use this knowledge to test whether square numbers have an odd number of factors as they learn about the factor pairs of numbers to 100. Pupils throughout the school have a sound ability to use graphs and charts to represent data and to interpret their findings. Pupils in a Year 3 lesson were able to identify several different methods of representing data. Some Year 4 pupils do not achieve as well as they could due to the lack of challenge in the data handling tasks planned for them.

102. Pupils across the school use their numeracy skills in subjects such as science and geography. For example, they measure the mass of plasticene before carrying out experiments on floating and sinking in science lessons.
103. The pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics and behave well in lessons. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are keen to learn. They particularly enjoy the first part of the lessons in which they carry out mental work. They are keen to learn and support each other well, sometimes applauding each other. The standards of the presentation of their written work varies across the school and between classes. At its best it is neat and legible but the work of some children is carelessly set down and does not reflect the sense of pride that they show in their mathematical ability.
104. The quality of teaching is good overall. It has a positive impact upon the standards achieved. Teaching in just under half the lessons was satisfactory and the teaching in one lesson was very good. This indicates an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be sound in the majority of lessons. The strengths of the teaching lie in the teachers' ability to use the beginning and ends of lessons to help develop mental calculation skills and rapid recall of important facts and to sum up the key teaching points. Planning for the middle part of the lessons when pupils work individually or in groups is sound, but some teachers do not spend enough time in this part of the lesson working with groups or individuals. This means that, although they correct the pupils' work, important opportunities for teachers to develop the understanding of groups through direct teaching is lost. In the lessons where teaching is most successful the teacher ensures that the work set helps all pupils make good progress because it meets their needs well. The level of questioning is challenging and, through the judicious use of praise, the teacher encourages the pupils to try hard and produce their best. A weakness in the teaching lies in the quality of marking which is unsatisfactory. Some work is not marked, and there is little feedback given to pupils to help them know what they should do in order to improve.
105. The school's implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been effective in helping to raise standards. Good quality whole-school planning systems have been agreed, but not all teachers are following this guidance. There are plans to introduce a suitable method of recording the information teachers have about pupils' attainment but none is in place as yet. Resources overall are adequate for the subject, but little use is currently made of computers as a resource for teaching mathematics. The mathematics co-ordinator is keen to develop this area of teaching.

SCIENCE

106. At the time of the last inspection in 1996 the school's standards in the statutory National Curriculum teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were slightly above the national average. In 1999, standards in science at the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average. Results have been maintained over the past three years.
107. Pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 5, when they transfer to secondary education, attain average standards. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in all lessons and through appropriate support are enabled to make good progress.
108. Coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study in science is good and gives pupils a firm background subject knowledge. There are strengths in pupils' knowledge related to the prescribed areas of the science curriculum - life processes and living things, materials and their properties, and physical processes - and some relative weaknesses in the area of experimental and investigative science which are not approached systematically in some classes. Progress in science is sound, overall, at both key stages.
109. At Key Stage 1, strong emphasis is placed on the properties of materials such as that related to experiments in melting substances and finding out why some items float and others sink. There is evidence of clear progression in pupils' learning throughout the school but very occasionally the content of lessons for different year groups is similar and the difference in skills to be acquired is insufficiently clear. Above average attaining pupils predict outcomes and make deductions well, but systematic recording skills are often insecure in the work of many pupils.
110. At Key Stage 2, pupils make further progress in their understanding of materials and develop a satisfactory grasp of food chains and habitats. They have opportunities to participate in field trips to explore for themselves the changes that occur in the wildlife of the local environment. This has positive benefits for the development of their investigational skills. Pupils show that they can compare plants and habitats successfully and they have a firm understanding of the need for 'fair testing'. Pupils develop a sound ability to write factual accounts of their findings and to develop skills of instructional writing. They learn to analyse the properties of various materials, to classify living organisms and develop an appropriate scientific vocabulary. They record the results of their findings appropriately and are developing the skills of making predictions and problem solving.
111. Pupils enjoy science. They handle materials safely and listen well to classroom discussions and to the ideas of others. They show particular enthusiasm when given the opportunity to take part in genuine experimental and investigative work. This was clearly evident in the experiments on sinking and floating at Key Stage 1.
112. Overall, the teaching of science at both key stages is good. It is never less than satisfactory and in one lesson out of six it is very good. This is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection. Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge. Planning is well directed to achieving good coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, but rather less well so at developing investigative skills and encouraging independent learning. There is some evidence of an over-reliance upon worksheets to record learning; these have the effect of limiting the response expected of pupils and do not encourage them to extend their research skills further. Teachers have clear learning objectives and make effective use of the

range of scientific equipment and published materials in the school. Teachers at both key stages ensure that pupils receive valuable opportunities to develop the scientific skills of observation, experiment design, hypothesis measurement, evaluation and conclusion. However, curriculum planning, and the amount of teaching time available means that these opportunities are not sufficiently regular to ensure that pupils develop a firm and confident grasp of the continuity of the whole scientific process from the initial hypothesis, the devising and implementation of a controlled test, to ultimate recording of findings.

113. Science is planned to a nationally developed framework and is supplemented by some commercial materials. The co-ordinator recognises the need to develop the investigative and experimental aspects of science and has good ideas for recording progress in these areas, which he hopes to put into operation in the near future. Assessment is generally related to what teachers intend pupils to learn, though the results of assessment do not always inform the planning of future work in order to address areas of weakness. The co-ordinator acknowledges that the samples of work used to assess pupils' attainment need to be updated. Resources are adequate; they are appropriately stored and are easily accessible.

ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. Standards are as expected for the ages of the pupils at both key stages in both subjects. This is an improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection when there was evidence of poor work in design and technology, and the range of work produced in art was judged to be too narrow. Two design and technology lessons were observed, one of which was combined with an art lesson. Judgements are based largely on the evidence of past work and on teachers' planning.
115. Pupils often incorporate art work into other subjects using different media and techniques. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 work together on a large picture of the Great Fire of London in connection with history. They use paint, crayon, fabric and different types of paper to create the desired effect. On other occasions they print using food dyes to make symmetrical patterns. Pupils work in the style of other artists and experiment with brush strokes and shades of blue to paint seascapes in the style of Van Gogh. Also in connection with a topic on water some of the older pupils in the key stage produce carefully completed pastel pictures on the theme of reflection using the work of Monet and Hockney as their inspiration. They paint plastic pots with care as part of their work on canals in history, together with the design and technology element of making canal boats. Also in design and technology pupils make light houses and design, then make, boats out of reclaimed materials and decorate the finished products to good effect.
116. At Key Stage 2 the range of art work has broadened since the previous inspection. For example there are now examples of three-dimensional work in clay, and evidence of print-making. Pupils look at the work of famous artists more closely and use it to influence their own work. For instance, Year 3 pupils develop their sketches completed earlier in charcoal, to produce jungle scenes using a painting by Henri Rousseau as a stimulus. They mix colours effectively to lighten and darken their pictures. Pupils use different sized brushes with care to incorporate detail into their work, under the helpful support and effective guidance of a student teacher. In design and technology they plan imaginary insects and make good use of reference books to help them with their creations. The pupils thoughtfully decide which materials they will need and incorporate appropriate annotations into their

diagrams. On other occasions they plan and construct small vehicles to transport eggs over a given distance in the annual 'Grand Egg Race'. Overall however, there is greater emphasis on making than planning how items will be made.

117. Year 4 and 5 pupils make good links with science as they paint pictures related to a nature walk. They begin to use techniques effectively such as stippling to represent the tree canopy and use a drier brush to represent the bark of trees. They develop the idea of perspective in their work on landscapes. Pupils demonstrate that they have looked closely in their observational drawings displayed around the school, but some of the work in personal sketchbooks is carelessly completed or left unfinished. In three-dimensional work pupils make clay creatures such as whales and hedgehogs which are later glazed. They produce work using fabric such as the impressive tapestry in the Key Stage 2 art area showing major events over the 20th century. In design and technology pupils create advertising posters to encourage tourists to visit the local area.
118. Pupils enjoy art and design and technology; most apply themselves well in lessons. They work with interest and most with considerable care. The quality of teaching in art is good overall. Too little teaching of design and technology was observed for a judgement to be made on the quality of teaching overall but in the lessons seen teaching was good. Teachers explain the subject of lessons clearly and support pupils well as they work. Most have sufficient knowledge of art to enable them to offer appropriate guidance on how pupils might improve their technique.

GEOGRAPHY

119. Pupils achieve standards which are expected for their age throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This is similar to the position at the time of the last inspection. All pupils make sound progress, including those with special educational needs.
120. At Key Stage 1, pupils are introduced to the appropriate geographical skills and show sound progress in interpreting plans and simple maps. There is appropriate use of their immediate environment to help them develop a sense of direction and scale. Presentation skills are not sufficiently well developed to enable pupils of all abilities to produce maps and plans that reflect their best efforts. Pupils are able to use simple directions to find a route around the school but the recording of this learning is less secure. At Key Stage 2, pupils move on to study the local environment of Charnwood and they recognise the problems that would be associated with the siting of a land-fill site in a local disused quarry. In Years 3 and 4 there is evidence that many pupils are still not secure in their understanding of scale when producing their ideas for alternative uses of the quarry. Visitors who come into the school to talk to pupils about their experiences of working in the quarry are a valuable way of engaging pupils' interest and extending their understanding. This has the additional advantage of helping to develop pupils' social skills and their interviewing techniques. In Year 5, many pupils have difficulty in deciphering a Charnwood publicity leaflet in order to uncover information about the notable places and features of the locality; they have relatively little understanding of the language used, which hinders their progress in this respect.
121. Due to the way in which the curriculum is organised it was only possible to observe lessons at Key Stage 2. Here teaching was satisfactory, which is as it was at the time of the last inspection. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and are

well informed about the geography and economy of the locality. They use this knowledge well to extend pupils' understanding and in most classes there is appropriate challenge to encourage pupils to seek information for themselves and to become more confident learners.

122. Planning in geography is appropriately focused on the development of the essential geographical skills and there is good emphasis on mapping skills. Teachers are clear about what they wish pupils to learn and there is due emphasis on the development of numeracy skills through the use of scales, co-ordinates and directions. Information technology is increasingly used as a useful tool for research and data handling.

HISTORY

123. Standards are as expected for the ages of the pupils at both key stages. At the time of the last inspection, standards in history were judged to be above average. Teachers' plans and schemes of work are well linked to the historical skills found in the key elements of the National Curriculum.
124. Progress in history is satisfactory at both key stages. Pupils make progress in the essential historical skills, though cross-curricular links are not always so well identified as to give them the impetus to explore further and to develop as independent learners. As they mature, pupils become more confident in developing their investigative and interpretative skills and reflecting upon particular historical problems.
125. At Key Stage 1, there is sound development of the chronological skills; pupils can sequence events and stories accurately and they become increasingly aware of the differences of life in the past. Pupils use a range of sources to identify and classify change over time. Their study of the story of Grace Darling shows a good development of appropriate subject vocabulary and they can make good cross-curricular links with their work in science to reinforce their understanding of life-saving equipment. Resources such as photographs and paintings stimulate their imagination and many are able to begin to answer the question of how historians know about events in the past. Several pupils ask interesting and relevant questions to further their knowledge and understanding and they can record their learning appropriately.
126. Key Stage 2 pupils build upon the knowledge, understanding and historical skills acquired in Key Stage 1. Written work shows that they have sound background knowledge and can recall, select and locate information accurately. By the end of Year 5, pupils attempt more extended writing in history, especially on the controversy of who should have become king in 1066. Some of this writing shows a good understanding of interpretation of historical sources and of the operation of bias in the historical process. Some over-dependence on worksheets limits pupils' opportunities to record and explore more detailed investigations of the past.
127. Pupils are enthusiastic and interested in their work in history, overall. They grow in confidence and are keen to ask and answer questions and to make interesting contributions to class discussions. Pupils' writing is somewhat constrained by the demands of worksheets and when given the opportunity to write independently, they

do so satisfactorily. Visits to local historical sites help them to extend their historical knowledge and develop their interest in history.

128. It was only possible to observe lessons at Key Stage 1 due to the way in which the school organises its curriculum. Here teaching was sound overall with examples of good and unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have generally good subject knowledge and put due emphasis upon developing historical skills, thereby giving pupils a firm foundation in the subject. However, some of the tasks set are insufficiently challenging and expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes inappropriate. As a result the quality of pupils' learning is not as good as it might be. Where teaching is good, there are plentiful opportunities for pupils to consider a variety of historical sources and to offer their ideas and views in a way that helps them to think historically.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

129. At the end of Key Stage 1 and by Year 5 standards in information technology overall are in line with national expectations. This is the same position as when the school was previously inspected. Pupils make sound progress throughout the school. Those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment in the use of computers.
130. There is evidence that since the last inspection the supply and quality of computer hardware and software has improved, as has the range of work covered.
131. During the inspection there was little opportunity to see direct teaching of computer skills by teachers. Only one lesson was observed. This was at Key Stage 2 and was satisfactory. Teaching generally takes place as part of other subjects when pupils are introduced to relevant skills. Evidence was collected from pupils' work and from observations and discussions with pupils and teachers. Word processing, communication and information retrieval are covered appropriately, whilst other aspects of the curriculum such as control and modelling are covered when pupils transfer to the 10+ base at the secondary school. Pupils mainly work in pairs and use software to consolidate skills introduced previously.
132. Pupils enter the school with very limited experience of using information technology and with few keyboard skills and little knowledge of how to use the 'mouse' to select items from a program. Year 2 pupils learn that numerical information can be handled using a simple data base and that information can be communicated by using the computer to create block graphs. Throughout the Key Stage 2 up to Year 5 pupils build up their skills and are able when word processing, to change the appearance of their work by using different fonts. Year 4/5 pupils use the 'Clipart' program effectively when word processing alliterative poems, and many pupils access the internet to send and retrieve messages. Pupils learn to use the 'mouse' to access data bases and interrogate them for information. When researching for other areas of the curriculum, such as English and history, Year 4 and 5 pupils learn to make use of CD-ROM technology and to use programs to investigate different topics. Effective use is made of tape recorders as tools for developing pupils speaking and listening skills.

133. Pupils make appropriate use of information technology to develop their literacy skills but the use of computers makes insufficient impact upon their numeracy skills or their work in science and other subjects.
134. Pupils enjoy working with computers and appear enthusiastic and well motivated, but the subject does not have a sufficiently high status throughout the school. When engaged in information technology activities pupils work independently and co-operatively. They behave responsibly and use the computers with care. They concentrate well and persevere with their tasks.
135. Information technology has featured as a major spending priority in the school's development plan and the range of computers now available represents a significant improvement on the resources seen during the previous inspection. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and direction for the subject and he has overseen the development of an appropriate information technology policy and scheme of work. However, there is currently no opportunity to monitor the teaching of information technology throughout the school, nor is there a whole-school system for assessing and recording the skills pupils acquire. As a result the continuous, progressive building of skills cannot be assured.

MUSIC

136. Too few lessons were observed during the inspection to enable secure judgements to be made about teaching and standards in music. Analysis of teachers' plans and discussion with teachers indicates that provision is now satisfactory overall. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to perform, compose and listen to music. One music lesson was observed during the inspection, and some further evidence of pupils' singing skills was gained from singing in assemblies. The singing is tuneful, confident and has a good tone. In the one lesson seen, Year 1 and 2 pupils were able to copy simple rhythms passed around a circle and to accompany a short song in groups using untuned percussion having chosen the instruments to fit the words of the song. They collaborated well, applauding each other's efforts, and improved their performance during the lesson. The teacher used her musical expertise well to further the pupils' learning.
137. The school has improved the range of instruments and has an interesting collection of instruments and recorded music from a range of cultures. Pupils are able to learn instruments such as the violin, flute, clarinet and brass instruments from peripatetic teachers. The extra-curricular provision is very good, including two choirs, a band and a performing arts group. Pupils perform regularly at local concerts and events. This enhances the music curriculum well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. It was not possible to observe all aspects of the physical education curriculum during the week of the inspection. Evidence is drawn from observations of lessons in dance, games, and gymnastics.
139. Pupils attain the standards expected for their ages. In the last inspection report standards in physical education were judged to be above average. They make

expected progress in developing control and co-ordination in travelling, jumping and balancing. Pupils are broadening their experiences of dance activities and they are acquiring competence in playing games and developing swimming skills. All pupils make at least satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs; some of whom do better and achieve results that enhance their self-esteem.

140. At the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils demonstrate sound co-ordination when using large body movements. They move with control and make good use of general space whilst engaged in warm up activities. When using apparatus pupils show due regard for safety and travel along and over the apparatus in different ways. A number of pupils show good control and can hold balances in challenging situations. In the playground pupils move freely, engage in a range of chasing games and are able to stop and start movements safely.
141. At Key Stage 2 pupils move with increasing control, and demonstrate an expected range of basket ball passing and catching skills. In simple competitive relay situations pupils show appropriate spirit and enthusiasm but limited ball control skills. Pupils in Year 3 are very enthusiastic when line dancing and creating their own dance sequences. Given the many pupils with learning and behavioural problems in this class, the very good response and good attainment reflect highly on the teaching and support the pupils are given. The school currently supports an effective swimming programme and most pupils achieve the required standards with a significant number of pupils achieving standards well above those expected. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. They make good progress overall and achieve results that enhance their self-esteem.
142. Most pupils work with enthusiasm, enjoyment and commitment in physical education. They clearly enjoy the sessions and nearly all change into appropriate clothing. Pupils are willing to share ideas, work co-operatively and make good use of opportunities to practise their skills. Behaviour is usually good; apparatus is sensibly and responsibly used and, in simple competitive situations, pupils show due regard for rules and fair play.
143. Teaching in physical education is satisfactory overall with some very good teaching and a small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching observed. Teaching at the time of the last inspection was good. Most teachers are enthusiastic about teaching physical education, and some wear appropriate clothing. This has a positive effect upon pupils' attitudes to the subject. The better lessons are characterised by good management, sound teacher knowledge, with pupils set appropriately challenging tasks. Pupils are encouraged to practise independently and safely. In these lessons pupil performance is used well to demonstrate achievement, to focus on good practice and to encourage other pupils to observe and evaluate both that seen and their own actions. However pupils are not always given the opportunity to comment upon performances and consider how the quality might be improved. This limits the development both of their physical education skills and their abilities to explain and to listen attentively.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. Pupils attain in line with targets identified in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education by the end of Key Stage 1 and achieve the expected levels by the time they leave the school at age ten. This is similar to the position at the time of the

previous inspection. However, the quality of pupils' previous work does not always reflect the standards achieved, as work is sometimes incomplete or not presented with due care. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported in all lessons, which enables them to make sound progress in their learning.

145. Pupils at Key Stage 1 learn about the part that water plays in religious ritual. They know about its significance in the Christian baptismal ceremony and understand that 'Christening' is an alternative name for 'baptism'. A few can name the font as the receptacle which contains the water for baptism and several understand baptism to be the ceremony whereby children are welcomed into the Christian church. They understand the significance of godparents and the part that they play in bringing children up in the Christian faith; some make appropriate links with their own family's experiences and a few are able to name their godparents. They know that other objects are important, such as the baptismal candle.
146. Pupils at Key Stage 1 also learn the significance of water in the rites and rituals of other religions such as the Muslim practice of washing five times a day in preparation for prayer. A few know that the name of a Muslim church is a mosque and that the Qur'an is the equivalent of the Bible for Christians. They are aware of the importance of prayer in Islamic worship and know that the prayer mat has a part to play in this respect.
147. Pupils build on their understanding of wider religious issues effectively at Key Stage 2. Here Year 3 and Year 4 pupils consider the ways in which they would wish to change the world in which they live. They consider aspects of creation and how man has improved or spoilt the world. Several have sensible ideas and suggest that, war, homelessness, oil spillages and deforestation are things they would change.
148. Year 4 and Year 5 pupils consider creation stories from different religions and are able to draw parallels with those in the Judaic / Christian tradition. For example, they compare the origins of the world as told in the Islamic faith with that of the Garden of Eden in the Old Testament of the Bible. Also they appreciate that there are similarities with other cultures such as Aboriginal stories in which there are parallels with the story of Noah.
149. The majority of pupils are interested in religious education and most are attentive in class, particularly where teachers introduce artefacts to enrich the understanding of pupils and to enliven teaching. An exception to this occurs in a minority of lessons where pupils are insufficiently engaged, do not listen respectfully to the views of others and respond inappropriately to questions.
150. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and in one lesson out of two it is good and occasionally very good. This is an improvement on the sound teaching reported when the school was last inspected. Teachers have a satisfactory understanding of the subject and most manage pupils well. They use resources effectively and in the best lessons present the material in a lively and interesting way. Where teaching does not capture the attention of pupils sufficiently, pupils lose interest and a minority do not make the progress that they should. In the majority of lessons teachers have appropriate expectations of pupils but tasks are occasionally insufficiently challenging and do not demand enough of pupils. This was also evident in previous work, much of which was poorly completed on photocopied sheets.

151. The co-ordinator is appropriately experienced and qualified. She is knowledgeable in the subject and regrets that it currently enjoys a lower status than it should due to the concentration on national priorities of literacy, numeracy and information technology. The co-ordinator supports other teachers well through the provision of resources, but does not monitor standards or the quality of teaching in the subject. Also there are no established systems for assessing how well pupils know and understand that which they have been taught and so the progressive development of skills and knowledge are not assured. Resources are satisfactory, but the opportunities to explore different religions through visits and visitors to the school are underdeveloped.