

INSPECTION REPORT

Catherine Junior School

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 120003

Headteacher: Mr. E James

Reporting inspector: Mrs J E Platt
11565

Dates of inspection: 10th January – 14th January 2000

Inspection number: 191924

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brandon Street Leicester
Postcode:	LE4 6AZ
Telephone number:	0116 2625896
Fax number:	0116 2538751
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Gage
Date of previous inspection:	December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs J E Platt	Registered inspector	Music Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? Schools results and achievements How well are pupils taught?
Mr R Watts	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values, personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr K Johnson	Team inspector	Science History	How well does the school care for its' pupils? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr M Heyes	Team inspector	Art Design and technology	
Mr D T Watts	Team inspector	Maths Information technology Equal opportunities English as an additional language Section 11	
Mr J Collins	Team inspector	English Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mr N Pinkney	Team inspector	Geography Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 1BB

Telephone 0161 282 2982

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7 - 11
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12 - 14
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15 - 16
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	17 - 18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18 - 19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21 - 22
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
SECTION 11 (ETHNIC MINORITY ACHIEVEMENT GRANT)	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25 - 28
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	29 - 42

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Catherine Junior school is a larger than average community school providing education for 425 boys and girls. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (22 per cent) is broadly average for junior schools nationally. The number of pupils coming from homes where English is not the first language is 93 per cent and this is very high. Currently, 40 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. The latest available census data indicates that social and economic circumstances are less favourable than found elsewhere in the country. Attainment on entry to the school is well below that usually found in most schools although these levels are gradually improving.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good and effective school. Teaching is good and helps the vast majority of pupils to achieve standards that are at least satisfactory in most subjects. The school is well led and the headteacher has a clear vision of the school's future development. The curriculum provides well for the needs of all pupils, including the significant number of pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. The school manages its spending carefully and overall value for money is good.

What the school does well

- The vast majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, are enabled to make good overall progress in the school.
- There is a high proportion of good or very good teaching throughout the school and an absence of unsatisfactory teaching.
- The school is well led and all involved with the school work together as a team to provide a happy and caring ethos.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners, work hard and have very good attitudes towards their work.
- The school successfully promotes personal development and relationships throughout the school are very good. Standards of behaviour are very good.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in some aspects of information technology are unsatisfactory and computers are not used regularly in lessons.
- Lesson plans and systems to assess pupils' on-going progress are not always sufficiently detailed to provide work at the appropriate level for the higher attaining pupils.
- Staff with management responsibilities do not have sufficient opportunity to carry out their monitoring role.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The developments since the last inspection in December 1996 have been sufficient to maintain the satisfactory standards identified in most subjects. The results achieved by pupils in the national assessments at the age of 11 have been gradually improving. Standards in design and technology and geography have improved. The school has started to focus on provision for information technology, as standards are not as high as those in other subjects.

The quality of teaching has improved and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. All the key issues for action and points for improvement identified in the previous inspection have received due attention. All National Curriculum subjects now have a designated coordinator and the school intends to appoint a coordinator for religious education in the near future. Planning has greatly improved and the school has new schemes of work for all subjects. The school spends money carefully and has established procedures to check on the effect of expenditure on standards and quality of provision. Overall the school has made good progress since the previous inspection and is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	D	E	D
Mathematics	D	D	E	D
Science	D	D	E	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The information above shows that standards in all subjects were well below the national average and were below average when compared with similar schools. In interpreting the above table it must be borne in mind that the overall attainment of pupils entering the school has been well below average, that a well above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and a very high number of pupils come from homes where English is not the first spoken language. The 1999 group included a higher than normal number of pupils identified having special educational needs and previous results have indicated average attainment compared with similar schools. The results are slightly above average for Leicester Local Education Authority. There has been an improvement in standards as pupils enter the school and this is now having an impact on standards as pupils move through the school. This improvement was recognised during the inspection. By the end of the key stage the proportion of pupils working at the nationally expected level was in line with the national average in mathematics and science. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in reading and writing but writing skills remain below average. In English, mathematics and science the number of pupils exceeding the national average remains low. The school has set appropriate targets to improve these results and is well placed to reach them.

Standards in numeracy and literacy are satisfactory and have improved in response to more detailed planning and good teaching. Standards in information technology are below average and computers are not used sufficiently for pupils to practise their skills. The school is aware of this and information technology is a priority for development in the school's action plan. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The standard of work seen in other subjects was wholly satisfactory and in art it was good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic workers and always try to complete tasks to the best of their ability.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good at all times.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good and pupils are aware of the need to help each other. Relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils work and play together harmoniously.
Attendance	Attendance is well below the national average.

The many strengths identified above combine to create a happy, working environment where pupils' efforts are valued and they strive to achieve their best. In previous years attendance rates have been higher. Pupils taking extended absences to visit families abroad have an adverse effect on these figures. The school does all it can to ensure the interruption to pupils' learning is kept to a minimum by providing work for pupils to do while they are away.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall			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.

Overall, teaching in the school is good. In 68 per cent of lessons observed teaching was good or better, and in 10 per cent of these it was very good and in 2 per cent teaching was excellent. The rest was satisfactory. Good teaching was seen in all years and in all subjects except information technology where teachers are less secure in their knowledge of the subject and do not plan enough opportunities to use computers. Teachers are very skilled in organising interesting lessons and in managing pupils' behaviour so that lessons are exciting and also carried out in an orderly way. Not all teachers plan with sufficient detail for the needs of the higher attaining pupils who on occasions could have been doing more challenging tasks. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and teaching of numeracy and literacy is good. Teachers and support staff for pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are involved in planning and this ensures these pupils receive effective support that enables them to make good and often very good progress.

All pupils respond well to their teachers and are keen to be involved in all activities. They listen closely and retain and build upon what they have learnt before. Given the vast majority of pupils in school started with well below average attainment and the average standards achieved by many pupils as they leave school at the age of eleven, the pupils are learning at a good rate throughout the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Most subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are given sufficient emphasis. Information technology receives insufficient attention. Extra-curricular provision is very good and the school's steel band is an excellent feature of the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The needs of pupils with special educational needs are fully met. Staff are well aware of the needs of these pupils and support is sensitive and effective both in class and when they are occasionally withdrawn for extra help.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for these pupils is very good and teachers and support staff plan together to ensure they have full access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	A significant strength of the school. All aspects are very good and have a positive impact on the personal development of all pupils. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and makes a significant contribution to the positive and caring ethos that is a feature of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school gives good attention to the care and welfare of pupils. Procedures for child protection are in place but the staff have not had any recent training.

Parents are satisfied with the education that the school provides. The school has effective links with parents and they are kept well informed about school activities although not all annual reports tell parents clearly about the progress their children are making. Parents and carers make a good contribution to pupils' learning by supporting them with the work required to be done at home.

The school has successfully maintained a balance between academic provision, with a focus on literacy and numeracy, and provision for creative and physical development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior management team provide strong leadership and all share a commitment to raising standards. Subject coordinators have successfully introduced new planning procedures but have limited opportunity to carry out their monitoring role to ensure these systems are working in the classroom.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive of the school. They share the school's vision for improvement. The governing body is newly appointed and at present is not sufficiently involved in future planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is good at evaluating its own performance and has effective procedures for checking on the progress pupils have made from starting school to leaving at the end of Year 6.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of time, money and accommodation. Resources are used well except for information technology which is under-used to support learning across the curriculum. Financial planning is effective in supporting planning and focuses on raising standards.

The school has sufficient experienced staff to teach all subjects in this age range. Accommodation is good and learning resources are appropriate for the needs of the curriculum. The school spends prudently and management ensure best value when purchasing resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school. • The good progress their children make. • The good quality of teaching. • The way parents are made welcome and can approach staff with any concerns. • The school is managed effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents felt children did not have sufficient work to do at home. • One or two parents did not feel the school provided sufficient after-school activities for younger pupils.

The vast majority of responses from parents were positive and the inspection team agreed with these. Provision for homework is often good. Tasks are set that extend the learning in lessons. The school is concerned about younger pupils getting home safely after events held after school. This has been resolved to some extent by activities being organised at lunchtime.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the school has gradually been improving but the vast majority of pupils in school started school with attainment well below average. Pupils work hard and are achieving well in terms of their earlier attainment. However, the 1999 results in national tests for eleven-year olds in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average. When compared to schools with a similar intake, attainment was below average. The group of pupils taking the 1999 tests included more pupils than usual identified as having special educational needs and results in 1998 indicated attainment compared with similar schools was average. The results are slightly above the average for Leicester Local Education Authority. The upward trend in the school's overall performance in English, mathematics and science between 1996 and 1999 has been broadly in line with the national trend. Evidence from the inspection, including scrutiny of work, discussions with pupils and lesson observations, identifies improving standards and the proportion of pupils attaining national expectations in English, mathematics and science is in line with the national average at the end of the key stage. However, the number of pupils exceeding this level is still below the national average. Overall improvements are due to an increase in standards as pupils enter the school and also reflect a positive response to many initiatives put in place by the school. The school has successfully implemented both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Pupils in the mixed Year 5 and 6 classes have been organised into single year groups matched to their attainment. This has been effective in enabling teachers to follow the national guidelines closely. The structure and outcomes of these lessons are very clear and are having a positive impact on standards. Staff training has been effective in improving standards in science as more attention is now given to investigation and to the analysis of assessment data. The consistently good teaching and the pupils' enthusiasm for learning indicate a good capacity to further improve standards. Teachers are committed to raising standards and ensure pupils achieve to the best of their ability. The school is very close to achieving the targets agreed by the local authority.
2. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are carefully assessed and tasks set to closely match their attainment. Analysis of their performance throughout the school indicates they make good progress and a few pupils have made very good progress. By the time they leave school many have attained standards close to the level expected for this age group. Similarly, pupils with English as an additional language are supported well in lessons. Joint planning between support staff and class teachers ensures all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and these pupils make similar progress to other pupils. The results of statutory tests indicated in some years that girls were underachieving and this is against the national trend. A detailed analysis of data indicates that the results vary considerably from year to year and during the inspection there was no evidence of girls receiving less attention than boys. The majority of pupils achieve to the best of their ability and make good progress as they move through the school. There has been a steady increase in the proportion of higher attaining pupils entering the school. Not all lessons fully cater for their needs and occasionally these pupils are set tasks that do not always fully extend their learning and sometimes their progress is at a rate that is less than that of which they are capable. Only in information technology when limited opportunities restrict learning is the rate of learning slower than it could be.

3. The Literacy Strategy has been phased into the curriculum with good effect. It is consolidating and reinforcing pupils' understanding and use of literacy skills. Speaking and listening skills are satisfactory and by the end of the key stage pupils speak confidently about the books they have read and share their opinions with the rest of the class. Not all have sufficient breadth of vocabulary or confidence to use technical terms in other subjects. Pupils throughout the school listen with great care to teachers and to each other. Standards in reading is average at the end of the key stage and pupils use their reading skills confidently to find information. Not all are at a level to analyse more detailed texts but most can locate the main points on a page. By the time they leave school the pupils have read a range of texts and enjoy discussing their preferences. Pupils' writing skills are less well developed and although the rate of learning is good, the standard of work at the end of the key stage is below average. Pupils understand the different purposes of writing and by the end of the key stage can write a book review with suitable detail. Spelling mistakes often occur, although pupils in Year 6 are beginning to extend their knowledge of spelling patterns and to use them correctly in their work. Handwriting is always neat but at the end of the key stage many still print rather than joining up their writing.
4. Overall standards in literacy are satisfactory and are applied effectively in other subjects. In religious education pupils write about other faiths and important artefacts. In science pupils write up their investigations and show an awareness of the different purposes of writing.
5. In mathematics the standard of work is in line with the national average. At the end of the key stage pupils have satisfactory skills in calculating using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, although a few are less secure with division. Number skills are satisfactory for pupils' ages and pupils recall important number facts and use them to calculate problems mentally and then explain their methods. Pupils are becoming confident with fractions and recognise the equivalent decimal number.
6. Standards in numeracy are satisfactory and teachers are effective in providing activities to extend these skills across the curriculum. In science, teachers provide tasks that involve calculating areas and in history pupils interpret timelines. Pupils' numeracy skills had a positive impact on attainment in a design and technology lesson when pupils accurately found out the best price for their biscuits.
7. Standards in science as pupils leave school are in line with the national average and pupils have a secure knowledge of the main parts of the body and how the human body works. They investigate the forces of friction and gravity but have not yet reached the level of generating their own investigation or challenging their findings.
8. Pupils' skills in information technology are below the national target level. By the end of the key stage, many pupils understand how to word process their work and change the size and style of their text. Pupils understand how to use computers to record information but they have insufficient opportunities to extend their skills in other aspects of the curriculum. The school is aware of these deficiencies and development of the subject is a priority in the school's development plan.
9. In religious education pupils attain standards in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of the key stage. Pupils have a good basic knowledge of a range of faiths and have a growing understanding of different festivals and artefacts and respect the importance of these to different faiths.
10. In other subjects of design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education pupils achieve standards in line with their ages. Standards in art are good and the effective displays of pupils' work around the school considerably enhance the learning environment.

11. Standards are similar to the previous inspection in most subjects and have risen in art and geography. Given the low level of attainment on entry to the school and the average standard attained by many pupils as they leave school, the majority of pupils are working at a good pace and are achieving appropriately for their age and level of attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. As they come into school in the morning, their eagerness is very evident. In the opinion of parents, virtually all pupils enjoy school and this is borne out by conversations with pupils. After lesson introductions, pupils move quickly to start their work because they enjoy it and are keen to learn more. They concentrate well and work hard to solve problems. They are enthusiastic about doing things outside the classroom, taking a strong part in extra-curricular activities. They show evident enjoyment of the prowess of others in such activities, for example, their appreciation of the performance of the steel band in an assembly.
13. The behaviour of pupils is very good. In lessons teachers seldom need to pull pupils up and when it is necessary it is often because of an excess of enthusiasm rather than naughtiness. Their behaviour as they move around the school and in assemblies is exemplary. Behaviour in the dining hall is excellent. Pupils have the opportunity to discuss the reasons behind school rules and fully accept their validity. There were no exclusions of pupils from the school last year, or indeed within memory of most staff. Pupils treat resources with great care. For example, in an art lesson, pupils worked carefully and made certain they did not splash the work of others.
14. The personal development of pupils and relationships within the school are very good. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities offered and, on many occasions volunteer to clear up or help around the school. They often identify what needs to be done and do it. In discussion they show maturity which increases as they get older. In some lessons where they might be expected to show initiative such as science investigations however, they are given insufficient opportunity to plan their own work. In class the strong rapport between adults and pupils is a very noticeable feature of almost all lessons. Pupils are confident that staff will treat them with respect and tolerance and they respond by giving of their best. Within lessons, around the school and in the playground pupils treat each other with respect and care. Within lessons pupils work well to support each other to achieve a common purpose. They recognise that in their multicultural school community there exist many different ways of life and beliefs. No incidents of racism, bullying or social exclusion were observed during the inspection. Some pupils gave their personal experiences of being bullied; these largely related to being socially excluded by groups of pupils. These had been resolved to their satisfaction and they did not believe that bullying was at all common in the school.
15. The overall attendance last year was well below the national average for primary schools and hence unsatisfactory. In previous years it has been higher. Approximately 1.5 percent of absence is accounted for by extended absences of pupils visiting family in Asia. Without this, attendance would be average. The school recognises the beneficial effects of these visits on pupils' self-esteem and the gains in knowledge about their own cultural background. The school responds to these requests by providing work for pupils to do while they are away. Nevertheless the school has some evidence that such absences have a negative impact on statutory test results. Unauthorised absence is average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Overall, teaching is good and is a significant factor in pupils' achievements. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed and was good or better in 68 per cent of them. Teaching was very good in 10 per cent of lessons and excellent teaching was seen in 2 per cent of them. Good teaching was seen throughout the school in equal proportions. The excellent teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6. Teaching is good throughout the school in English, mathematics, science, religious education, geography, art, design and technology, music and history. It is satisfactory in other subjects. Although the small amount of information technology teaching that takes place is of satisfactory quality, there is insufficient amount to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
17. Teachers display good subject knowledge, which is instrumental in motivating and stimulating pupils' interest. In mathematics teachers have a good knowledge of teaching mathematical skills and lessons include lively introductions that teach new skills in a range of interesting practical ways. Pupils respond to this enthusiastically and are keen to get their calculations correct. On occasions teachers do not extend learning sufficiently by encouraging pupils to explain their calculations. All teachers and support staff have a good knowledge of teaching basic literacy skills. This results in good advice to pupils as they are reading and writing and this is a significant factor in pupils' confidence to try reading and writing words that may be new to their spoken vocabulary. Teachers are less familiar with all of the aspects of information technology and are only just starting to identify its potential as an aid to learning across the curriculum.
18. Planning and assessment in lessons is satisfactory but varies between classes. When teaching was very good or excellent the lesson plans that teachers normally use includes sufficient detail to ensure tasks are matched clearly to all levels of attainment. Planning often omits the use of information technology as an aid to learning across the curriculum. Lesson objectives are set out in medium term plans and in mathematics and English and when teaching was most effective pupils had a clear understanding of what they were going to learn in the lesson. A significant strength in planning is the joint planning sessions when teachers and support staff meet to evaluate previous lessons and also collaborate about future lessons. This ensures pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language have full access to the activities being taught. As a result, tasks are appropriate to the individual needs of these pupils who make good progress related to their prior learning. Teachers are very effective in assessing pupils' work in lessons and quickly spot pupils needing extra attention and also move pupils on who have completed work. Recording of on-going assessment varies from informal notes to detailed records of individual progress. Although this is usually effective in identifying pupils' understanding at the end of a particular theme or topic, it is not always used as successfully to plan lessons with a clear focus on the needs of all pupils. Pupils do not always have a clear understanding of their learning and the school has identified target setting for pupils as an area for development.
19. All staff have high expectations of children's behaviour in class and this enables pupils to give due attention to their work and they respond positively by concentrating well and producing their best work. Expectations of the rate at which pupils should work is usually appropriate. The exception to this is provision for the higher attaining pupils who on occasions complete the same work as others before moving on to the more challenging tasks and a few would increase their rate of learning by working at the higher level for more of the time.

20. Teachers use a very good range of methods and organisational strategies which ensure lessons are interesting. Many lessons have a practical activity and this ensures learning is consolidated through investigation and pupils' understanding is deepened as they solve problems for themselves. There is a good balance of whole class teaching, small group and individual work. This is particularly effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language as they receive additional adult support when it is needed. Pupils are efficient in organising themselves and settle quickly to tasks. They respond well to supporting pupils who may need instructions translating and this is done unobtrusively in many lessons.
21. Teachers manage classes very well and achieve very good standards of discipline. They have very effective working relationships with pupils and use praise and encouragement effectively. Pupils behave very well in lessons and appreciate how their actions can disturb the learning of other pupils. Teachers encourage the completion of tasks. Pupils listen closely to instructions and apply considerable effort in all lessons. They are just as keen to improve their playing of the recorder and other creative and physical skills, as they are to extend their academic skills.
22. Teachers usually make good use of time available and lessons are conducted at a good pace. Pupils enjoy the challenge to complete tasks in a set time. This was evident in an excellent mathematics lesson when pupils were given 5 minutes to complete a set number of investigations before the class shared their findings. There was an atmosphere of determination as pupils worked at a good rate to finish their work in time. Resources are used well although information technology is not a regularly feature of learning across the curriculum and this restricts pupils achieving the standards of which many are capable. Support staff make a very good contribution to learning.
23. Parents expressed a concern about the amount of homework set for their children. During the inspection pupils were set homework that extended their learning in many lessons. Discussions with pupils indicated a clear understanding of the amount of work to be done at home and it is in line with government recommendations.
24. The quality of teaching was sound and often good, at the time of the previous inspection. It has further improved as a result of new schemes of work and more focussed planning. The weakness identified in design and technology has been resolved and the school has identified the need to strengthen the teaching of information technology. The strength in the teaching is the staff's commitment to their pupils and this is contributes significantly to the good rate of learning that pupils make as they move through the school.

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

25. The curriculum is good and meets statutory requirements with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. All subjects now have schemes of work, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. These nationally approved schemes of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority provide support for teaching and learning across the school. Religious education is taught using the Locally Approved Syllabus. Opportunities for personal, social and health education are good and include sex education, drugs and substance awareness. The school offers a balanced curriculum including physical and creative opportunities as well as providing for pupils' academic needs. However, the use of information technology in other areas of the curriculum is under-developed and inconsistent in practice.
26. The overall planning for literacy and numeracy is good and is contributing to the trend of rising attainment. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are fully in place in the school. The school has identified a lack of achievement in writing and additional time is being allocated to improve the attainment of pupils in this work. The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils with English as an additional language ensures equal opportunity and access for all groups of pupils. This is a strength of the school.
27. The curriculum is enhanced for many pupils by the wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. There is a steel-band group, which meets at lunchtime and a highlight of the inspection was their very good performance in an assembly for parents and the rest of the school. A Kwik-Cricket club met for the first time and over 20 pupils attended. Many clubs are so well supported that staff have had to organise separate sessions for some year groups. For example, there are 2 choir groups for Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 pupils. Older pupils attend a local outdoor centre for a residential day visit. Parents are appreciative of these activities and they are well supported both during and after school. The curriculum also reaches out into the wider community and pupils visit the local shops and do surveys to help their mathematics and geography. They use a local park as a resource. Some pupils participate in the area Indian Dance classes, which meet in the Community Centre adjacent to the school. However, there are few examples of local people or businesses being involved in the life of the school and sharing experiences.
28. The schools' curriculum is enriched with very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The high quality provision noted in the last report has been maintained, and indeed enhanced, and is now a major strength of the school. There are many opportunities for pupils' spiritual development and this provision is very good. The quality of assemblies is good and provides appropriately for the school's population and explores social and moral questions that are linked to the everyday lives of pupils. Pupils also consider questions about the values and beliefs of other religions. During the inspection one assembly used as its theme a Hindu prayer about the use of 'kind hands'. Opportunities for reflection occur in many lessons. For example, Year 4 pupils were asked to consider what they might wish to include in their 'Millennium Dome' and responded with ideas such as peace and an end to homelessness. Year 5 pupils considered why religion is so important to people as an introduction to looking at the Sikh religious views and beliefs. These valuable opportunities encourage pupils to reflect on the environment and on their own lives and the lives of others and promote pupils' knowledge and awareness of different beliefs.
29. The provision for pupils' moral development is also very good. The whole ethos of the school is directed towards relating what is morally right from wrong. In all classes there is evidence of the way that positive rules for behaviour are consistently reinforced. In a physical education lesson with Year 5/6 pupils the class teacher used a 'pushing' incident to discuss the moral implications of such behaviour. Many of the stories and texts that pupils work with have a clear moral focus, such as telling the truth, which teachers use well. Teachers themselves provide very good role models for their pupils.
30. The social development of pupils is another strength of the school. Cooperation between pupils

is good and they work well together in pairs or small groups. Older pupils help to run the school 'tuck' shop at playtime. Pupils carry out a regular check on small games equipment. All classes have monitors and pupils are encouraged to take other responsibilities. A noticeable feature of classroom behaviour is the way in which all pupils listen with respect to others and appreciate their points of view. The very good relationships in all classes are a major feature of the school and contribute significantly to the social development of pupils.

31. The school celebrates its ethnic and cultural diverse population and uses it very well to enhance the provision of cultural development of all pupils. Groups of pupils have visited the local temple and examined a range of religious artefacts. Year 5 and 6 pupils have visited a theatre to see a performance of 'Oliver Twist'. The curriculum includes a range of activities to extend pupils' cultural knowledge. For example, in geography some pupils are studying Chembakolli, an Indian village, and in art the work of painters such as Matisse is studied. In music pupils study the work of famous composers and there are numerous effective displays around school to support this aspect of the schools' provision.
32. The school ensures continuity of learning as pupils transfer from the local infant school. Teachers meet and discuss pupils' attainment and personal development so that Year 3 teachers have a good platform on which to build their knowledge of the new pupils. There are satisfactory links with local secondary schools in the introduction of pupils but there are few curricular links.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school places great emphasis on the care of its pupils and provides a secure environment where pupils can learn effectively.
34. The school has effective procedures to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. Child protection procedures are satisfactory and the school has adopted the Local Area Child Protection Committee procedures. The headteacher is designated as responsible for child protection but has received no formal training, nor have any of the school's staff. Staff are given detailed guidance on child protection and are confident that any issue referred will be handled effectively. The school has good links with outside agencies and exercises its responsibilities appropriately in this area. The school has appropriate policies in place for health and safety and routine attention to health and safety is satisfactory. The governing body receives reports on any matters requiring attention. Defects are rectified or equipment taken out of use. Appliances and equipment receive regular safety checks. The school has carried out some risk assessments but not fully developed these to ensure that health and safety risks are constantly under review. Two members of staff are qualified first aiders. All accidents, their causes and subsequent treatment are recorded in a register held in the reception area. Parents are informed of any serious incident and indicate they are happy with the way the school cares for their children.
35. The school's provision for the care of its pupils is supported by effective systems to monitor their progress and to provide additional help where needed. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic development are good. The school rigorously tracks pupils' achievement in English mathematics and science through standardised and annual National Curriculum tests. Data from these are carefully analysed to identify any trends in pupils' progress including those related to gender or ethnicity. The school's use of data analysis is improving and results are now being used to adjust provision and set targets for pupils' future attainment. Consequently, pupils are taught mathematics and English in groups based on attainment and writing has a higher profile in English. The school has systems to review pupils' work and match it to National Curriculum levels. At present those documents have limited evidence of work at the higher levels in English, mathematics and science. Day-to-day monitoring of pupils' progress by teachers is satisfactory. Although there is no consistent method of recording throughout the school, all teachers keep records of pupils' progress in the English, mathematics and science. A few teachers have detailed records of progress in all subjects. Although teachers assess

pupils' attainment this is not always translated into classroom provision and on occasions tasks are not sufficiently focussed on pupils' needs and this is particularly the case for higher attaining pupils.

36. There are good systems in place to monitor pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare. The organisation of the school into four areas enables teachers within each area to discuss pupils' personal and academic progress at weekly meetings. Teachers record any incident or achievement that may affect their pupils' progress, along with necessary action taken. There is very good liaison with teachers who support pupils with special educational needs and those who support pupils for whom English is a second language and this ensures support is directed to those who need it most. Detailed information and individual education plans are kept and used effectively to target support in classrooms and teaching groups. The consistent application of discipline effectively promotes good behaviour. Very good behaviour is reinforced and consequently behaviour throughout the school is very good. The school minimises bullying by dealing with it effectively when it occurs.
37. Pupils' attendance is monitored regularly. Absence rates are calculated and specific concerns recorded. The Education Welfare Officer follows up any identifiable trends or prolonged absences at the school's request.
38. Pupils' behaviour is also carefully monitored and ensures that learning takes place in a secure and happy environment. The school has strong anti-bullying and anti-racist policies and implements these effectively. At the beginning of each school year each class reviews aspects of the school's behaviour code through the programme of personal and social education and religious education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Parents are very satisfied with the education the school provides for their children. Analysis of the views given at the meeting for parents before the inspection and from the questionnaires returned indicates that they are overwhelmingly satisfied with most aspects of that education. Their children are very happy to come to school and they are very pleased with the attitudes that the school promotes. They believe they make good progress and that the leadership of the school is good. Some expressed concerns about too little or inconsistent homework and the lack of extra-curricular activities for younger pupils. Inspection findings confirm parents' positive opinions of the school. The concerns over homework are not justified and the school reports on pupil progress are satisfactory. The provision of other activities for younger pupils after school is limited by the school's concerns for their safety going home on their own.
40. The school's efforts to link up with parents and the impact of their involvement with the work of the school are satisfactory. It sends out a brief newsletter each term with basic information, for example about the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Workshops have also been held to discuss these initiatives. They were not, however, very well attended and parents did not feel well informed about these and some other aspects of school life, such as behaviour and homework policies. However, the school has provided policies to all parents attached to the Home-School Agreement. Staff meet parents of pupils with English as an additional language to promote parental understanding of school activities and this has a positive impact on the support these pupils receive at home.
41. The previous inspection identified the pupils' annual reports to be lacking in the required detail. They are now better and meet statutory requirements. All describe what the pupils can do in mathematics, English and science in some detail although there is seldom any indication of the level pupils are working at in comparison with expectations. The best reports give advice on what the pupil should do to improve and how the parents can help, for example in reading at home or practising mental mathematics' skills in the supermarket. Parents have good opportunities to discuss progress with their child's teacher and feel that this can be done informally at any time should the need arise.
42. Parents and carers make a good contribution to pupils' learning. They support the school's ethos of discipline and care for others, which contributes so much to their learning. In particular their efforts at hearing pupils read at home have a good impact in raising attainment in reading. Parents also support homework, although they are not always clear about when and how to do this. The school believes it is too soon after its introduction to evaluate the impact of the Home-School agreement. A majority of parents returned signed copies although some could not see that they served any purpose. Very few parents help on a regular basis in school and few visit school to talk about their experiences to support the curriculum. The school is always seeking to improve the effectiveness of communications and to bring more parents into the daily life of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The school is well led and the head teacher provides strong leadership and clear educational direction for the school. He is supported effectively by the deputy head who oversees pastoral issues and shares a leading role in curriculum development. The senior management team provides effective leadership and meets weekly to discuss pupils' personal and academic progress. The organisation of the school into four 'areas' with identified leaders benefits pupils and parents as clear lines of communication are established if issues need to be raised with staff.
44. The head teacher develops the skills and confidence of staff by delegating responsibilities purposefully. Curriculum leaders manage their own budgets and are developing skills in seeking out value for money. They are confident implementing initiatives and share 'ownership' of curriculum development with colleagues. Consequently staff are motivated, have a shared purpose and work effectively as a strong team to further raise standards.
45. The governors are very supportive of the school and share with the head teacher and staff the commitment to improvement. Governors are made aware of the school's strengths and needs through regular meeting. The chair of the governors meets regularly with the head teacher to discuss finance and other emerging issues. The role of the governors in the strategic planning for the school is currently too passive. However, training for target setting has been undertaken and there are plans to link governors with specific subject areas once the new governing body has its full complement of members. All statutory requirements are met except the school prospectus omits the school's attendance figures and does not provide the national comparative results of national tests.
46. The headteacher rigorously monitors the quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons. Issues arising from monitoring are dealt with sensitively and may include discussion, training or intervention by the subject co-ordinator. This makes a significant contribution to the good quality of teaching. The monitoring role of subject co-ordinators however, is not sufficiently developed. This aspect of their leadership is largely restricted to the monitoring of planning and sampling examples of work but not the quality of teaching and learning, in order to evaluate impact on standards and plan for further improvements.
47. The effectiveness of the school is monitored well through clear analysis of test results and of pupils' personal development and behaviour. Pupils' attainment is tracked from Year 3 and improvements are measured in terms of their progress through the national curriculum levels. The school's analysis shows clearly that a substantial majority of pupils make at least satisfactory progress. When weaknesses are identified prompt action is taken to remedy them. For example, in providing more time for writing and in teaching Years 5 and 6 separately for English and mathematics to allow staff to follow the national literacy and numeracy strategies more closely. The school development plan is used well to implement actions to resolve any identified weaknesses. It is a well-structured document, which clearly outlines activities, responsible personnel, costs and a realistic time for evaluation.
48. Careful management has led to overall good provision for staffing, accommodation and resources. The school is well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers. Support staff are experienced and make a significant contribution to standards. The support for pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs is good. Arrangements for the professional development of all staff are good and linked to targets in the school development plan. For instance, recent training for literacy and numeracy and for teaching design and technology has been undertaken and has led to improvements in these areas. Appraisal procedures are in place and effectively linked to staff development. The school has a very settled and happy staff with high morale, which is having an impact on the teaching and rate of pupils' learning.

49. The accommodation in the school is spacious and well maintained. There are a sufficient number of classrooms to enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. Spare classrooms are used very effectively for small group teaching and this has a beneficial impact on standards. The school has an attractive library but it is no fully developed as a resource for independent learning. The premises officer and staff keep the school immaculately clean, which was highlighted in the last report. The hall is small for the number of pupils on roll, and is cramped when older pupils are using it for gymnastics. Outside there is an ample playground and a grassed area.
50. Overall, learning resources are sufficient in range and quality. Resources for design and technology have improved in response to a need identified in the previous inspection. There are now sufficient materials and tools for the subject and this has led to an improvement in standards. The school has been addressing the issue of increasing the number of books and there is sufficient for lessons but there is still a need for more attractive and up-to-date books in the library. Resources are generally used well although information technology is underused to support learning across the curriculum.
51. Overall the school makes optimum use of funding and monies are spent prudently with a view to the priorities in the school development plan.
52. The maintenance of careful financial planning effectively supports educational developments. The headteacher, senior management team and governors monitor the budget regularly, and together with specialist support ensure accurate control of spending. Financial decisions are firmly rooted in a commitment to raising standards for all pupils. The role of the governors in terms of strategic financial management has been somewhat restricted in recent months because of a restructuring exercise within the local schools. This initiative is now complete and the reconstituted governing body is now in a strong position to fully establish their role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and to evaluate the effectiveness of their decisions in terms of cost effectiveness and its impact on standards of attainment.
53. The previous inspection report referred to a lack of cost effectiveness measures to identify more accurately, gains in educational standards and quality of provision. The school has addressed this issue through the introduction of a cost effectiveness document which reviews major spending decisions and evaluates success against clear criteria. Overall the quality of leadership has improved since the last inspection and the combined effort of all involved has had a significant impact on the improvement in standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. To improve further standards of attainment and quality of education the head, staff and governors should:

(1) Raise standards in information technology by:

- further developing teachers' competence and confidence to teach all aspects of the subject
- including the use of information technology in planning to ensure all pupils have greater opportunities to develop information technology skills
- ensuring information technology is used more extensively as an aid to learning across the curriculum. (The school has identified information technology as a priority in the school development plan)

(See paragraphs 2, 8, 16, 17, 18, 22, 24, 25, 50, 65, 73, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100 and 101)

(2) Further extend learning opportunities for higher attaining pupils by:

- ensuring planning includes sufficient detail for activities for all ranges of ability
- using assessment data more effectively to ensure that tasks challenge and extend the learning of the higher attaining pupils
- revisiting the procedures for matching samples of work to National Curriculum levels to raise teachers' understanding of the requirements of the higher levels.

(See paragraphs 2, 18, 19, 35, 67, 73, 79, 80, 91, 113 and 114)

(3) Further develop the role of subject coordinators to allow them more opportunities to monitor provision.

(See paragraphs 46, 75, 80, 95, 101 and 114)

55. In addition to the key issues above the following less important aspects should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- now the governing body is in place, to involve it further in the future planning of the school (See paragraph 45)
- as soon as possible arrange for staff to attend training in child protection (See paragraph 34)
- to improve the quality and quantity of books in the library (See paragraphs 50, 68)
- to extend the use of the library for independent research (See paragraphs 49, 68)
- to include all required information in the school's prospectus (See paragraph 45)

Section 11 (Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant)

56. Since the last inspection the Section 11 grant has been re-designated as the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. The current funding from this source is used effectively to employ the full time equivalent of 2.3 teachers. The school is also involved in several initiatives within the local area to increase parental and community awareness, for example providing training and guidance in reading and English so that parents can assist pupils with homework.
57. The teachers and the bi-lingual assistant are well qualified and experienced and they work in close partnership with classteachers, sharing responsibility for the planning, evaluating and teaching with occasional examples of skilled 'team-teaching' delivery. During this process, class teachers are developing their own knowledge, understanding and skills in bi-lingual provision. The way in which this approach integrates the bi-lingual pupils into the social and learning aspects of their class is a strength of the school and it ensures that they have full access to the National Curriculum and religious education. This has a positive impact on their acquisition of language skills in English as well as their levels of attainment in all areas of the curriculum.
58. The attainment of most pupils on entry to Key Stage 2 is well below that expected for pupils of their age. All pupils, who are bi-lingual, entering the school at any stage, are assessed. A database is maintained from assessments carried out each term and this records details of their achievements as they progress through the school. When appropriate, support is modified accordingly but mostly support is provided within the classroom situation. Care is taken to distinguish pupils who have language difficulties and those whose special educational needs are masked by language inadequacy.
59. Through a good emphasis on language development in all activities and the effective use of bi-lingual staff where appropriate, pupils soon gain confidence in speaking in large and small groups. The school puts due emphasis on the development of English language for many pupils for whom English is an additional language and their rate of learning in lessons is good. Progress from entering school to leaving at the age of eleven is good in all subjects with the exception of information technology. By the end of the key stage the majority of pupils are reaching the average level of attainment in most subjects including English and mathematics. A significant minority of these pupils do not meet the expected level. Many still have difficulty understanding subject-specific vocabulary in mathematics, in problem solving and in investigative science lessons and they are dependent on further explanation by the teacher on a one-to-one basis. Progress and subsequent attainment is sometimes affected by extended holidays abroad especially when the return to school happens just before the statutory tests. The school has devised a system of work packs for these pupils designed to provide on-going self-study activities. Further input to raising standards is the use of the community wing of the school where staff meet parents and promote parental understanding in the support for their children's' learning. This ensures pupils receive support at home and evidence indicates this has a significant impact on attainment particularly in reading.
60. The current provision for pupils with English as an additional language is very well organised and the support provided is a strength of the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2.4	9.8	56.1	31.7	0	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	Y 3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		425
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		93

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		170

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	396

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	59	60	119

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	37	37	43
	Girls	39	34	36
	Total	76	71	79
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 [58]	60 [53]	66 [67]
	National	70 [65]	69 [59]	78 [69]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	34	31
	Girls	27	33	37
	Total	44	67	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	37 [58]	56 [72]	57 [66]
	National	68 [64]	69 [64]	75 [70]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	7
Black – other	0
Indian	358
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	43
Any other minority ethnic group	11

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	30.4

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	658,618
Total expenditure	655,556
Expenditure per pupil	1,457
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,047
Balance carried forward to next year	11,109

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	425
Number of questionnaires returned	199

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	30	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	44	2	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	36	3	1	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	38	10	9	6
The teaching is good.	55	40	2	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	33	9	2	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	35	1	1	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	28	4	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	44	39	6	3	8
The school is well led and managed.	57	36	1	1	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	38	2	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	33	11	6	9

NB: Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, sum may not = 100%

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

ENGLISH

61. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' performance was well below the national average and below average when compared with similar schools. The 1999 group included more than usual pupils identified as having special educational needs. In previous years the school has compared more favourably with similar schools and is average when compared to Leicester Local Education Authority schools. Although the proportion of pupils attaining the national target level was similar to the national picture few pupils exceeded this level and this had an adverse effect on the overall results. However, analysis of assessment as pupils enter the school indicates low levels in language and literacy skills. The results indicate that 90 per cent of pupils improved their performance by two levels or more in the National Curriculum tests and nearly a third of pupils improved by three levels. This indicates that pupils are working hard and learning at a good rate as they move through the school. In the 1999 national reading tests 84 per cent of pupils attained the expected Level 4 or above which was just above the national average. Attainment in the writing tests was below the national average of 56 per cent, with 46 per cent of pupils attaining the expected level for their age. Girls have been achieving lower results than boys but there was no evidence during the inspection of girls receiving less attention than boys. The 1999 results identified no differences in attainment between boys and girls. Since 1997 pupils' results in English tests have remained below the national average but have generally shown an improving picture.
62. The current standard of work observed during the inspection indicates that the improvement is continuing and by the end of the key stage attainment is in line with the national average in speaking and listening and reading but is still below average in writing. The previous inspection identified attainment to be generally in line with the national average and the school has worked hard to maintain and build on these standards. The school has set specific targets and is on line to achieve these. The school has implemented several changes that have had a significant impact on standards. Planning is now more structured and follows the advice in the National Literacy Strategy. The school now teaches Years 5 and 6 in single age classes to allow teachers to follow more closely the structure of the new guidelines. Pupils are also being taught in groups closely matched to their prior attainment. Additional 'booster' classes are being carefully planned to give effective support to identified pupils. Teaching is consistently good and has a significant impact on the improved standards identified during the inspection.
63. By the end of the key stage, standards in speaking and listening are in line with the national average. The school has a high percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language and this level of attainment is due in no small part to the very good provision made for these pupils and those with special educational needs. For example, Year 3 pupils listen carefully when learning to recite a 'rap' poem and Year 4 pupils speak clearly and well in explaining their ideas for 'definition poems'. At the end of the key stage pupils listen to each other's opinions and ideas with respect and help and support each other when required to do so. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 speak confidently in discussing their ideas and opinions about the work of the Bronte sisters. However, not all pupils have sufficient breadth of vocabulary to explain their ideas or to use technical terminology accurately. Throughout the school there is an emphasis on oral work that continually encourages pupils to express themselves and they make good progress in developing their language skills

64. Standards attained in reading at the end of the key stage are average. The majority of pupils enjoy the Literacy Hour and the interesting range of activities presented to them. They work hard and concentrate during the introductions following the shared text carefully. When pupils start in the school most have a secure knowledge of sounds and letters and use them well in their reading. Some still rely heavily on pictures to help them with new words. Teachers provide many chances for pupils to practise their reading and this ensures they learn at a good rate and most make good progress in extending their reading skills. Pupils in Year 3 are able to identify the index and contents page of a non-fiction book and know how to use a dictionary. Year 5 pupils read more fluently and accurately and higher attaining pupils show good understanding of the text. In contrast, lower attaining pupils in both Year 5 and Year 6 read mechanically and without expression. Other pupils in Year 6 are enthusiastic readers and have a number of different strategies for dealing with unfamiliar words. They check carefully for understanding but as yet do not recognise the hidden meanings within text or appreciate how the author is creating suspense in the text. Most are able to find main facts and key words on a page but are less secure reading a page of more detailed information. Many are members of the local library and have favourite authors.
65. Although the majority of pupils are making good progress in improving their writing skills standards in work at eleven is below that in other aspects of English and is below the national average. The school has already targeted this as an area for future improvement. Throughout the school most pupils recognise that writing changes for different purposes. The majority of pupils in Years 3 and 4 use capital letters and full stops correctly and understand sentence structure. Higher attaining pupils in Year 3 are beginning to use imaginative words in their descriptive writing; for example, one pupil used the word 'glowing' to describe a cats' eyes. Sensitive language is used to describe the feelings of a dog as it sits at its master's grave after looking at the picture of 'The old shepherd's chief mourner.' By the end of the key stage pupils write short stories following an appropriate structure and are beginning to use more imaginative vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils show an understanding of the use of re-drafting their work to improve their presentation. This has been successful when recording their ideas and opinions of the work of classical texts such as 'Macbeth' and 'Oliver Twist'. Although the majority of pupils in all classes write neatly and form letters clearly, many particularly in Years 5 and 6 are still using print rather than joined script. Spelling mistakes are frequent and often cannot be justified by sounding out the words themselves. This improves at the end of the key stage when the majority of pupils sort words according to their 'sounds' and recognise spelling patterns. All pupils take pride in their writing and work hard at their presentation. Whilst there is some use of information technology in writing, it is usually confined to word processing of completed work for display.
66. Literacy skills are satisfactory and enable pupils to record their work and research information in other subjects. Teachers maximise every opportunity for pupils to practise their literacy skills. For example, in the topic writing on mountains and rivers in a mixed Year 5/6 class and the folding books and passports in Year 4's topic on journeys. There are many displays in classrooms and around the school, which show literacy skills used to record work in science, design technology, history and geography by all groups of pupils.

67. The quality of teaching is good and has a significant impact upon the good rate of learning and the progress pupils make. In 79 per cent of lessons seen the teaching was good or better. Lessons are effectively planned enabling pupils' learning to be moved forward at a good pace. This enables the majority of pupils to work at an appropriate rate for their ability. However, although activities are still carefully planned, opportunities are occasionally missed to challenge and extend pupils' learning. This is particularly so for higher attaining pupils who could have been set more challenging work to ensure they achieve their full potential. Lessons are well planned with clear learning targets and in the good lessons teachers share these with pupils so that they have a clear understanding of what they are going to learn. Good lessons have high challenge, which enthuse pupils to learn and these high expectations encourage pupils to give their full attention to their work. All teachers show a secure knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Literacy Hour and use this well to manage their pupils' learning. Pupils know and understand the routines of the Literacy Hour and respond well to them. They remember what they have been taught and try to use it in their work and this ensures they improve their learning. Teachers use questions effectively to check on understanding and particularly to extend vocabulary. Pupils respond well and are keen to be part of the lesson and contribute fully in discussions and this ensures they make good progress in speaking and listening. Good, consistent behaviour strategies are used and frequent praise and encouragement is used to reward positive attitudes to learning. Relationships within classes are very good, both between pupils and between pupils and adults. They celebrate each others success with genuine pleasure as was demonstrated in a Year 5/6 class when pupils spontaneously applauded the work of another pupil. When used, support staff are well briefed and make an effective contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs or those for whom English is a second language. This provision ensures equal access to the planned curriculum for all pupils and allows the pupils to make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, Most teachers provide homework activities closely related to classroom lessons, and both parents and pupils appreciate this. Good use is made of resources to support learning and pupils are well organised and accept responsibility for their own learning. Assessment in English is thorough, on-going and is used to inform future planning. There was a discrepancy between teacher assessments and the actual test results in 1999 and the school has identified the need to revisit their moderation procedures. There is a portfolio of samples of pupils' work against which teachers can monitor the progress of their pupils through the different levels of the National Curriculum. However, at the present time it does not contain any work at the higher levels of attainment so that teachers have no clear yardstick against which they can measure standards at Level 5.
68. There is a positive ethos for the subject across the school and the Literacy Hour has been implemented successfully. At present a temporary coordinator who has produced an action plan for the future development in English leads the subject. The headteacher has monitored teaching of the subject in all classes this year and teachers have received useful feedback. This has led to increased confidence in their teaching and improvement in standards. Resources for the teaching of the Literacy Hour are generally good. However, the range and quality of many books in the library is unsatisfactory. Many books are out-dated and in a poor state of repair. The use of the library as a resource for independent learning is underdeveloped.

MATHEMATICS

69. The 1999 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the age of eleven show that the percentage of pupils reaching the national target level and above was below the national average and was below the average seen in similar schools. This particular group of pupils included more pupils than usual as identified as having special educational needs and comparisons with schools with a similar intake have previously been average. The test results indicate that the proportion of pupils exceeding the national level expected for this age group was well below average. Over the four years 1996 to 1999 the overall performance of pupils in mathematics was below the national average; the attainment of boys being below and that of girls being well below that seen nationally in pupils of this age group. These results need to be considered alongside the pupils' levels of ability as they enter the school. Pupils' levels of basic mathematical knowledge are well below the national average for seven-year-olds. In the younger years of the key stage, where their understanding of English is less well developed, pupils often have difficulty in understanding new mathematical concepts. However in the 1999 tests, the percentage of boys and girls achieving average levels of attainment, at level 4 only, is broadly in line with that seen nationally and this indicates the majority of pupils have been working at a good rate of learning. Inspection findings indicate that because of good teaching and focussed support in the classroom for the very high percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language, standards of attainment are broadly in line with that seen in other schools. This is similar to the standards identified in the previous inspection. In the current Year 6 cohort, seven per cent of pupils have been in school for less than two terms and have a limited understanding of English. However, scrutiny of work, discussions with pupils and teachers and the analysis of school target setting data indicate that the percentage of pupils likely to reach average levels of attainment in the statutory tests for eleven-year-olds is now similar to the national picture. Further explanation for this improvement in standards can be seen in the school's successful implementation of the National Numeracy Project. To ensure the guidelines can be followed rigorously the school has opted to teach Year 5 and 6 in single age classes and pupils are also grouped according to their attainment. This enables teachers to focus closely on the needs of their pupils.
70. Pupils who have English as an additional language learn at a good rate relative to their prior attainment. This is as a result of well planned support. These pupils often benefit in their level of understanding of a concept when it is explained to them, sometimes in their mother tongue. Because of the frequent incidence of extended holidays abroad some pupils miss important areas in mathematics and the school tries to overcome these problems by providing additional work.
71. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs, including identified pupils for whom English is an additional language, are given good support by class teachers and learning support staff. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and this effectively enhances their development and understanding and the correct use of mathematical vocabulary as they reach the later years of the key stage.
72. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils have broadly satisfactory skills in the four operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, although skills in the latter are less well developed. The recent implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on the pupils' ability to recall known number facts quickly and use them to calculate mentally using a variety of methods. Most pupils enjoy lessons and sustain good levels of concentration and are eager to participate in the oral sessions at the beginning and end of the lessons. Pupils have a desire to improve and towards the end of the key stage, pupils confidently use their increasing numeracy skills to solve problems, although a minority of pupils for whom English is an additional language have difficulties understanding the written problem. Once the problem is explained, they usually make at least satisfactory and often good progress in problem solving. This difficulty manifests itself during statutory testing when, owing to the high numbers of minority ethnic pupils, sufficient explanation cannot always be given and this has a negative impact on levels of attainment. In a higher attaining Year 6 group, pupils were working with negative and positive numbers and identifying the difference between them. When required to plot the values of these numbers using four quadrants, the majority made good

progress during the lesson and in relation to earlier learning. Pupils work well together and exchange ideas for computation exercises. A Year 5 group of higher attaining pupils calculated accurately, using mental and written methods, to find the fractions of whole numbers such as $\frac{7}{12}$ ths of 144, by dividing by the bottom number and multiplying by the top number. The majority understand the concept of equivalence of fractions and they use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Year 4 pupils enjoy using cards to respond to oral questions involving subtraction of two digit numbers from 100 and they strive hard to improve their time.

73. The quality of teaching is predominantly good, with approximately two thirds of the lessons seen judged to be good; one example of very good teaching and one excellent lesson were also seen. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection. Teachers are committed to giving their pupils the best and this ensures pupils make good progress. Throughout the key stage, teachers demonstrate good strategies to establish clear understanding of the number system. This is effective in ensuring pupils develop their skills in an appropriate order. Pupils' concentration in lessons is good and this ensures they recall prior learning and can use these skills to extend their learning when new topics are introduced. In Year 3, good use was made of an analogue clock to demonstrate the relationship of hours and days. A feature of excellent teaching in Year 5 was the high quality reviewing of previous work. The teacher made very good use of assessment during the lesson and this led to tasks that were more challenge for the higher attaining pupils. This has a positive impact on the level of understanding for the rest of the class by extending their thinking. Teachers use time effectively and lessons are carried out at a brisk pace. In the excellent lesson the teacher gave pupils a set amount of time to complete tasks and this increased the rate of learning as pupils gave their best effort to complete their work. Good use is made of assessment and tasks are generally well suited to the majority of pupils' levels of attainment and this enables them to make good progress. The organisation of pupils in attainment groups within each year is good and is having a positive impact on the standards of attainment for the average attainers. However, the school recognises that further sub-division of higher attaining groups in mathematics is not always planned to provide sufficient challenge for the higher attainers and on occasions these pupils could achieve at a higher level. Currently there is no coherent system of recording assessment information and this also leads to some mis-match of task to ability. Resources are used well for problem solving. The use of information technology in mathematics was not generally in evidence during the week of inspection. However scrutiny of work indicates that it is used occasionally to present information for example in bar chart surveys. Homework is regularly set and marked accordingly this has a positive impact on attainment.
74. Numeracy skills are satisfactory and mainly developed in mathematics but pupils consolidate and use these skills in other subjects, for example to make graphical representation of data in geography and science. In dance, pupils are encouraged to count the beats in the music and to fit their dance steps to the music.
75. The subject is managed effectively by an experienced and qualified coordinator and the commitment to raising the levels of attainment in mathematics is underpinned by the enthusiasm and dedication of all the staff. The results of assessment are analysed and used effectively to inform teachers' planning and to adjust the curriculum. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject in the classroom has begun and is conducted by the headteacher. The coordinator has only had limited opportunity to support the teaching and evaluation of mathematics in recent months but it is recognised that this is an area for development.

SCIENCE

76. Inspection evidence indicates that the proportion of pupils who attain the level expected of eleven-year-olds is in line with the national average. However, the proportion exceeding this level is below average. The standards identified in the previous report have been maintained. The previous report highlighted investigative skills were not as well developed as other aspects of the science curriculum. This was not the case during the current inspection and pupils were, for example, observed effectively investigating different forces.
77. The 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds showed attainment in science to be well below average nationally and below average when compared with similar schools. Although standards in science are shown to be consistently low over time, there is a steadily improving trend. Previous year's results have indicated attainment to be more in line with similar schools. Although this was not the case in 1999 indications are that this trend is set to continue. This can be attributed to improvements made since the previous inspection in the analysis and use of assessment data to identify areas for development and the adjustment to the curriculum in response to this analysis. The improving standards as pupils start school are also becoming apparent in lessons. Corporate planning is now a strong feature of the school and has brought more coherence and consistency to what is taught. This ensures teachers build on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding. Planning also provides effectively for those pupils for whom English is an additional language. Specialist leaders employed in the school contribute to planning to ensure possible language difficulties are minimised. For example many resources are presented in English and Gujarati to help pupils understand where there is no equivalent language to describe a particular concept. This benefits a large proportion of pupils in the school.
78. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of life processes. They understand how the human body works. Most correctly identify major organs such as the heart and lungs, and name the bones in the human skeleton. They understand the functions of bones, muscles and joints. Pupils demonstrate appropriate understanding of balance and imbalance in forces and investigate the forces of friction and gravity. They name the sources of light and understand that shadows are formed when light cannot pass through materials. Pupils classify and test materials for their absorbent qualities or durability. Year 4 pupils, for example, tested a range of fabrics prior to designing and making purses, show good links between science and technology. By the end of the key stage most carry out a range of investigations and understand the idea of a fair test. They record their findings well using a variety of methods.
79. The quality of teaching is good and in half of the lessons seen teaching was good and the rest were satisfactory. This ensures that the majority of pupils work to the best of their ability. This contributes significantly to the good rate of learning seen in lessons and the overall good progress pupils make as they move through the school. Lessons are well planned and teachers' subject knowledge enables brisk and confident teaching. Good use of questions challenges pupils' understanding and keeps pupils well focused. Resources are organised and used effectively, particularly to help pupils whose English language skills are not yet secure. Despite prior attainment and many language difficulties these pupils make good progress. They show a strong capacity for hard work and a good pace of learning is present in lessons. Very good relationships are established and the resulting good behaviour contributes well to the quality of learning. Overall planning is effective as the school is implementing a new scheme of work. However, the organisation of Years 5 and 6 into mixed age classes makes it difficult for teachers to teach all aspects of the curriculum to the required depth. This restricts the rate of learning of higher attaining pupils who could be set more challenging tasks. Investigative work for example, is not generated by the pupils themselves, and does not provide opportunities for pupils to decide for themselves what evidence should be gathered, select apparatus or present data in a variety of ways, including the use of information technology.

80. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership and is instrumental in promoting curriculum planning and development. The process of data analysis is beginning to take effect and the school has clear targets for the next two years. It is recognised that a more specific focus is needed to effectively increase the proportion of higher attaining pupils. The co-ordinator monitors curriculum planning, samples of pupils' work and annual reports for consistency, but the monitoring of teaching and learning in order to plan improvement is underdeveloped.

ART

81. The school provides opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of artistic skills. The standard of work is often better than that seen from pupils of similar ages. All pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language enjoy art and their efforts ensure they achieve good results and the rate of learning is good throughout the school. This maintains the level of attainment and levels of learning highlighted in the previous report.
82. At the end of the key stage pupils have a good knowledge of a range of artistic skills. They take great care with their work and are proud of the work they produce. This was observed in a Year 5/6 class, in which the pupils were making a three-dimensional greetings card with two carefully completed pictures to create a front and background. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they have a good artistic skills and knowledge of the subject. This was seen in a number of attractive displays around school. For example, work related to the history topic on World War Two shows an emphasis on detail of shape and form in paint. In Year 3, pupils were developing and exploring line and shape. In one lesson seen, pupils made good levels of learning using the work of Matisse to create a picture of an animal using different shapes of coloured paper. Pupils in Year 4 continue to develop their understanding and ability in selecting a range of material for use in mixed media work. An example was seen displayed in a Year 4 classroom, in which different shades of white, grey and black had been created. Pupils are developing skills of critical analysis and this was seen in a Year 3 class in which pupils discussed and reviewed their work with all adults including the inspector. This is having a positive impact on pupils' good rate of learning.

83. The overall quality of teaching observed is good. Teachers are very enthusiastic about art and have good knowledge and understanding. Teachers in each year group co-operate very effectively to plan a wide range of imaginative and interesting work, which is well matched to the attainment of all pupils and meets the demands of the National Curriculum. This is reflected in the pupils having an appreciation and understanding of the work of great artists, which was seen displayed in the library area, where pupils had imitated the style of Picasso's 'Child with Dove' in paint. In lessons teachers encourage pupils to discuss their work in groups and explain what they have done to the rest of their class using appropriate vocabulary and this contributes to their good rates of learning in literacy. Pupils work well together on art projects and are supportive of the achievements of other pupils. Currently information technology is underused in art.
84. The subject coordinator is an effective manager and ensures the subject has a high profile within the school, This is reflected in the attractive displays in classrooms and corridor spaces around the school. For example, there is a large display in the hall with a futuristic display of the Millennium Dome and the title 'Forward into 2000' which has an immediate impact when entering the hall.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. Evidence from pupils' work indicates standards in design and technology matches the levels expected for their age and the rates of learning for all pupils are sound. This is a significant improvement on the last report, which indicated levels of attainment were below the national average.
86. Following the last inspection the school carried out an audit of the subject and organised effective training for staff. A new scheme of work has been put in place and the subject coordinator has carefully monitored this. Additional resources have been made available and these factors have all been effective in raising standards in the subject.
87. Pupils in Year 3 quickly learn the importance of planning in the design stage of their work and are able to evaluate and modify their product during the construction stage. This was seen in a Year 3 class in which pupils had designed tables and evaluated their effectiveness and the appropriateness of selected materials. Pupils are also developing their knowledge and understanding of 'Food Technology'. This was evident in a Year 3 class, in which pupils were reviewing and evaluating different sandwich fillings and the bread used in their making. There is a sound rate of learning from year to year as pupils develop the ability to select the materials suitable for making the object they have designed and acquire greater skill in measuring, cutting and assembling them to arrive at an end product. For example, Year 4 pupils had designed a purse or wallet and recorded their reason for making their wallet or purse in a particular way. Pupils tested the suitability of different materials, and reviewed and evaluated their completed wallet or purse to see if it had been successful. By the end of the key stage pupils are more proficient in designing and making for a particular purpose. This was seen in a Year 5/6 class in which pupils were beginning to design a 'Piggy Bank' and selected suitable materials for its completion. Pupils are proud of what they do and this is reflected in the quality of their finished work. At the end of the key stage pupils were very keen to discuss the quality of their biscuits with each other and adults alike.

88. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use time and resources well. Clear instructions are given at the beginning of lessons and pupils listen attentively and work safely and well with each other. Lessons are planned well across year groups and link in with the topic focus for each term. This provides pupils with a good range of experiences in handling different materials and testing their effectiveness. Teachers have a firm grasp of the processes involved in design and technology and pass these on successfully to pupils. Pupils recall previous activities and use this knowledge in new situations. Teachers insist that pupils pay adequate attention to planning products carefully. They provide opportunities for pupils to review and modify their work before completion, thus ensuring by the end of the lesson pupils have made good progress and produce work of a satisfactory and often good standard.

GEOGRAPHY

89. Only a small amount of geography was seen during the inspection. Additional evidence was obtained from looking at pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils. Standards of work are broadly in line with those expected for this age range and this reflects an improvement since the previous inspection. The school has recently adopted a new scheme of work and this is already assisting teachers to plan for further improvements in standards.
90. Pupils in Year 3 used an excellent set of photographs of an Indian village to build up a simple picture of life for adults and children in the village. They were also able to draw on the experiences of several pupils in the class who had spent extended holidays in India. In Year 5 pupils produced detailed studies of Dominica illustrated with maps, pictures and comparisons of climate, crops and school life. Pupils in Year 3 used an excellent set of photographs of an Indian village to build up a simple picture of life for adults and children in the village. They were also able to draw on the experiences of several pupils in the class who had spent extended holidays in India. In Year 5 pupils produced detailed studies of Dominica illustrated with maps, pictures and comparisons of climate, crops and school life. Pupils in Year 3 used an excellent set of photographs of an Indian village to build up a simple picture of life for adults and children in the village. They were also able to draw on the experiences of several pupils in the class who had spent extended holidays in India. In Year 5 pupils produced detailed studies of Dominica illustrated with maps, pictures and comparisons of climate, crops and school life.
91. Overall teaching is good. No teaching seen was less than satisfactory and a half of the teaching was good. This ensures pupils work at an appropriate pace and their skills and geographical knowledge are extended as they move through the school. There is particularly good progress in how well the pupils compare communities in different countries. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language receive good support and make good progress through the key stage. Teachers have good subject knowledge, are confident in their delivery and in handling pupils' questions. Pupils respond well and talk with understanding and enthusiasm about the work they are doing. They are attentive listeners and respond well to teachers' questions and to opportunities to express their own views. Lessons are planned well with clear objectives, which are shared with pupils and this enables pupils to assess their own learning. A variety of tasks are planned which appropriately challenge pupils and pupils respond. For example, pupils in Year 5 wrote letters to imaginary children in Dominica describing their school life, and then had to use their knowledge of Dominica to compose a response. However, in the mixed age classes near the end of the key stage tasks do not always appropriately challenge the older high attaining pupils. Lessons generally proceed at good pace but occasionally the pace is not sufficient to maintain the full attention of all pupils and learning objectives are not fully achieved. Teachers manage lessons effectively and pupils' behaviour is very good.

HISTORY

92. The standard of pupils' work in history is similar to that seen in most schools. Pupils show an interest in historical events and are eager to discuss topics in order to gain more information.
93. By the end of the key stage pupils develop an appropriate understanding of chronology and gain satisfactory knowledge of past events. Year 3 pupils, for example, learn about early settlers in Britain and study the day to day life of Vikings. Year 4 pupils' knowledge of the Tudors and Lady Jane Grey in particular, is made more meaningful by their visit to Bradgate Park. Year 5 and 6 pupils learn about the Victorians and study life in Britain from 1930 onwards. Pupils' behaviour and their application to work contributes significantly to standards. Presentation of pupils' work is good. Illustrations are carefully drawn, and recording of information is neat and legible, reflecting the pride pupils take in their work. These standards, and the good progress pupils make, have been maintained since the previous inspection.
94. Teaching is good and pupils are taught well. Lessons are carefully planned and build well on what has been taught previously. Pupils show a good recall of topics studied earlier. The objectives of the lesson are shared with pupils. This sets targets for their achievements within the lesson and encourages pupils to work at a good pace. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, enabling topics to be taught in depth. Very good relationships are established, consequently pupils have respect for, and work confidently with one another. Teachers ensure pupils who have English as an additional language are fully included and also learn at a good rate. These pupils are supported well by friends who provide translations to help them overcome language difficulties.
95. Leadership by the subject co-ordinator is effective. Samples of pupils' work are checked for content and the curriculum is monitored for consistency, across year groups. There are no arrangements for monitoring the quality of learning, in order to bring about improvements in standards.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

96. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' standards in information technology are below the national expectation. In the previous inspection in 1996, the attainment of pupils was reported as being below average in relation to national expectations. Although the school has implemented some new initiatives and resources much remains to be done. The subject is identified as a priority for development on the school development plan.
97. During the inspection, a small number of pupils were observed using information technology to develop their skills and to support their learning in other subjects but only two examples of direct teaching were observed. Overall there is insufficient focussed teaching to ensure a satisfactory rate of progression in the development of skills across the programmes of study and the opportunity to use these skills in other areas of the curriculum.
98. Pupils enter Key Stage 2 with very few skills in basic computing techniques. They enjoy the subject and show considerable interest when given the opportunity to use a computer. In Year 3 pupils have a low level of skill in using the keyboard. They use the mouse and the arrow keys to navigate around a programme involving the drawing and colouring of a design to match a poem based on winter. A minority of higher attainers are competent at saving and printing their work but for the majority, a considerable amount of instructional input is necessary to successfully achieve this. By Years 4 and 5 pupils' confidence is increasing and the majority use the mouse and keyboard to select, drag and move across the menu of a program to estimate distances on a desert island. Despite satisfactory progress in acquiring basic skills, attainment is still below that expected for pupils of this age group. By the end of the key stage, many pupils can enter, store and print both graphics and text but with supervision. In word processing, they lay out the text, change the appearance of the letters and correct if necessary. Most pupils by the end of Year 6 understand the processes of moving text from one page to another. Pupils with English

as an additional language and those with special educational needs are able to do this with appropriate support. These pupils usually make at least sound progress in relation to their prior learning. Using a CD-ROM facility, pupils develop the skill of referencing to support their studies in a range of subjects, for example when a group of Year 6 pupils were finding out about the Victorians. Pupils in the younger classes learn to programme a robot to follow pre-determined path. However, throughout the key stage, insufficient opportunity is given for the pupils to use word processing and data handling skills across the curriculum.

99. Given the low starting base for many of the pupils in information technology, satisfactory progress is made by most pupils in acquiring basic skills and knowledge in computing. However by the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils have not developed the full range of skills expected by the time they are due to transfer to the next phase of their education
100. The small amount of direct teaching seen was generally satisfactory although it is insufficient in quantity. The school has recently established an information technology suite of five new computers and associated equipment, which is located in the library. Groups of ten pupils from each class are timetabled to use this facility and they share computers and work well together. Pupils receive instruction mainly from learning support assistants and non-teaching assistants. They follow worksheets designed to develop basic skills as recognised in the national guidelines, which the school has adopted as its scheme of work. Although there is a range of other computers around the school, which are located in either classrooms or adjacent corridors, insufficient use is made of these by the class teachers to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in other aspects of the curriculum and for them to receive direct teaching during lesson time. Too much reliance is placed on the use of the new suite to address the learning needs of all pupils with insufficient use of the other class-based equipment. As a result this has a negative impact on the rate of learning and subsequent standards of attainment across the key stage.
101. The school is currently in a transition period having acquired the new computer suite, and has recently been successful in a bid for training funds; it also has bid to join the National Grid for Learning. The school is conscious of the need to improve many teachers' subject knowledge and confidence, which are slowing down the progress of the pupils. The subject coordinator has good subject knowledge but has little opportunity to support monitor, evaluate and support the delivery of the subject in the classroom. However direction and advice are provided by the co-ordinator in the professional development of the staff with contributions by the local authority advisor. Assessment records are maintained of the learning experiences and competency of the pupils and it is recognised that this information needs to be used to provide more opportunities for the higher attaining pupils within each year group.

MUSIC

102. Although it was only possible to see a small amount of music during the inspection evidence was supported by review of the new scheme of work, attending extra-curricular activities and observing the school video recording of the latest school performance. Standards of work are similar to those encountered in this age range and these findings are similar to those in the previous inspection.

103. Pupils enjoy listening to music and are gaining in confidence to express their likes and dislikes. In Year 4 pupils quickly recognised the changing speed and dynamics of the music. Most could identify the group of instruments playing but were unsure about the names of the different instruments. In the musical assembly pupils listened enthralled to the William Tell overture and the vast majority identified the music for the storm and then listened with more care to hear the first raindrops. Pupils understand that music can be represented by symbols. In Year 3 pupils know the names of the percussion instruments they select for their short composition. They work well with a partner drawing shapes to represent sounds and using letters and signs to identify how the instruments are to be played. Good progress is made so that in Years 5 and 6 pupils learn to play recorders and read musical notation with growing confidence and accuracy. It was not possible to hear any singing during the inspection but the video evidence and the attendance at the school choir indicate pupils enjoy singing and they sing a range of songs tunefully.
104. The teaching seen was good. Teachers plan an interesting range of activities to interest the pupils and this ensures rates of learning are good. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and they challenge pupils to think carefully when composing and to use the correct terminology. When listening to music, teachers give a specific objective and this keeps pupils focussed on the task. Teachers develop skills in an appropriate sequence and pupils respond well by retaining prior knowledge as well as extending their learning. Classroom management and organisation are good and allow instruments to be played in an orderly way. Pupils are enthusiastic when playing instruments and are eager to improve their skills. When listening to music, the pupils behave very well and a calm atmosphere is often created and pupils have a genuine appreciation of the quality of music.
105. The curriculum is enriched by many opportunities to take part in activities after school. As at the time of the previous inspection the steel band is a popular feature of the school. This is a tradition in the school and the band plays to a high standard at many local functions. Different composers are selected as a focus for assemblies and this plus the wide range of music used throughout the school ensures music makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

106. Owing to the timetable arrangements the lessons observed during the inspection were dance and gymnastics. However, discussion with the coordinator, pupils and teachers and a scrutiny of planning show that the school provides a balanced curriculum which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils learn to play games, have gymnastic and swimming lessons and learn to respond to music through dance. Standards are similar to those normally encountered for pupils of this age range.
107. Throughout the school pupils make satisfactory progress in the skills of throwing and catching, controlling and developing hand-to-eye coordination. As they move through the school, pupils develop these skills and perform with increasing confidence and competence. Pupils take part in traditional dances and are quick to learn a variety of sequences, although many fail to give due attention to the neatness of the steps. In gymnastics, by the end of the key stage, pupils balance and transfer their weight to different parts of the body. Many combine movements into a short sequence although insufficient attention is given to the movements that link their activities. Pupils have the opportunity to go swimming and by the time they leave school the majority can swim the required distance identified in the National Curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in lessons and make satisfactory progress overall. This reflects the findings of the last inspection.

108. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. During the inspection teaching in 40 per cent of lessons was good and the rest was satisfactory. Teachers show a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. Effective use is made of pupils themselves as demonstrators in lessons and this clarifies tasks and ensures pupils learn new tasks thoroughly. For example, in a Year 3 lesson on balance, pupils were very effective in showing their work and this clarified the task and others responded by improving tension in their balances. Most pupils are confident to demonstrate in front of the class and have good attitudes to physical activities. They enjoy the subject and respond well to teachers' instructions and behaviour is good. The better lessons are marked by good use of warm-up activities and clear learning objectives, which are well conveyed to pupils so that they know what is expected of them. This was evident in a lesson on balance with a mixed Year 5 and 6 class when pupils showed good control of movement and balance work with a partner. Less successful lessons lack focus and have a more pedestrian pace, which slows down the rate of learning of pupils. In these lessons pupils could have been challenged with more exciting activities.
109. The subject is managed well by the coordinator who is aware of the forthcoming changes to the physical education curriculum. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs and opportunities to take part in games with other schools. Both pupils and parents value these activities. Current resources are adequate in number and quality for the subject, although the size of the hall is somewhat limiting for the numbers of pupils in some classes, especially when large, fixed apparatus is used.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

110. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards of work are at least in line with expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The standard identified in the last inspection has been maintained. The weakness identified in not sufficiently developing understanding of significant events has been resolved.
111. By the end of the key stage pupils have a good basic knowledge and understanding of the key features of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity through the handling of religious artefacts, learning about the appropriate religious symbols and holy books. They learn about and celebrate various religious festivals from these faiths and are familiar with key stories such as the Christmas story and the story of Rama and Sita. They develop an appreciation of the beauty and variety of the creation and compare stories of the creation from different faiths. They also learn about the basic elements of Sikhism and Buddhism. They demonstrate respect when handling religious artefacts and sensitivity to each other's faiths. Pupils are keen to hear stories from different faiths and to express opinions about them. For example, in Year 3 pupils spent much time and care producing a decorated model of a Hindu mandir.
112. The rate of learning for pupils, including those with special educational needs, through the key stage is generally good. The pupils develop a deepening awareness of the importance of religious faith in different communities and in the local multi-faith community. Pupils in Year 3 learn about important symbols in various faiths, such as the crucifix and the various articles on the Puja tray. In Year 5/6 classes they become aware of the work of different faiths in charitable work such as the Red Cross, Red Crescent, Christian Aid and Oxfam. They also demonstrate considerable perception when comparing and contrasting stories of the Creation and the Great Flood from the Christian and Hindu faiths.

113. The quality of teaching overall is good and often very good, and has improved considerably since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and they competently handle pupils' questions even when a full answer is not possible, for example "Who created the gods?" Lesson planning is generally good with clear objectives set. In many lessons an appropriate atmosphere of spirituality is developed through reflection and the sensitive telling of stories. For example, a mixed-age Year 5/6 class, having listened attentively to the story of the birth of the Buddha, proceeded to design and write newspaper articles to celebrate the unique event. Another group of Year 5/6 pupils displayed great imagination and sensitivity in writing the nativity story from the point of view of the donkey that carried Mary to Bethlehem. Teachers generally plan a range of appropriate activities but higher attaining pupils are not always given work, which fully extends them. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace that ensures pupils learn at a good rate. Time is used well, although occasionally learning objectives are not fully met when insufficient time is allowed to complete set tasks. Teachers make good use of the concluding part of lessons to assess with pupils the progress made.
114. The curriculum is appropriately balanced to meet the needs of the Agreed Syllabus and to reflect the nature of the local multi-faith community. As yet there is no systematically planned programme of assessment to monitor pupils' progress, although informal assessments are made on the basis of the work set.