

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RISE PARK JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Nottingham

LEA area: Nottingham City

Unique reference number: 122474

Headteacher: Mrs K. Slack

Reporting inspector: Mr C. Kessell  
20695

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2001

Inspection number: 192416

Full 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:	Bestwood Park Drive West Rise Park Nottingham
Postcode:	NG5 5EL
Telephone number:	0115 915 3775
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K. Thomson
Date of previous inspection:	24 <sup>th</sup> February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20695	C. Kessell	Registered inspector	Mathematics Physical education Religious education	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further
19697	J. Moorhouse	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18709	A. T. Bee	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Provision for pupils with special educational needs Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14991	A. Hardwicke	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography History Equality of opportunity	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school has 234 pupils on roll (114 boys and 120 girls) and is about average in size. It is situated in the north west of Nottingham and draws pupils from both private and council housing. The majority of pupils come from white United Kingdom ethnic backgrounds. However, the percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language, currently 4 per cent, is higher than in most schools and 22 per cent of pupils come from minority backgrounds. Fifteen per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs; this is below the national average. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The attainment of the pupils when they start school is average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a friendly, caring and popular school with a positive ethos. Standards need to improve. Currently they are well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Teaching is often good and there is a commitment in the school to raise standards. The headteacher manages the school well and has developed a team of teaching and non-teaching staff who work extremely hard. The governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily and the strengths of the school outweigh the areas for development. It provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Nearly all of the teaching is good and pupils learn at a good rate.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is good. Relationships are very good.
- Moral development is good. Social development is very good.
- Provision for pupils with specific special educational needs is very good.
- The range of extra-curricular activities provided for the pupils are good.
- There are good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare.
- The school works well with its parents.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are too low.
- The use made of assessment information to plan work could be improved.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has improved satisfactorily since it was last inspected in February 1997. Good progress has been made on the key issues identified at the time. The curriculum, which was criticised at the last inspection, has developed well particularly in areas such as information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology. Liaison with the feeder infant school is now good and the management of the school has improved. The positive features identified at the last inspection have been maintained for example, the good teaching. However,

standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have fallen since the previous inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results of the 2000 national tests for eleven year olds indicated that English was well below average and mathematics and science below average. When compared to similar schools, standards were below average in English and average for mathematics and science. The school's trend of improvement is below the national trend. Current standards in English and mathematics for the pupils who are eleven, are well below average and below average in science. The school will not achieve its statutory targets in English and mathematics for 2001. However, the school is not complacent about its results and there is a strong commitment and determination from the headteacher and staff to improve test results. There are also some mitigating circumstances. The current cohort of Year 6 pupils entered the school with attainment that was well below average. This year group has also suffered from high mobility with a number of pupils either leaving or joining the school. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. The targets set by the school for 2002 show an improvement in standards.

In all other subjects, standards are in line with those expected by pupils at the age of eleven. In ICT and design and technology this represents an improvement since the previous inspection in 1997 as standards in these subjects was judged to be unsatisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in physical education.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are good. At the time of the last inspection pupils were keen to learn, demonstrated an interest and commitment to their work and were happy in school. This situation has been maintained and pupils show considerable enthusiasm for learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of the classroom, is good.
Personal development and	Pupils respond willingly and reliably to opportunities to be actively

relationships	involved in the life of the school. All pupils have responsibilities within their classrooms and for keeping shared areas tidy and the playground free of litter. Classroom monitors come into school early to help prepare their classroom.
Attendance	Attendance at the school is satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
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.*

The quality of teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection. Seventy per cent of lessons were good, eleven per cent very good, three per cent excellent and sixteen per cent satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. The teachers' management of the pupils is consistently very good. The majority of pupils are happy and confident learners who are interested in their work. Classrooms are calm and there is a purposeful atmosphere. In the best lessons, pupils are well motivated and make good progress in their knowledge and understanding. All of the teachers work very hard and are committed to the school and pupils. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily and the national strategies in these areas have been effectively implemented. However, there are some areas for development in teaching. For example, work is not always effectively planned for pupils of different abilities and some pupils are not challenged and extended as well as they could be. Support staff are used very well and make a significant contribution to the learning experiences that most pupils receive.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides for the needs of all pupils. Statutory requirements are met and appropriate provision is made for religious education. The extra-curricular activities provided for the pupils are good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special education needs is good and it is very good for the pupils who have specific difficulties. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and there is staged referral system in operation, which follows the national recommendations.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils have reached appropriate levels in their acquisition of basic language skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The pupils' social development is very good. Social skills are well promoted throughout the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. The school atmosphere is supportive and happy and makes a positive contribution to pupils' progress. The procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are good. The school has good relationships with outside agencies

	involved in pupil care. Assessment information could be used more effectively.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	There is a good partnership between parents and the school. Parents' views of the school are also good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a good leader and she should take credit for the improvements in management since the previous inspection. She has developed a team of teaching and non-teaching staff who, work very well together and have the confidence of the local community who hold the school in high regard. The school has a positive ethos where pupils and staff are valued.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are supportive and fulfil their statutory responsibilities. The governing body has developed well since the previous inspection and has in place an appropriate range of committees to ensure the smooth running of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has correctly identified those things that need to be done to raise standards and improve the education offered to pupils. However, better use could be made of school performance data to set targets and raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and support staff are of a good quality and are very effective. All areas of the school are kept bright and clean by the site manager and his staff. The school building is also enhanced by good quality displays. The accommodation, both inside and around the school, allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. Subjects have adequate resources and are stored efficiently. The school uses most of the principles of best value well for example comparing spending decisions with those of other schools.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils are looked after in a caring way.</li> <li>• The staff are approachable.</li> <li>• It is a happy school where pupils are well behaved and well mannered.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>• Children like school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• More trips and visits.</li> </ul>

The above views are taken from the pre-inspection meeting that was attended by fifteen parents and the fifty-seven responses to the parents' questionnaire. The inspection team would support the parents' positive views. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities although some parents find the cost of some of these events prohibitive. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils went on a day-trip as part of their history class work and overall, trips and visitors to the school are used well to support the curriculum.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average overall but there are significant weaknesses in the pupils' reading. The pupils' numeracy skills are good. This is confirmed by the 2000 National Curriculum test results for the current Year 3 pupils. However, standards on entry are not consistent. For example, the current cohort of Year 6 pupils joined the school with attainment that was well below average. The previous inspection also identified a wide range of attainment on entry to the school. The national test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 showed that pupils' results were well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, standards were below average in English, but average in mathematics and science. Since the previous inspection in 1997 when standards were average, there has been a decline in standards until 2000. In this year there was an improvement overall, particularly in mathematics and science. However, standards are still not high enough and the school appreciates the need to improve. Evidence provided by the school indicates that many of the pupils from the 2000 Year 6 cohort achieved the levels expected of them in relation to their prior attainment particularly in English and science. In science, many pupils exceeded expectations. There were weaknesses in mathematics and not all of the pupils achieved the levels they were capable of. The school's trend of improvement is below the national trend and when taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, the performance of the pupils fell below the national average in English, mathematics and science.

2. Standards are currently well below average in English and mathematics, and below average in science. Overall, these standards are lower than last year although the unconfirmed national test results for 2001 do show an improvement in the percentage of pupils that achieved the higher level 5 in English and science. The school was extremely disappointed in these results and there is no doubt that the teaching and non-teaching staff in the school work extremely hard for the pupils. This is confirmed by the parents and governors. However, the school has not achieved its statutory targets in English and mathematics and this raises doubts about the effective use of assessment information and the school's evaluation of its own performance. There are some mitigating circumstances. The current Year 6 pupils started the school with attainment that was well below average and the year group has suffered from high mobility with a number of pupils either leaving or joining the school.

3. By the time the pupils are eleven, standards of speaking are below those in other schools though nearly all pupils listen with satisfactory concentration during class discussions. A large number of pupils in many classes find it difficult to answer questions. Some are reluctant to do so and, unless asked a direct question by their teachers, remain passive. In their reading, pupils display well below average standards. Average attaining pupils read accurately but because they have difficulty

reading some words such as ‘babbled’ – there is some hesitancy. This is more marked with lower attaining pupils who find that words which contain many syllables such as ‘quivering’ are difficult to decipher. Standards of writing at the end of the key stage are well below average. Many pupils often plan their writing and re-draft it after a first attempt. Their writing is usually clear but they have difficulty in finding exciting words to express their ideas because many have a limited vocabulary. Pupils enthusiastically work out calculations in their heads in their mental mathematics sessions, but many of the lower attaining pupils do not perform at the levels expected for their age. Pupils understand the value of numbers and can link this knowledge to their understanding of decimals and fractions. Pupils participate in mathematical investigations but many have limited strategies for working with mathematics in practical situations and have a limited mathematical language. In science, pupils have worked on practical investigations and developed some understanding of how to make their tests fair, and how variables need to be controlled. But their understanding is below that expected nationally.

4. The school’s statutory targets for 2002 indicate an improvement in standards. The headteacher and staff are determined to raise attainment by making better use of assessment information, becoming more rigorous in determining targets for individuals or groups of pupils and ensuring that all ability groups in all classes are given work that is challenging and appropriate. Pupils often made good progress in lessons observed during the inspection, but scrutiny of pupils’ work and analysis of performance data indicates the pupils’ achievement through the school and over time is satisfactory overall. Pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to the other pupils in their classes. There are some slight differences in the performance of boys and girls and some of these issues are addressed in the school improvement plan.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because their needs are clearly identified and work is well matched to their individual needs. In addition pupils receive very good quality support from the classroom assistants when they support them in lessons and when they work on the specific targets on their individual education plans. This has a positive effect on their learning and the rate of progress over time.

6. Standards in the remaining subjects of art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT and religious education are in line with those expected nationally and with the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils’ achievement in these subjects is satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about physical education. Standards in design and technology and ICT have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be below national expectations. A minority of pupils in Year 6 achieve higher than expected standards in religious education and standards of singing are good throughout the school.

#### **Pupils’ attitudes, values and personal development**

7. Pupils’ attitudes to school are good. At the time of the previous inspection pupils were keen to learn, demonstrated an interest and commitment to their work

and were happy in school. This situation has been maintained and pupils currently show considerable enthusiasm for learning. In the majority of situations pupils work purposefully, demonstrate positive attitudes and show interest in activities. Inspectors saw noteworthy examples of this in an ICT lesson where there was a buzz of enthusiasm and in a design and technology lesson when pupils listened carefully and knew what they had to do. A significant majority of parents replying to the questionnaire and those attending the meeting agreed their children enjoy coming to school. In mathematics and design technology, pupils handle and share resources sensibly and they worked together co-operatively in group activities during physical education and English lessons.

8. The previous inspection judged the behaviour of pupils to be good and this situation has been maintained. Pupils' behaviour in the classroom, in the playground, when moving around school and during lunchtime is good. Pupils are aware of the standards of behaviour that are expected and this results in consistently good and orderly behaviour throughout the school. Parents have no concerns about behaviour. One parent gave an example of pupils' good behaviour out of school when a group of pupils were taken to a local supermarket to help with bag packing. Customers there commented on the good behaviour of the pupils. There have been no exclusions in the last school year.

9. Pupils respond willingly and reliably to opportunities to be actively involved on the life of the school. All pupils have responsibilities within their classrooms and for keeping shared areas tidy and the playground free of litter. Classroom monitors come into school early to help prepare their classroom. Pupils in Year 6 set up the ICT suite each day and are the captains and vice captains of the school's four house teams. Pupils enjoy being librarians, preparing the hall for assemblies and their involvement in the fund raising activities run through the Parent Teacher Association. Pupils carry out these responsibilities sensibly and maturely. All of these responsibilities make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. When talking to pupils, inspectors found them to be polite, friendly and courteous. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities given to them in lessons to work in small groups and discuss tasks. They handle these opportunities maturely and enthusiastically. There was an interesting discussion between pupils in an ICT lesson on the effectiveness of different colour combinations and sensible discussion during lessons in religious education.

10. Relationships in school are very good. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection when they were good. The respect shown by pupils for the feelings and beliefs of others is very good and no incidences of unkind behaviour between pupils were seen. Inspectors saw kind and caring attitudes between pupils of the same age and between older and younger pupils. There were no incidents of bullying seen or reported during the inspection and none were mentioned by parents at the pre-inspection meeting. Pupils form positive relationships with each other, with teachers and with other adults, including visitors. Inspectors saw good relationships between pupils and the school's visiting pianist. Pupils work and play together collaboratively in groups and pairs. This was seen during lessons in mathematics and design technology and during playtime. The very

good quality of relationships between pupils and teachers has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and achievement.

11. Attendance at the school is satisfactory with figures broadly in line with national averages. Pupils are keen to come to school and are generally punctual. This enables lessons to start on time and the school day to get off to a good start.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

12. At the time of the previous inspection, teaching was judged to be good throughout the school. During the current inspection, teaching was consistently good with seventy per cent of lessons good, eleven per cent very good, three per cent excellent and sixteen per cent satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. However, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that there are areas of development in teaching particularly in the effectiveness of teachers' planning and the quality and use of ongoing assessment. Parents are happy with the teaching in the school. Ninety-one per cent of parents agreed with the parents' questionnaire statement, *The teaching is good* and at the pre-inspection meeting, parents stated that staff were approachable.

13. A significant strength of the teaching is the management of the pupils. This is consistently very good. There are some very challenging pupils in the school who are very well managed in a positive, caring environment. Relationships are also very good, which is an improvement on the previous inspection, and consequently the pupils are keen to work hard and apply good effort to their work. Classrooms are calm working environments where pupils want to learn and concentrate on their work. Very good or better teaching ensures that pupils are making rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding of a subject or its related skills. The teaching is always interesting and learning is exciting for the pupils. This was observed in a Year 5 numeracy lesson where pupils were solving money problems that also involved percentages. The teacher provided very good explanations and demonstrations that ensured all pupils had a very good understanding of their learning. Problems were clearly related to everyday situations for example, clothes in a sale with price labels and the class learning support assistant also gave good support. Work was presented to three different ability groups and a very good working atmosphere was maintained. In a very good music lesson, two Year 5 teachers worked well together and showed good understanding of the subject as they created a year group 'performance' with pupils singing in rounds, playing percussion instruments and conducting each other. The pupils showed very mature attitudes to learning and clearly enjoyed the challenging session. Opportunities were provided for pupils to comment on their performances and whether that had achieved the lesson objective. The pupils' commitment to the lesson was so strong they could not believe where the time had gone when they were dismissed for afternoon break. In an excellent ICT lesson, pupils were provided with a dynamic introduction that built very effectively on the pupils' previous knowledge and linked well with the next stages of learning and the lessons' objectives. No time was wasted as pupils moved briskly to their main activity, well supported by the classteacher and learning support assistant. Very good support was offered so

pupils of all abilities made excellent progress in the lesson. Planned extension activities ensured that higher attaining pupils were appropriately challenged and all pupils show exceptional enthusiasm for the subject.

14. At the time of the previous inspection, there was a purposeful atmosphere in all classrooms. This has been maintained. Lesson objectives are always shared with the pupils and reference is made to them at the end of sessions to provide pupils with an opportunity to consider whether they have achieved the objectives. This is good practice and ensures that pupils generally understand what they are learning. Older pupils show sensitivity and respect in their class discussions. This was well illustrated in Year 5 and 6 religious education lessons and in a Year 6 geography lesson where pupils were discussing the pros and cons of siting a sports centre by the River Trent. However, speaking and listening skills are not consistently well promoted and many of the pupils' language skills are underdeveloped. Teachers' subject knowledge in many subjects for example, music, religious education and ICT is good. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when concerns were raised about teachers' subject knowledge in design and technology and ICT. All teachers in the school are committed to their pupils and this is reflected in the quality displays found in most classrooms and the effort that has gone in through the academic year to ensure that pupils are able to work in pleasant, comfortable and well organised surroundings. The different year group classes are consistent in their approach and this supports pupils' learning. There is a shared commitment to improving standards and teachers are keen to listen to advice and reflect carefully on what they are doing and whether it is effective.

15. There are similar areas for development in teaching throughout the school. These were very noticeable when lessons were judged to be satisfactory but also identified in some good lessons. Although teachers plan work for different ability groups in their classes, not all of this work is as accurately matched as it could be to the needs of individuals or groups of pupils. Consequently, in some lessons pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of. This was often noticeable in literacy and numeracy lessons. Ability grouping for lessons is often better in non-core subjects such as religious education or history. Although all other aspects of lessons are well organised and introductions by teachers are clear and precise, the pace of some lessons could be better. Time limits on the pupils' activities to ensure the pupils stay on task and worked quickly are very rarely imposed. Although extension activities for pupils are often identified, there is not always an insistence by teachers that some pupils, particularly the higher attainers, should attempt or complete these tasks. Although many of the teachers know their pupils well, the use and quality of ongoing assessment, particularly in literacy and numeracy, could improve. Very little evidence is seen of teachers recording their evaluations of lessons and using this in future planning, and day-to-day interactions with pupils are not used to reorganise ability groups within the class or extend individual pupils. In some cases, teachers are not aware of the National Curriculum levels that their pupils are operating at. The basic skills of English and mathematics are taught satisfactorily and the national strategies for these areas of learning have been implemented appropriately but could still have a greater impact on the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Work analysis indicates that pupils' learning is

satisfactory over time. In some classes, academic expectations could be higher. Pupils with English as an additional language are integrated well in all lessons.

16. All teachers mark work regularly and comments are supportive and encouraging to the pupils. However, insufficient information is provided to pupils on how to progress to the next stage of learning and there is confusion amongst the pupils about targets for improvement. The school operates whole school targets in literacy and numeracy, class targets and individual targets; however, many of the pupils are unable to explain what their targets are and how they can reach them. Literacy and numeracy displays that relate to current work can be found in all classes, but during the inspection these were very rarely mentioned and opportunities were lost to enhance or support learning. Regular homework is set to support the curriculum and extend pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy and other subjects. Good examples were observed during the inspection where homework was planned for particularly in English and mathematics. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents spoke very positively about homework and how it developed progressively through the school as the pupils got older and the good use made of homework diaries. However, in response to the parents' questionnaire, twenty-two per cent disagreed with the statement - *My child gets the right amount of work to do at home*. Although some lessons could have more pace to them and time could be used more effectively; support staff and resources are consistently used well. The learning support assistants are very professional and contribute significantly to the positive learning experiences that many pupils experience. In many lessons, the group of pupils supported by an LSA, learn well and make good progress.

17. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Work is well matched to pupils' differing abilities. Pupils are well supported and all adults who work with these pupils are very sensitive to their needs and give good quality support. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. All adults develop very good relationships with the pupils they work with which results in pupils developing positive attitudes to lessons, which impacts positively on learning in all areas of the curriculum.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

18. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides satisfactorily for all the pupils. All statutory requirements are met and appropriate provision is made for religious education. Teaching time is slightly less than the recommended minimum time for Key Stage 2. There were many criticisms in the previous inspection with regard to the curriculum but all of the issues have been addressed well. The previous inspection report made reference to a lack of schemes of work to guide curriculum planning. Policies are in place for all subjects and teachers plan lessons using the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and national guidelines for the majority of the other subjects. This ensures the progressive teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding and is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils are taught in single age classes and are placed into ability groups for English, mathematics and science. Lesson planning for all subjects is satisfactory

but assessment opportunities are not always identified. In particular in English and mathematics, the teachers' planning does not consistently and clearly identify the needs of all abilities within the groups.

19. Good provision is made for personal, social and health education, including sex education and information on drug misuse. It is planned through many areas of the curriculum such as science and physical education lessons. The headteacher is aware of the need to set out a yearly overview with clear guidelines for teachers to follow. Pupils have the opportunity to discuss many topics in well planned lessons. A good example was seen when Year 6 pupils identified positive things about themselves and what they had achieved since they were seven. The nurse regularly visits and works with pupils, which enhances this area of learning further. She has recently worked with pupils in Year 4 as they looked at the human skeleton during a science topic. Year 6 pupils are involved in a drug awareness programme in which they become familiar with the dangers of some drugs. Health education is well promoted in science and physical education lessons.

20. The provision for pupils with special education needs is good and it is very good for the pupils who have specific difficulties. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and there is a staged referral system in operation, which complies with the national Code of Practice. Identification and assessment procedures are sound and the co-ordinator is in the process of developing them further. Most individual education plans have clear targets and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Plans are reviewed regularly with parents being fully involved. Pupils are aware of their individual targets and are given 'child friendly' copies of their individual education plan. The school provides sound support for pupils for who English is an additional language.

21. Strategies for the teaching literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. The school has made a conscious decision to teach reading outside the literacy hour. These reading sessions are well organised and pupils are placed in small groups. Classroom assistants are used well during these sessions, in particular with pupils with special educational needs.

22. Many subjects are effectively linked together in the planning and there are some good opportunities in lessons to reinforce teaching in other subjects, particularly in history and religious education, design and technology and music. Opportunities are missed when teachers do not reinforce literacy skills when teaching other subjects. For example in Year 3, many pupils in a design and technology lesson missed out the capital letters and the full stops when they wrote instructions on how to make a sandwich.

23. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities that are open to all year groups and support learning well outside the school day. These include some sporting activities such as basketball, hockey, tennis, gymnastics or football at set times during the year. There are also opportunities for pupils to participate in musical activities in and outside school such as the choir and recorder groups. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument from visiting

specialist musicians. Gifted and talented pupils in Year 5 and 6 are invited to attend a writing club each week.

24. There is a good selection of educational visits to enrich many curriculum areas. All pupils have opportunities to participate in these visits which support learning well. A residential visit is available to pupils in Year 6. This reinforces skills taught in history, geography and religious education. All year groups take part in well-planned educational visits, for example Year 5 pupils visited Newstead Abbey as part of their work on Victorians, wearing clothes from that period of time to reinforce their learning. Pupils in Year 3 visited a local country park and made Christmas decorations using their developing art skills.

25. Links with the local schools are good and have developed well since the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 6 make visits each year to a range of secondary schools in the locality. There are a number of good links with the feeder infant school. Pupils in Year 2 come on an induction day before they transfer to the school. Older pupils regularly revisit the infant school to read to the pupils and help to set up equipment in the nursery. There are good links with other primary schools when teachers meet for in-service training sessions and when teachers and pupils meet to compete in sporting events.

26. There are good links with the community, in particular when people come in and talk to pupils in assembly. Visitors are regularly invited into school to talk to the pupils. They support other areas of the curriculum well. For example, the physical education programme was enhanced when an Olympic medallist came in and spoke to the pupils about her experience. The local vicar takes assembly and talks to the pupils about his work. Theatre groups are invited in to work with pupils, which reinforces and enhances many areas of the curriculum. The school has links with local leisure centres and invites them in to inform the pupils about what is available during the school holidays. Senior citizens are invited in to attend school performances and concerts.

27. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. It is very good for pupils' social development and it is good for their moral development. Spiritual development and cultural development is satisfactory. Assemblies meet statutory requirements and in whole school assemblies there are opportunities to reflect on life and one's own thoughts and beliefs, but there are too few opportunities identified during class assemblies. In a Year 6 religious education lesson, pupils showed awe and wonder as they began to understand that art is a support in belief and spirituality; however, such opportunities are rare in lessons generally. Teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that there are relatively few planned opportunities in art and design and music lessons to reflect on and appreciate the work of great artists and composers.

28. Pupils' moral development is promoted well. In response to the parents' questionnaire ninety-four per cent of parents agreed with the statement; *The school is helping my child become mature and responsible*. The moral themes in stories such as The Good Samaritan are considered during assemblies. In religious education lessons, pupils apply moral principles such as the importance of treating friends well to Christian beliefs. Pupils are clearly taught to understand right from wrong. They are regularly rewarded through praise, stamps and gold slips for positive attitudes and behaviour including being helpful and considerate. These

procedures are continued when the pupils are out of the classroom, for example at lunchtimes. Charts in all classes celebrating pupils' individual achievements. Adults act as good role models for all pupils as they continually promote honesty and fairness. Health education lessons give pupils the opportunity to talk about possible dilemmas, which they may encounter as they get older, and ensures that they develop their own views on dangerous aspects of life such as drug misuse and smoking.

29. Provision for pupils' social development is very good and permeates everything the school does. Social skills are well promoted throughout the school day. Mutual respect is developed so that relationships between adults and pupils, and between pupils, are very good. Pupils are regularly given opportunities to work in pairs and groups and they learn to work collaboratively and to share their skills for the benefit of everyone. All pupils are particularly aware of the pupils in the school who have specific special educational needs and include them in all activities inside and outside lessons. Older pupils are given some opportunities for taking responsibility, for example they go daily to the infant school next door and set up the equipment for the nursery. Pupils have the useful and enjoyable opportunity to live and work together during the Year 6 residential trip to Derbyshire.

30. Satisfactory opportunities are provided to experience a range of cultures in the curriculum and includes a study of different times and localities in history and geography and the work of famous artists in art and design lessons. In religious education lessons, pupils learn about different cultures as they learn about different religions. Pupils in Year 6 show a limited knowledge of well-known composers and famous pieces of music they have listened to and speak vaguely about times they have listened to and appraised pieces of music. The school promotes different cultures satisfactorily and invites pupils to share their individual cultures with each other. By the time they are eleven, pupils begin to develop a satisfactory understanding of the diverse society in which we live.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

31. Rise Park takes good care of its pupils. The school atmosphere is supportive and happy and makes a positive contribution to pupils' progress. The procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are good. The school has good relationships with outside agencies involved in pupil care. There are two trained first aiders on the staff. All necessary procedures are in place for reporting and recording cases of accident or illness. The school's health and safety policy is based on the Local Education Authority guidelines. It is relevant to the school and includes the roles and responsibilities of the headteacher and governors related to the monitoring and reporting of the school's health and safety performance. A governor and the site manager are involved with the headteacher in termly health and safety audits in the school. There is a separate policy for road safety that includes details of creating a safer environment around the school. Governors prepare an annual review of the dangers around school and discuss steps to be taken to reduce them. The risk assessment policy contains details for carrying out assessment in the school and for off site visits. There is a policy for off site visits based on local guidelines that comprehensively details the procedures for planning and conducting the visit. The governors are aware of the need to provide a safe environment for pupils and staff. The inspection team has shared concerns related to health and safety issues with the school.

32. Supervision during lunchtime is satisfactorily organised through a rota of eight lunchtime supervisors. Each member of the lunchtime staff links with one class. The supervisor is outside in the playground when her class is outside, in the

dining hall when her class is eating lunch and takes responsibility for her class during 'wet play'. Lunchtime is an orderly occasion as pupils treat supervisors with politeness and courtesy. There are rules for the playground with their own set of appropriate consequences for use by the lunchtime supervisors and supervisors have their own reward system. There is useful daily contact between the lunchtime supervisors and the headteacher.

33. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. School rules and class codes of conduct are applied consistently across the school. Good behaviour is rewarded with individual gold slips, certificates and class treats and privileges. The behaviour policy is available to parents and gives details of the sequential consequences and rewards procedures. The school's admission arrangements are clearly listed in the school prospectus. The procedures for monitoring absence and improving attendance are good. The attendance policy is very detailed and includes procedures for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing attendance performance and a list of performance indicators. The school's improvement plan has a section on attendance that includes the need to set attendance targets. Class teachers monitor absence carefully and the school reminds parents of their responsibilities through the school brochure and newsletters. The school advises parents on the undesirability of taking their children out of school during term time for holidays. Staff know pupils very well and monitor their personal development through the individual records of achievement.

34. The school has continued to maintain its good links with external agents since the previous inspection and uses them when necessary to support pupils with special educational needs. Clear documentation is kept on all special educational needs pupils, which shows clearly, the good progress they are making. There is a positive attitude in the school regarding pupils with special educational needs which results in the other pupils, the teachers and the other adults who work in the school being very aware of their individual needs.

35. An external specialist is used to determine pupils' language levels and at present there are no pupils who are on a low level of language acquisition.

36. The school has made satisfactory progress in developing assessment procedures since the previous inspection. Assessment procedures are satisfactory for English, mathematics and science. The school is beginning to use the information provided by assessment to place pupils into ability groups in English, mathematics and science. Teachers regularly assess the learning in these subjects to identify what the pupils have learnt and keep records of what individuals can do. However, they do not consistently use the detailed information that they collect to move pupils on to the next stage of learning. In the majority of the remaining subjects, the school plans lessons using the new national guidelines and the assessment procedures recommended for these subjects. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good. They all have individual plans containing clear targets, which are well tailored to their individual needs.

37. There are satisfactory procedures for setting targets and the school has identified school targets, class targets and individual pupil targets for English and mathematics. However, the pupil targets have insufficient impact on raising standards because they are kept in pupils' Record of Achievement Books and other targets are not consistently mentioned during lessons or when marking pupils' work. This results in pupils being either confused between school, class and individual targets or being unable to remember what their individual targets are.

38. The school fully complies with the requirements to administer statutory tests at the end of the key stage and these results are beginning to be analysed. In the past, pupils have been tested at the end of some years but there has been no consistent procedure, in particular with regard to Year 5. The head is planning to introduce testing at the end of each year, analyse the results and use this information to move individuals and groups of pupils forward; however, at present this is not happening.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

39. There is a good partnership between parents and the school. The previous inspection reported parents being supportive of the school and this has been maintained. Parents' views of the school are good. Almost all of the parents replying to the questionnaire agree or strongly agree that the school works closely with them. The majority of parents attending the pre-inspection meeting agree staff are very approachable. The school has an 'open door' policy and eighty-nine per cent of parents replying to the questionnaire agree or strongly agree to feeling comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

40. There are regular letters to parents that are good in relation to their content and presentation. There are monthly class newsletters that include information on class work and topics. The whole school newsletter is sent out termly and produced by the headteacher in an attractive and readable style. It contains useful information for parents on events and changes in school, some of which relate to staffing, and details of visits and visitors. The school prospectus is well presented and informative and contains an invitation to parents to help in school. A number of parents (and a grandparent) do support a wide range of school activities, both curricular and non-curricular. Parents help with reading, making story sacks, supporting swimming lessons and helping on trips and visits, including the annual residential week. There is a very active and supportive Parent Teacher Association. The funds they raise are used to purchase equipment to improve the school environment generally and playground specifically.

41. Eighty-nine per cent of parents replying to the questionnaire agree or strongly they are being kept well informed as to how their children are getting on. The school holds parents' meetings three times each year. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting found annual reports to be personal to their child in some subjects, while in others topics covered were outlined rather than achievements made. The last inspection reported that targets for future attainment were not included. Reports scrutinised during the inspection were found to include targets for mathematics and English. There is a lack of information in the foundation subjects on the actual achievements made by individual pupils.

42. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting agreed pupils receive sufficient homework. Seventy-six per cent of parents replying to the questionnaire agree or strongly agree their child had the right amount of work to do at home. Twenty-two per cent of parents disagree with this statement. During the inspection, homework was set and marked in line with the homework policy. Reading books are taken home regularly. The school has recently carried out a parental survey on homework through a questionnaire and is reviewing practice in response to feedback from parents, including the format of the homework diary. This is good practice.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

43. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory overall. Moreover, the headteacher has a number of strengths that enables the school to function effectively and efficiently. She has developed a team of teaching and non-teaching staff who work very well together and have the confidence of the local community who hold the school in high regard. The school has a positive ethos where pupils and staff are valued. The relationships that pervade the school are very strong. Everyone in the school works extremely hard for the benefit of the pupils and this is a noticeable feature. There were a number of weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school that were identified at the time of the previous inspection. These no longer exist. The current headteacher was appointed after the previous inspection and should take credit for this improvement. In response to the parents' questionnaire, ninety-six per cent of the parents agreed that the school was well led and managed. The headteacher is supported effectively by the deputy-head and other staff with management responsibilities. Some subjects are particularly well managed, notably science, ICT, design and technology and music. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are satisfactory overall. There have been some good initiatives and the work of all teachers has been monitored. Like many schools the most recent focus has been on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Governors have been involved in the process, as have external advisors. This has contributed to the good teaching observed during the current inspection. However, there are some areas of development in teaching that can be found in many of the classes particularly in literacy and numeracy.

44. The governors are supportive and fulfil their statutory responsibilities. The governing body has evolved satisfactorily since the previous inspection where they had 'delegated much of the responsibility for the running of the school to the headteacher'. They have in place an appropriate range of committees to ensure the smooth running of the school and are effectively involved in shaping the direction of the school. Much of this is undertaken through the school improvement plan which is an informative document that clearly identifies the school's priorities for development and has a particularly strong focus on raising standards. However, although standards improved in the school in mathematics and science from 1999 to 2000, unconfirmed test results for 2001 show a fall in standards in mathematics and no improvement in English. There has been an improvement in science standards but the school has not achieved its statutory targets in English and mathematics for 2001 which highlights weaknesses in the use of assessment information and the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance. The strength of the school improvement plan is the involvement of all staff in its conception and the opportunities that are provided for governors to offer a critical view of the plan. The plan also provides a strategic view beyond one year and this is good practice. The school's procedures for financial planning are sound. The initial budget is put together by the headteacher, chair of governors and the chair of the governors' finance committee. After being presented to the finance committee for discussions and adjustments, the budget plan is then presented to all governors for approval. The school receives good support from an independent budget advisor and this also allows the school to make comparisons in their spending against other schools. This is good practice. Because of a reduction in staff expenditure since the previous inspection, the school has a high budget carry forward that will be used to develop

school resources, for example purchasing lap top computers. The parents have been consulted about some major developments, for example playground safety and installing close circuit television. Consequently the school applies many of the principles of best value well including comparing expenditure with other schools. Subject co-ordinators are responsible for managing their own budgets and this practice provides them with a good opportunity to link financial resources with their own strategic thinking for their subjects. The school receives no extra funding for pupils with English as an additional language.

45. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is well organised and has a good idea of how pupils with special educational needs learn. Liaison is very good between all adults who work with pupils with special educational need and the classroom assistants are very highly regarded. They work with confidence and are always very well prepared for their sessions. The school continues to use the funding for pupils with special educational needs well. In particular, resources are good to develop basic skills in literacy and numeracy.

46. The school's policies and practices to promote all aspects of inclusion and equality of opportunity are good. The school's aims include a commitment to meet the needs of all pupils as individuals, and this aspiration is well reflected in the day-to-day life of the school. Teachers and support staff ensure that the pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are fully included in all aspects of the school's life. The ways in which pupils of differing abilities, needs, and cultural backgrounds work and play together harmoniously is a marked feature of the school. The school's very good provision for social development contributes well to the full inclusion of all pupils.

47. The school has sufficient teaching and other staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. All staff have clear job-descriptions, and are effectively and appropriately deployed. Procedures for the induction of new staff are well established and the school's strategy for performance management is good. New and established members of staff work well together as a team. Support staff are well trained, and effectively deployed. They understand their roles well, and work effectively with class teachers in both planning and teaching. Their help is invaluable to the teachers, and they are skilled at meeting the wide range of individual needs.

48. The school office is very efficient, and provides good support to ensure that the school day runs smoothly. The site manager and cleaning staff work hard to keep all areas of the school clean and attractive, and this work makes a positive contribution to the pleasant environment in which pupils and staff work. Lunchtime staff are clear about their roles, and pupils are well supervised, both inside school and out.

49. The school's accommodation is good overall. Although some areas of the school are cramped, especially when practical activities are taking place, the teachers work hard to overcome these difficulties, and the school's curriculum and other activities do not suffer. In most classrooms, and in shared areas around the school, teachers work hard to produce high quality displays, and these make a

positive contribution to pupils' learning. The school's surroundings provide good facilities for physical education and other outdoor activities, and are well maintained and attractive.

50. The quality and range of resources is satisfactory overall. Those for ICT are very good, and those for religious education and history are good. In all other subjects resources are satisfactory. Parents have contributed to the provision of resources for English by making story sacks. Subject co-ordinators oversee resources, and they are generally easily available to staff, and stored safely.

51. Despite the well below average standards, with the pupils' enthusiasm for school, their good behaviour, the very good relationships, the care provided by the school and the good teaching, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to improve the standards and the quality of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:
  - Ensuring that work is more accurately planned for the range of different ability groups within classes and based on accurate day-to-day assessment information and lesson evaluations;  
(Paragraphs: 4, 12, 15, 18, 43, 55, 59, 63, 65, 66, 70, 78 and 92)
  - Planned extension activities for pupils with clear expectations that they should be completed;  
(Paragraphs: 15, 55, 61 and 65)
  - Promoting literacy and numeracy skills more effectively across the curriculum;  
(Paragraphs: 14, 15, 16, 22, 56, 60 and 67)
  - Improving teachers' marking so that it consistently provides pupils with more information on how to move to the next stage of learning or achieve targets.  
(Paragraphs: 16, 61 and 66)
- (2) Further develop assessment procedures and data analysis to ensure that the information recorded is used more effectively to set individual and group targets for pupils and review the school's current target setting procedures.  
(Paragraphs: 2, 4, 12, 16, 36, 37, 38, 44, 62, 68, 70, 87, 106 and 113)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	11	70	16	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	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	234
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	42

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	34

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2*

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	28	30	58

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	23
	Girls	22	17	26
	Total	38	35	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (53)	60 (44)	84 (60)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	20	21
	Girls	20	18	20
	Total	34	38	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (40)	66 (42)	71 (38)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	18
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	10
Indian	9
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	183
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

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

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

### *Teachers and classes*

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	29.25

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	133

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	474 966
Total expenditure	459 689
Expenditure per pupil	1 965
Balance brought forward from previous year	67 651
Balance carried forward to next year	82 928

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	234
Number of questionnaires returned	57

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	49	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	44	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	46	2	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	56	18	4	2
The teaching is good.	47	44	2	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	56	7	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	32	7	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	28	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	40	11	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	57	39	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	54	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	37	32	7	5

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

### **ENGLISH**

53. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, attainment was well below the average when compared with schools nationally. When compared with similar schools, attainment was below average. The previous inspection report recorded average attainment but documentation clearly shows that the levels that the pupils enter the school, varies from year to year. These impact on the levels the pupils achieve by the age of eleven. There has been a high rate of mobility in the current Year 6, which has contributed to the pupils' overall results.

54. Inspection findings suggest that in writing and reading standards are well below average at eleven. The number of pupils who will reach the higher Level 5 is below the national average but will be slightly higher than 2000. There is some concern that the targets set for this year will not be met. Standards in listening are similar to those expected for their ages but in speaking they are below those expected.

55. Although the current Year 3 entered the school with average standards, attainment on entry varies from year to year. Overall the progress which pupils make through the school, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory. However, inspection evidence indicates that in approximately half of all lessons learning within the lessons was good. This is specifically linked to good teaching; where teachers accurately match activities to the needs of all pupils and plenary sessions are well planned and enable pupils to think about and identify what they have learnt. All English lessons are taught in ability groups and some teachers do not feel that there is a need to discriminate further. This particularly affects the learning of the above average pupils who need to be challenged. The last part of the lesson where the learning is reviewed, explained or extended is usually used to report back what individuals have learnt and is not consistently used to extend learning. Teachers plan lessons that closely follow the recommended structure for daily literacy lessons and extend guided reading sessions outside the literacy hour. These sessions vary in quality and are at least satisfactory. They take place at the beginning of the morning or afternoon sessions and classroom assistants are used well in particular when working with pupils with special educational needs. A good example was seen where a text was promoted well as pupils worked with materials from one of the 'story sacks'. These 'story sacks' promote good learning and are developed by an enthusiastic group of parents.

56. Standards of speaking are below what is typical of eleven year-olds in other schools though nearly all listen satisfactorily during class discussions. A large number of pupils in many classes find speaking difficult and are reluctant to answer

questions. This results in many remaining passive as they do not speak and in many lessons pupils are not challenged sufficiently by their teachers. When these pupils do answer questions, one word or short answers are routinely accepted and speaking skills are not consistently well promoted for all pupils across the curriculum. In most lessons there is no conscious effort to include every pupil in the discussions. In a higher attaining group in Year 5, many pupils had difficulty defining the meaning of words that described the poems they studied, for instance 'rhythm', 'repetition', and 'syllabic pattern'. When attempting to define words these pupils spoke using a limited vocabulary and generally lacked confidence when speaking about what they have previously learned. Overall speaking and listening skills are satisfactorily

promoted in literacy sessions and in other areas of the curriculum however there are many opportunities when not all pupils are encouraged to be involved in speaking.

57. In their ability to read texts, eleven year-old pupils display well below average standards. Above average pupils in Year 6 read showing a satisfactory understanding of various texts. They read fluently and expressively and talk confidently about using the Internet to research information. Pupils identify and explain why they like certain books. Average pupils read accurately but because they have difficulty reading some words such as 'babbled' – there is some hesitancy. This is more marked with below average pupils who find that words which contain many syllables such as 'quivering' difficult to decipher. All have a sound idea of the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Most pupils are aware that their reading books are graded into levels and select books, which are suitable to their needs. Teachers' reading records are good. They are consistent throughout the school and clearly show the National Curriculum level each pupil is working within and what they have to do in order to reach the next level.

58. There is a satisfactory selection of reading books and a good selection of books for group reading sessions. The headteacher is aware of the need to develop the area that is used as the library. Teachers use the county library services to borrow books for the topics they teach. There are satisfactory links with the local library and the librarian comes into school to talk to the pupils about popular books. Throughout the school, reading standards vary and reflect the levels pupils enter the school with; for instance in Year 3 standards are average.

59. Standards of writing at the end of the key stage are well below average. All pupils practise handwriting as a whole class with the emphasis on joining letters. The majority develop a cursive script by the age of eleven. Above average pupils write in paragraphs and produce work that is accurately punctuated as they develop, describe and evaluate the writing of David Armand. Many average pupils, like others in the class, often plan their writing beforehand or re-draft it after a first attempt. Their writing is usually clear but they have difficulty in finding exciting words to express their ideas because many have a limited vocabulary and use *and*, *so* and *then* to produce lengthy rather than complex sentences. Below average pupils know how stories are constructed but limited language and spelling skills affect the overall standard of their efforts. For example, they write stories such as 'The three little dogs and the big bad cat'. Many still have difficulty spelling basic high frequency words. All pupils however, experience a suitable range of writing – not only stories, but letters, descriptions and journals, arguments and poems. There is a wide range of ability within each year and the school has begun to address this by putting pupils into two separate ability groups. However, teachers do not consistently give pupils within these ability groups accurate work matched to their different abilities.

60. All pupils keep spelling logs but these vary in quality and quantity. The best examples are in Year 4 where they are filled in frequently and clearly show the pupils' progress in developing spelling rules. Above average pupils in Year 6 look at words which begin with 'sub' and 'micro'. Below average pupils in Year 5 learn to spell high frequency words for instance 'almost' or 'sometime'. Average pupils in Year 4 develop a satisfactory understanding of words which end in '-ight' such as

'might', whereas in Year 3 they add 'est' and 'er' onto the end of words. Satisfactory standards were seen in ICT, where word processing skills were suitably promoted. A high standard of writing was encouraged in a Year 4 science lesson when the teacher had high expectations regarding writing up the experiment using scientific vocabulary. Other examples show that although there are good opportunities to use developing literacy skills in many subjects, teachers do not, in particular when writing, consistently and effectively promote basic skills such as the importance of writing sentences using capital letters and full stops.

61. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In lessons observed during the inspection, approximately fifty per cent of teaching was good. However, standards are still too low and the good teaching, which some pupils receive, is needed for all pupils in order to raise standards throughout the school. In the lessons seen, good teaching was observed in all year groups. Teachers generally have sufficient knowledge of English to teach it soundly. They have good control of their classes and use classroom assistants well to support less able pupils and those with special educational needs. Good teachers keep up a brisk pace, have high expectations regarding involving all pupils and ask probing questions to encourage pupils to think. In the best lessons, all pupils are engaged in the question and answer sessions as they were in the higher attaining Year 6 lesson. Not all teachers are as clear about what it is that they want pupils to achieve in a lesson and some tasks are too complicated and not matched well to all abilities within the groups. Pupils in Year 5, for example, have difficulty defining the words they have previously learnt such as the 'rhythm' and 'rhyme' in poetry. They then have difficulty identify these in the poems written by Benjamin Zephaniah that they read. Other higher attaining pupils in Year 3 quickly finish their task and waste time chatting. Higher attaining children in some groups are not consistently challenged because there is no urgency to finish tasks. Extension activities are sometimes available for those who finish quickly but higher attaining pupils are not systematically identified and challenged. Marking is inconsistently used to support work in lessons. Work in books *is* marked and teachers often add some words of praise but only a few write comments that show pupils how they can improve. In all classrooms there are informative displays which promote what has been previously taught; however, there was little reference to these in lessons during the inspection.

62. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and the progress they make. All pupils are tracked regarding the National Curriculum levels they achieve. The school has tested pupils at the end of some years but are developing a system in which all pupils are tested at the end of every year. This has not consistently been in place in all classes. The school is beginning to analyse recent test data to identify the areas of weakness across the school but is still unsure as to why standards are so low. Pupils have individual targets, class targets and school targets for English. However discussions with pupils in Year 6, indicate that they are either unsure of these or are muddled between which is which. The headteacher is aware of the need to use assessment procedures more precisely to move individuals and groups of pupils onto the next stage of learning. Resources are adequate with a good selection of group reading books. The 'story sacks' are a useful resource which enhance many texts. Visitors, such as theatre groups and local librarians invited into school, enrich the English curriculum. Well-chosen texts,

which the pupils read, enhance their moral and cultural development. Their social development is promoted well in all classes when they are encouraged to work together in groups.

## **MATHEMATICS**

63. By the time the pupils are eleven, they attain standards that are well below average. This is a marked difference to the previous inspection when standards were judged to be average. However, attainment on entry to the school is variable and the current cohort of Year 6 pupils has also suffered from high mobility. Progress for all pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall. In some lessons, higher attaining pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when the learning support assistants provide them with good quality support. However, there are some pupils, particularly those found in middle ability groups who do not always achieve as much as they could. The 2000 national test results showed standards to be below average and average when compared with similar schools. These results were an improvement on 1999 but taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, the pupils' performance in mathematics fell below the national average. There are some differences in the performance of girls and boys. Standards are not as high as they should be and the school will not achieve its statutory target in mathematics for 2001.

64. By the age of eleven, pupils work out calculations in their heads, but many of the lower attaining pupils do not perform at the levels expected for their age. Pupils understand the value of numbers and can link this knowledge to their understanding of decimals and fractions. As part of data-handling, pupils produce graphs and Venn and Carroll diagrams. They measure the angles of triangles, identify acute and obtuse angles and calculate perimeters. Pupils participate in mathematical investigations but many have limited strategies for working with mathematics in practical situations and have a limited mathematical language.

65. Whilst the quality of teaching and learning was good during the inspection, analysis of pupils' work and assessment data indicates that pupils' achievement over time is satisfactory. Consequently, teaching in mathematics is judged to be sound overall. There are many strengths to the teaching. Relationships are very good, all classes are well managed and the pupils' behaviour is consistently good although there are many challenging pupils in the school. Resources are always well organised and learning support assistants are used well. They make significant contributions to the pupils' learning, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. The introductory mental mathematics sessions have pace and careful consideration is made to involve all pupils. This was particularly noticeable in a very good Year 6 lesson for pupils in the lower ability class. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of multiplication facts were reinforced and developed through the dynamic and challenging start to the lesson. All classrooms are purposeful and calm and pupils are good at concentrating and maintaining their effort. However, in many lessons, even those that were judged to be good, a small minority of pupils could have achieved more. Even though the school operates classes for pupils of different

ability, not all of the work is matched rigorously enough to pupils' ability. Consequently, not all of these pupils are challenged sufficiently. Extension activities are not always prepared for pupils who finish their work and time limits are not imposed consistently on pupils so that they have a clear understanding of what is expected of them during the lesson.

66. The teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy and the three-part lesson structure is soundly established. The plenary session is often used well by teachers to establish what pupils have understood and this was well illustrated by a Year 5 teacher in a lesson about percentage reductions of prices of articles in different shops. By using the session effectively, she was able to identify a groups of pupils who had failed to achieve the lesson objective. However, scrutiny of previous weekly numeracy planning shows that there are insufficient lesson evaluations and individual or groups of pupils who have either failed to achieve the lesson objective or exceeded it, are not identified. Work is marked regularly and often with positive comments but little information is provided to pupils on how to move to the next stage of learning or deal with difficulties they may be having. A number of activities are based on work sheets which are too easy for some pupils. Pupils are also confused about the targets that are set for them. For example, when Year 3 pupils were questioned about their class target, there was a mixed response with a number of pupils just shrugging their shoulders being unable to explain what it was for. All of the classrooms have numeracy displays to reinforce the current areas of work. However, during the inspection very few references were made to these displays and many of the pupils did not really appreciate their importance.

67. The development of numeracy skills in other subjects is satisfactory but could be better. In ICT, laptop computers have been used in Year 6 and data handling supports science activities. However, during the inspection very few lessons were observed where numeracy skills were developed in other subjects.

68. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject and is a leading mathematics teacher for the local education authority. She has been involved in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and planning and to this extent there has been improvement since the previous inspection when teaching in mathematics was judged to be satisfactory overall. The school has a range of assessment procedures and undertakes data analysis but this information could be used more effectively to raise standards and improve target-setting procedures. In principle, the school's target setting processes are a good idea but they are not having the desired effect of raising standards in the subject. For example, the whole school target in numeracy is based on an analysis of the previous year's national tests. Although this is good practice there is data available for all year groups that would encourage far more effective targets. Teachers also need to be more aware of the levels their pupils are achieving. On several occasions during the inspection, some teachers were vague about the current levels that were being reached by pupils in their classes. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall and effectively organised.

## SCIENCE

69. In the school's previous inspection, standards in science were judged to be average. There has been considerable variation from year to year since then, with a downward trend in the national test results. There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. In the 2000 national test results, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 and above was well below the national average, overall results also being below those of similar schools. The current inspection broadly confirms these results, finding that standards at the age of eleven are below those found nationally. There has therefore been a decline in standards since the previous inspection. Factors contributing to this decline include well below attainment on entry and continued high rates of pupil mobility.

70. Although teaching is often good, and pupils show positive attitudes towards their work, planning and assessment procedures are not sufficiently rigorous. Teachers' planning does not always identify learning objectives sufficiently clearly, and there is sometimes too little planning for pupils of different ability. Assessment procedures do not provide information about individual understanding, which could then be used to plan the next steps in learning. Some pupils are therefore given work that is too difficult for them, while others are not stretched enough. Because of this, some pupils do not make as much progress as they could.

71. By the age of eleven pupils, have developed some understanding of forces, such as gravity. They know that gravity pulls objects down towards earth, and that friction slows objects, for instance in air resistance. Although they have some understanding of these concepts, it is at levels that are below those found nationally. Through working on practical investigations pupils have also developed some understanding of how to make their tests fair, and how variables need to be controlled. But here again, their understanding is below that expected nationally.

72. The attainment of pupils in Year 3 is broadly in line with expectations. In a Year 3 lesson seen during the inspection pupils learnt about the importance of a healthy body and diet. They were setting up an experiment to study the effect of sugar on teeth. They discussed what they thought would happen, and why, and the teacher ensured that they used the correct scientific language to describe what they were doing. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how the different foods they ate could affect their well being was at the right level for their age.

73. By the time they reach Year 6 standards are below the national average. Although pupils sometimes make good progress in individual lessons, planning and assessment procedures do not allow teachers to focus on individual learning. The result is that pupils are not always given work that is at the right level for them, and their progress over the longer term is no better than satisfactory. In some lessons seen during the inspection, and in some previous work analysed, it was evident that the higher attaining pupils were given work that did not challenge them enough. Although the setting system allows teachers to focus their work on the higher or lower ability pupils, there is still a need for further ability grouping within these classes.

74. All areas of the curriculum are given appropriate coverage, but scientific enquiry needs further development. Pupils are given some opportunities to carry out investigations, but the effectiveness of this approach varies from class to class. There is sometimes too much teacher domination of activities, so that pupils do not have enough chance to devise their own investigations. The good practice observed in some classes is not extended throughout the school.

75. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with a substantial amount of good teaching seen during the inspection. Teachers generally manage their classes very well, so that time is used effectively and pupils behave well and work hard. Good use is made of the skills of learning support assistants, who ensure that all pupils, particularly the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, are fully included in the work.

76. In a Year 5 lesson about sound the teacher used a flute to demonstrate how the pitch of notes changes. This captured the interest of all the pupils, and she asked them to predict what would happen when she changed the note. The teacher used terms such as 'pitch' and 'vibrations', and expected the pupils to use them too. The pupils were fascinated, and keen to say what they thought would happen. The teacher's good knowledge of science, and her clear explanations, ensured that all her pupils were involved and interested, and so learnt well. She also made good links with the music curriculum when talking about musical instruments and how notes are produced. Because of such good teaching as this, and the range of interesting activities chosen, most pupils have positive attitudes towards science. They enjoy the work, particularly when they are given practical investigations, and they share and co-operate well in their tasks.

77. The subject is well managed by the two joint co-ordinators, who work well together as a team. Although they have only been responsible for the subject for a short time, they have come to a clear view of what needs to be done to improve. The

school has sufficient resources, which are well-organised and readily available, with due regard for safety issues.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

78. No lessons were seen during the inspection and judgements on attainment and progress have been made by looking at a scrutiny of past work, planning and discussions with pupils. Teachers follow appropriate guidelines that are due for review and will be linked to the new national scheme of work. Assessment procedures are not identified on the planning and there is little evidence to indicate that assessment is used to identify the next step of learning. This was an issue in the previous report. Throughout the school, there are good links with other subject areas and art skills are reinforced well. Attainment is in line with that expected for eleven-year-olds. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

79. As the pupils move through the school art skills are built on and extended successfully. Pupils in Year 3 develop a satisfactory idea of three-dimensional art. They make Diwali pots from clay as they link art with their work on Hinduism in religious education. Pupils study the work of Mondrian and begin to develop an awareness of the work of famous artists as they create bold patterns using his style. Art is linked well to history when pupils sketch Victorian artefacts. Past work in Year 4 shows that there are good links with English and history as pupils look at how the Ancient Egyptians wrote. They identify this old form of writing as hieroglyphics and attempt writing and drawing using the Ancient Egyptian symbols. Recently they have carefully made collage portraits of Tudor kings and queens. In Year 5, pupils continue to develop sketching skills as they use pencils and charcoal. Previous work indicates that they have looked at the work of Lowry to inspire their own artwork. Using their knowledge and understanding of how to work with clay, pupils sketch characters from their favourite books and make models of them from clay. Pupils show a satisfactory understanding of using symbols to convey messages as they develop their own Pop Art after looking at the work of Andy Warhol.

80. Throughout the school, art displays create an attractive visual environment and clearly demonstrate the satisfactory progress pupils make in all year groups. The subject promotes pupils' cultural development appropriately as they study the work of famous artists and look at artwork from around the world. Pupils in Year 6 talk enthusiastically about the many artists they have learnt about such as Pablo Picasso, Vincent Van Gogh and Andy Warhol. Visits to local places of interest enhance the art curriculum. For example, Year 3 pupils went to a local country park and made Christmas decorations, Visitors invited into school, such as the group who helped pupils make puppets, encourage the pupils to use the skills they had been taught in art when they made their own puppets. There is little evidence to suggest that ICT is used sufficiently to support the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

81. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection when most aspects of the subject were unsatisfactory. Attainment is now satisfactory by the age of eleven. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those with

English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.

82. Pupils have many opportunities to develop design and technology skills but little use is made of ICT. In Year 3 past work shows that pupils put their ideas on paper and design, made and evaluated cardboard picture frames. Pupils begin to develop a good idea of the importance of food safety and hygiene as they write instructions, plan and make a sandwich. Planning and a limited analysis of previous work in Year 4 show how pupils link their topic with literacy as they design, make and evaluate pop-up books. Past work and photographic evidence shows pupils in Year 5 were designing, making and evaluating musical instruments after previously looking carefully at wind, string and percussion instruments. Some instruments are well thought out and realistic, for example 'The Rainshaker'. Previous work indicates that pupils in Year 6 have been thinking about making vehicles move and determining how fast they move. They are currently designing a vehicle and planning shows they are due to begin to make an appropriate vehicle the week following the inspection.

83. There is too little evidence to make a judgement on teaching overall, but during the two lessons observed in Year 3 and 6, teaching was good. Teachers have well-established routines in their classrooms regarding designing, making, listening and completing the task. Support staff are used well and all adults interact effectively with the pupils. The correct vocabulary is reinforced successfully, and this extends pupils' understanding as well as their language skills. Relationships with pupils are good and the pupils confidently answer questions because the teachers value their contributions. Consequently, all pupils respond very well to the teachers' high expectations regarding the completion of the task. The pupils have many opportunities to use literacy in design and technology lessons but not all teachers promote them effectively. For instance, although pupils in Year 3 had a good opportunity to write instructions before making their sandwiches, many wrote without using a capital letter at the beginning of their sentence or used a full stop at the end.

84. The last report identified weaknesses in this subject area. The school has worked hard to address these issues and has greatly improved the opportunities for design and technology. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. Teachers use the new national guidance for design and technology. This is supporting their teaching so that the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are taught and learned in a cohesive way and this helps to raise standards. End of unit assessments are beginning to be used to determine what pupils have understood fully and where more input is necessary. The co-ordinator is aware of what is taught in each year group and informally monitors teaching by analysing the work produced by all classes. There are good links with other areas of the curriculum for example in English, science and music. Visitors, such as a baker who talked about bread making, are invited into school to enrich this curriculum area. The subject promotes pupils' social development well as they are often given activities where they have to work together as a group and share ideas. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

85. Standards are in line with the national expectations by the time pupils reach the age of eleven. This is the same as the finding of the previous report, and the school has therefore maintained satisfactory standards. Only one geography lesson was seen during the inspection, but further evidence from pupils' previous work, displays around the school, and discussions with pupils and teachers, show that pupils achieve the expected levels by the time they are eleven.

86. Pupils show positive attitudes towards the subject throughout the school. When work is presented in practical, stimulating ways pupils find it enjoyable and interesting. In group work they co-operate well, sharing and taking turns, and show good personal development.

87. The teaching of geography is satisfactory overall, and this enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, to make satisfactory gains in learning. In a lesson on rivers, Year 6 pupils used their results from river studies and residential visits to present arguments for and against the development of a leisure centre. They used secondary sources, such as photographs, to explore ideas about erosion and how people could damage or improve the environment. There were good links to literacy through the use of research skills. The clear teaching and good organisation enabled all pupils to make good progress. Planning procedures vary from class to class, and in some lesson plans, learning objectives are not clear enough. Assessment is still largely informal, and although teachers know their pupils well, there are no ways of assessing individual understanding, nor of using assessment information to plan the next steps in learning.

88. The school provides a broad curriculum that gives satisfactory coverage to all aspects. There are good links with other subjects, particularly history, especially when work forms part of cross-curricular topics. The school's good use of educational visits makes a valuable contribution to the quality of the curriculum offered. Such experiences enable all pupils to gain understanding of a range of different localities.

89. The subject is effectively co-ordinated, documentation has been updated, and resources well organised and maintained. The co-ordinator is also responsible for history, and this arrangement works well.

## **HISTORY**

90. Pupils reach standards which are in line with those found nationally by the time they are eleven. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were found to be above those found nationally. There has therefore been a decline in standards over this period. However, pupils are making satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

91. As they move through the school, pupils are given a good understanding of historical sources and how they can be used to find out about past events. Teachers also make good use of a range of interesting artefacts, which help to bring the past to life and stimulate pupils' interest. This approach enables pupils to develop their understanding of the passage of time, and the similarities and differences between their own lives and those of people in other times. Topics are presented in a relevant and interesting way, and there are good links with other subjects, such as when pupils made papier-mâché models of ancient Greek vases. This work gives experience of the art curriculum, as well as that for history. This approach is effective in engaging the interest of pupils of all abilities.

92. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching seen during the inspection. Positive attitudes are encouraged, and teachers manage their classes well. During the inspection, the Year 5 pupils visited Newstead Abbey as part of their topic on the Victorians. Pupils and staff all dressed in Victorian costume, and spent the day living the lives of Victorians. There was a real sense of excitement, and pupils were very well motivated to learn. The teachers had thoroughly prepared for the visit, and all aspects were very well organised. The visit made a valuable contribution to pupils' historical understanding. Planning and assessment procedures are variable and often informal, but there is a need for a more systematic approach to these areas in order to provide appropriate work for pupils of all abilities.

93. The subject is effectively co-ordinated, and the co-ordinator is also responsible for geography. This approach works effectively and enables the skills and areas that overlap in the two subjects to be managed well. The school has good resources for history, and has built up a good resource bank to support the topics covered. Colourful and effective displays, which include artefacts, books and pictures, along with work produced by pupils, make a valuable contribution to the learning environment. In some lessons observed during the inspection, and in some previous work scrutinised, it was evident that the more able pupils were given work that did not challenge them enough.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

94. By the time they reach the age of eleven, pupils achieve the standards expected nationally. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were unsatisfactory. The key issues raised in the previous report have all been thoroughly addressed, and the subject is now sufficiently developed to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all.

95. As they move through the school, pupils are given a range of worthwhile experiences in all areas of the ICT curriculum, both by the use of the school's ICT suite and by the use of computers in other subjects. Subject policy and schemes of work are now in place, in line with the national recommendations. Deficiencies in hardware and software have been addressed, and the school now has very good ICT resources. Progress on all these fronts has been good, and the previous unsatisfactory picture has been transformed.

96. In Year 3, pupils show confidence in working with the computers. They use word processing to present their work and are beginning to combine text and graphics. They also learn about the advantages and disadvantages of technology, for instance in the use of telephones. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils have gained further understanding of basic ICT skills, and use them in a range of activities. They can prepare and use multi-media presentations, explain how computers can be used to control the environment, and are beginning to use simple commands to create features of web-site pages, such as the colour of text and background. In a Year 6 lesson pupils worked in the ICT suite, designing their own web pages. They showed good basic skills, such as when they cut and pasted sections of text, and could use these skills in new situations. Their understanding of adding to, combining, and amending information from different sources, was appropriate for their age.

97. The teaching of ICT is satisfactory overall, with some excellent teaching seen during the inspection. When teaching Year 6 pupils about web sites, the teacher showed excellent class management, had planned the work very well, and kept a lively pace of work throughout the lesson. These excellent strategies drew all pupils into the activities, kept them very well motivated and promoted excellent learning. Pupils with special educational needs and English is an additional language, were all very well provided for, both by the excellent teaching strategies, and by the skilled work of the support assistant. Throughout the lesson pupils were enthusiastic about the work, and showed pride and pleasure in their success. Whilst the overall standard of teaching is satisfactory, there is still a variation in the confidence and subject-expertise of teachers. Much has already been done to address this, but the school recognises the need to continue to provide support, identify training needs, and develop individual expertise.

98. ICT is also used in the context of other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils work on the design and control of traffic lights, or Year 3 pupils develop their word processing skills to present and organise their written work, using copy, cut and paste techniques. However, ICT could be used more effectively to support other subjects.

99. The school has been very successful in building up a very good range of hardware and software, both through specific grant funding, and through its own efforts. The impact of the considerable investment in ICT, and the good quality of planning and management of national initiatives, has been very significant in the development of the subject, and the improvement in standards. The introduction of the new computer suite means that pupils have room to work, and the school's accommodation provides ample space for ICT.

100. The subject is well managed by a committed and knowledgeable co-ordinator. He has worked hard to develop the subject, and to address successfully the issues identified in the previous report. He has updated documentation, and has been well supported by the senior management team in carrying through the initiatives identified in the school improvement plan. The school's priorities for development have been clearly identified and systematically addressed. There is now a clear view of the way ahead, and of the areas which still need continued development.

## **MUSIC**

101. By the age of eleven, pupils reach standards similar to those expected nationally. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Two lessons were seen during the inspection and additional evidence was gained from listening to pupils sing in assemblies, during their weekly choir practice and with discussions with pupils. Further evidence was gained by looking at planning and through discussions with the talented music co-ordinator and the music specialist.

102. Progress in music is satisfactory overall for all pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Pupils make good progress in singing and performing and this is an improvement since the last inspection. By the end of the key stage, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of what a pentatonic scale is and define musical vocabulary such as pitch and tempo correctly. They sing tunefully, clearly and confidently. Whilst singing or playing percussion instruments, the majority are aware of how different parts fit together and the need to achieve an overall effect. This was demonstrated very well during a Year 5 lesson, as they performed a song entitled *Calypso*.

103. Pupils have many opportunities to perform with percussion instruments, to sing and to learn to play a musical instrument. Pupils in Year 3, 4 and 5 meet weekly to play in a recorder group. They perform confidently and tunefully as they play *Reindeer and the Sea Shells*. All have a satisfactory idea of how to read music. The choir is a popular weekly session and approximately a sixth of the school are involved. Pupils sing with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment as they practise for a Year 6 leavers' assembly. They all sing without scripts as they sing songs such as *The Rhythm of Life*. A few pupils take up the opportunity to play a string, brass or wind instrument and receive weekly sessions from outside specialists.

104. Pupils talk of listening to different kinds of music in assembly and occasionally in music lessons. However, most have difficulty recalling the names of

any composers and speak vaguely about developing their own music, recording what they have written and then performing their own tunes. The composing element of music has not been reinforced sufficiently throughout the key stage. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 clearly show that musical vocabulary has not been sufficiently reinforced for all pupils. A few are confused with musical words such as timbre that is used to describe different types of sound.

105. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It was good or very good during the lessons seen which were predominantly concerned with singing and performing. Lessons are thoroughly planned, learning objectives are clearly identified and all activities are interestingly thought out. Pupils evaluate their own performance and articulate well what they have learned. These all have impact on learning, as do the pupils' enthusiasm for the subject and their ability to sustain concentration and work very well together. The pianist who is involved in all music lessons develops very good relationships with teachers and pupils. This valuable input in all lessons impacts on the standards the pupils reach.

106. The subject is well led by the subject co-ordinator. The school is now using the new national guidelines for music and the end of unit statements to assess what has been taught. However, teachers do not use this information effectively to identify pupils who have not fully understood what they have been doing in particular in relation to developing composing skills and the understanding of specific words related to music. Displays around the school do not reinforce and promote music well. Resources are satisfactory, but there is little evidence of ICT used to support work in the subject. The school has recently attended a local music festival where pupils performed along with a number of other local schools. The many activities which involve pupils working together and the well chosen pieces of music they look at promotes the pupils' social and cultural development well.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

107. Only one physical education lesson was observed during the inspection so there is insufficient evidence to make judgements about pupils' attainment overall. Pupils do achieve appropriate standards in their swimming lessons that are undertaken in Year 3 and 5. However, discussions with the subject co-ordinator indicates that there have been some improvements in the subject particularly in terms of ensuring that the experiences offered to the pupils develop progressively.

108. The one lesson observed was good and Year 4 pupils effectively developed their games skills as they practised striking, bowling and fielding as part of a series of lessons developing an understanding of rounders and cricket. A notable feature of this lesson was that it started outside on the school field but because of inclement weather had to be continued inside in the school hall. This made no difference to the good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils or in the quality of teaching. The classteacher quickly reorganised the lesson so that the restrictions of operating inside were taken into consideration. Sensibly, because there had been a break in their physical activity, the classteacher decided to have a new warm-up session. This was conducted at an appropriate pace with good explanations given to the pupils about what they were doing. The lesson was also technically good with the pupils being offered good coaching points as they looked at ways of throwing a ball to each other. The teacher motivated the pupils to be more accurate with their throwing by cleverly using the restrictive space of the school hall. The pupils worked together throwing and catching sponge balls as the teacher interacted well with different groups to reinforce learning or offer further challenges. The lesson encouraged pupils to be active and developed well with pupils moving from throwing

underarm with each other to bowling using a cricket action. The management and control of the pupils was very good and with the very strong relationships in the class pupils were keen to learn and work together.

109. The subject is satisfactorily managed by the subject co-ordinator and the criticisms offered by the previous inspection no longer exist. Opportunities are now provided for pupils to develop the range of skills required by the National Curriculum. Satisfactory links are made with other areas of the curriculum for example, life processes and living things in science as pupils look at how their bodies change after exercise and aspects of numeracy when pupils use different forms of measurement in athletics. A good range of extra-curricular activities and experiences, which are often provided for all year groups by local education authority Sports Development Officers, enhances the curriculum. Pupils from each year group have input into the activities that they would like to undertake after school. However, some parents find the cost for some of these activities prohibitive. There are some examples of good practice. Pupils who cannot participate in physical education lessons are expected to complete report sheets that identify what happened in the lesson and which pupils did well. Not only does this encourage the pupils to use their literacy skills it also provides them with an opportunity to comment on the skills, ideas and techniques of other pupils' work which is an important part of the physical education curriculum. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall and stored tidily and effectively. The school accommodation provides a range of grassed and hard playing surfaces that during the inspection were used for games and extra-curricular tennis.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

110. By the time the pupils are aged eleven, their knowledge and understanding of religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Some

Year 6 pupils achieve standards that are above average and this was also observed during the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, learn effectively and make satisfactory progress.

111. In discussions with Year 6 pupils, they talked confidently about their religious education studies. They showed appropriate subject knowledge of Islam and Christianity and talked positively about a presentation provided by a Muslim pupil and the artefacts that they had brought in. Although they were not so confident in discussing the complexities of Buddhism, they expressed enjoyment and interest in the subject and the opportunities they also have to be involved in discussions on sensitive subjects such as personal feelings and emotions.

112. As at the time of the previous inspection, the quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good overall. In a very good Year 6, lesson the complex issues of iconography were discussed well as pupils studied how art helps Christians to worship. This was a very well organised lesson that extended pupils' knowledge and understanding. Good references were made to previous learning

and during the classteacher's introduction pupils of all abilities were involved. The main lesson activity was planned so pupils of all abilities were engaged in activities that were appropriate to their levels of knowledge and understanding. Higher attaining pupils showed above average understanding as they argued against the iconoclastic position presented by religious leaders. Average attainers studied iconographic art and with a key interpreted and explained Christian symbolism. Lower attaining pupils worked very well with a learning support assistant, to match religious symbols to their meaning. Because of this very good organisation, pupils of all abilities made significant gains in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils were very positive and some mature discussions were undertaken. At the end of this very demanding session, pupils of all abilities presented their findings to the rest of the class. Year 5 pupils worked enthusiastically in groups in role-play situations as they presented their own ideas on how Christian beliefs can be applied to the moral principles that individuals use in their own lives whether they are Christians or not. The lesson was managed in a stimulating and perceptive way that allowed some delicate issues to be discussed, for example arguments with parents. The pupils' discussed issues in a mature manner with appropriate respect being shown to others' beliefs and views. In both of the lessons described above literacy skills were well developed. Links with ICT are underdeveloped.

113. The subject is well managed by the subject co-ordinator who is a subject specialist and has good subject knowledge. There have been some good improvements in subject organisation and resources since the previous inspection. The school uses national guidelines and the locally agreed syllabus well to ensure a progressive development of knowledge and understanding. This is reflected in the pupils' work as they move through the school. The pupils study the major religions of the world thoroughly and work analysis and discussions with pupils indicate that there is an appropriate balance between written work and debate. There are no formal assessment procedures in place for religious education and the subject co-ordinator acknowledges that this is an area for development. Resources for the subject are good, well organised and stored appropriately. Discussions were undertaken with all staff to ensure that religious artefacts are used in the correct manner and a range of reference materials are also available for teachers.