

INSPECTION REPORT

MEXBOROUGH DONCASTER ROAD

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Mexborough

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106682

Headteacher: Mr P Davis

Reporting inspector: Mr G T Storer
19830

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th March 2002

Inspection number: 194590

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 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Doncaster Road Mexborough South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S64 0LU
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Barron
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd – 4 th May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
G T Storer 19830	Registered inspector	English Science Art Physical education Religious education English as an additional language Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? School improvement How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
G Marsland 13706	Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance How well does the school care for its pupils? Partnership with parents
G Logan 11810	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography History Information and communication technology Music	Curriculum and other opportunities

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mexborough, Doncaster Road Junior School is situated in a small town in the Don valley, some distance from Doncaster. The school serves the local community living in local authority housing or smaller owner occupied homes in the immediate vicinity of the school. With 128 pupils on the school roll, this school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The school deals with a range of social and educational difficulties. There is unemployment in the area and a considerable number of families experience hardship. There are 34 per cent of families known to be eligible for free school meals. This is above the national average. Pupils' attainments on entry have improved considerably in recent years. When pupils in the current Year 6 entered the school, their attainments were well below average but the most recent intake was broadly average. Despite these improvements, a quarter of all pupils face difficulties in their learning. There are 33 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and six pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. This is above average for a school of this size. However, there is only one pupil from an ethnic minority background and no pupils speak English as an additional language. This is less than other schools in this sort of location. The school also has to deal with a fairly high turnover of pupils. During the last school year 14 pupils entered or left the school at times other than at the beginning of Year 3 or the end of Year 6.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in the school; year on year, more pupils are attaining or exceeding the nationally expected standard in English, mathematics and science by the time that they leave the school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there are examples of good teaching in classes throughout the school. The headteacher provides good leadership. He receives effective support from the governing body and together they have improved aspects of leadership and management. The school manages its budget well and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides effective leadership. He has a clear view of the way ahead that ensures improving standards in many aspects of the school's work.
- The governing body fulfils its duties conscientiously and is influential in planning for school improvement.
- The school's aims and values reflect very clearly in many aspects of its work; this is a caring school in which the personal development of pupils receives considerable attention.
- Pupils have positive attitudes. They get fully involved and make an effort to improve.
- Most pupils enjoy school, behave well and relationships at all levels are very good.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development effectively.
- The school's partnership with parents contributes effectively to pupils' education.

What could be improved

- Procedures for assessment and teachers' use of assessment information are not systematic enough when planning for pupils of differing abilities.
- Planning and support for pupils with special educational needs is not systematic enough to ensure that they make best progress.
- Senior staff and co-ordinators do not have enough opportunities to check on the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects or on whether teachers and others apply the school's policies and agreed practices consistently and in the best interests of pupils.

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 maintained a satisfactory level of improvement since its previous inspection in May 1997. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain higher standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology and religious education. The governing body is more effective in holding the school to account for what it achieves and in shaping the course of school improvement. The overall quality of teaching has improved; teaching is more consistent and there are fewer unsatisfactory lessons. The curriculum has been strengthened. Arrangements for ICT and design and technology are better than they were; all aspects of these subjects now receive satisfactory attention and the resources for ICT have improved enormously.

The curriculum also places greater emphasis on personal social and health education and, as a result, many pupils have more positive attitudes to school and to their work. Curriculum planning is also better because the school has adopted national guidelines for all subjects in order to improve its schemes of work. The school makes better use of assessment results in English, mathematics and science to track pupils' progress. Nevertheless, it still has a way to go in developing assessment procedures and the use of assessment in planning for pupils of differing abilities in these and in other subjects. The school has reviewed teachers' roles and responsibilities as subject leaders and as co-ordinators of other aspects of the school's work. However, it has not yet made arrangements that enable them to make a real impact on aspects of leadership and management by monitoring standards and quality effectively. The school's procedures for caring for its pupils are more effective than at the time of the last inspection; arrangements for child protection, for ensuring the health and safety of pupils and staff and for eliminating bullying are all more secure. The school has continued to develop its partnership with parents so that they can contribute more to their children's education.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	E	C
Mathematics	D	E	D	B
Science	E	E	D	B

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

Standards are rising. In the most recent tests for 11-year-olds, standards in English were well below the national average but in line with standards in similar schools. Standards in mathematics and science were below those in schools nationally but above those in similar schools. Over the last four years, the rate of improvement has been similar to that in schools throughout England. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are continuing to rise. In the current Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are below average, whilst standards in science are broadly average but these below average results do not indicate serious weaknesses in teaching or learning. Pupils' attainments on entry have improved considerably in recent years and are now about average but pupils now in Year 6 came to the school attaining well below average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Most average and higher attaining pupils have made at least satisfactory progress. In all three subjects, the proportion of pupils on course to attain the nationally expected Level 4 or the above average Level 5 is greater than last year or than in preceding years. Standards in religious education are in line with those set out in the local authority's guidance. Most pupils make sound progress and achieve satisfactory standards in all other subjects. However, the progress of pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. In many lessons, teachers do not match tasks closely enough to learning targets in pupils' individual education plans for them to overcome the difficulties that they face.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Most work hard to improve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well in lessons. There is no evidence of bullying or of any other unpleasant behaviour in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are mature and responsible. Staff and pupils treat each other with respect and relationships at all levels are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is improving but remains well below the national average. Families taking holidays during term time cause much of the absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory

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 is satisfactory. During the inspection, inspectors observed all teachers and teaching was satisfactory or better in almost all lessons. Almost half of the lessons were good. There was good teaching in nearly all classes and examples of very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. The teaching of the basic skills in English and mathematics is sound. Teachers plan carefully for these subjects. However, pupils do not always make the progress that they should because teachers are not making enough use of assessment information to ensure that the tasks they set match the needs of pupils of differing ability in the group. This is particularly the case in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. There is good teamwork between teachers and classroom assistants that contributes to the quality of pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs often receive sensitive support that enables them to succeed alongside others in the class but when tasks do not relate to the difficulties that pupils face, their progress is unsatisfactory. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour. As a result, most pupils are attentive, join in well and persevere with their work. Teachers' management of their pupils is almost always effective. Teachers ensure that pupils are interested and involved and the school's older pupils concentrate well and become increasingly independent. Nevertheless, a failure to allow pupils to make choices and be independent in their work was a contributory factor in the unsatisfactory teaching that was observed. Teachers in Years 5 and 6 usually set work for higher-attaining pupils at a sufficiently challenging level to allow them to attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time that they leave the school. This degree of matching does not always extend to other subjects where younger pupils of differing ability often complete the same work and this restricts the progress that they make. Teachers use homework satisfactorily to extend pupils' learning, although there are variations in the frequency of assignments and in the amounts of work that teachers set.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All subjects of the National Curriculum receive suitable emphasis and visits, visitors and special events add to the quality of pupils' learning and experience.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory. Current arrangements neither ensure that teaching systematically meets pupils' identified needs nor do they secure pupils' full and equal access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Moral and social development are particular strengths but pupils do not learn enough about the richness and diversity of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school. Arrangements for child protection and pupils' welfare are very secure and teachers use their knowledge of the pupils effectively to support personal development. However, teachers' use of assessment information in their planning for pupils of differing abilities is currently unsatisfactory.

Partnership with parents is improving. The school has effective links with many parents and provides a good range of information for them.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides effective leadership that results in a shared sense of purpose and good levels of teamwork amongst staff. However, current levels of delegation and the time given for other staff to carry out management responsibilities limit the contribution that they make.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are conscientious in overseeing the school's curriculum, staffing, financial planning and matters of health and safety. They play an active role in improving the quality of education.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has begun to analyse performance data and to monitor teaching and learning. However, these activities do not yet include all staff and this reduces their impact on the school's development planning.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The governing body uses the school's budget and other grants very effectively, according to principles of best value and in the interests of the pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are comfortable in approaching staff with questions or problems. • The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best. • Teaching is good. • Their children are making good progress. • Their children like school. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information that parents receive about how their children are getting on. • The school's partnership with parents. • The range of activities outside lessons. • Pupils' behaviour. • The work that their children are expected to do at home.

There were 67 questionnaires (52 per cent) returned and 4 parents attended the meeting for parents. Most parents' responses supported the school and the quality of education provided for their children. However, a number of parents expressed concerns. The inspection endorses most of the positive views but also finds evidence to support some of their concerns. There are inconsistencies in teachers' use of homework. Amounts and frequency vary but most homework relates to pupils' ongoing work and so makes a satisfactory contribution to their learning. Pupils' behaviour is generally good but there are some pupils whose poor behaviour could affect the learning of others. Staff work hard and in most cases successfully with these pupils and their families in order to overcome such difficulties. The pupils' annual progress reports give parents a good evaluation of their learning. They give parents clear information about what pupils know, understand and can do. The school has worked hard to improve its partnership with parents. It actively seeks to involve parents in the work of the school and in their children's education. The number and range of activities that take place outside of lessons are limited but are about the same as in many other schools of this size.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, the school's results in English were well below the national average and results in mathematics and science were below the average for schools nationally. Despite the fact that in recent years standards have remained below or well below schools nationally, standards are rising. Over the last four years, standards in core¹ subjects have improved at a similar rate to standards in schools across the country as a whole. Inspection evidence confirms this picture of year-on-year improvements in standards. In the current Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are below average, whilst standards in science are broadly average. In all three subjects, the proportion of pupils on course to attain the nationally expected Level 4 or the above average Level 5 is greater than last year or than in preceding years. Standards are rising because:
 - teachers use their understanding of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy effectively to improve the teaching of the basic skills of English and mathematics;
 - new resources for pupils and teachers are improving planning and bring greater consistency to the teaching of science;
 - teachers are making progress towards meeting targets for raising standards year on year;
 - teachers in Years 5 and 6 have high expectations and set work that is challenging for pupils of all levels of attainment. This improves the progress that pupils make;
 - additional staffing and arrangements for grouping pupils according to their abilities ensure that teaching groups for some English and mathematics lessons each week are quite small. In these lessons, all pupils have the support they need in order to succeed and make good gains in confidence and competence.
2. When pupils in Year 3 entered the school, their attainments were about average. However, pupils' attainment on entry has improved significantly over the last four years. When the pupils currently in Year 6 joined the school, their attainments were well below average. Taking account of the social and educational difficulties that pupils face, the 2001 results were in line with the average for similar schools in English and above the average for similar schools in mathematics and science. Taken together, these results indicate that most pupils are achieving satisfactory standards and making sound progress in the core subjects of the curriculum.
3. Standards in design and technology and ICT are better than they were at the time of the last inspection. By the time that pupils leave the school, they attain satisfactory standards in these and in most other National Curriculum subjects seen during the inspection. Timetable arrangements made it impossible to inspect the teaching of music and history so there is insufficient other evidence to make a judgement on standards in these subjects. Standards in religious education have also improved since the last inspection and are now are in line with those set out in the local authority's guidance.
4. There are no significant differences in the attainments of pupils of different gender, ethnicity or background. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above average for a school of this size. Some of these pupils face quite profound difficulties that result in below average standards by the age of 11 and this affects

¹ Core subjects are English, mathematics and science.

overall standards as reflected by test results. However, pupils with special educational needs are not making enough progress. Current arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are unsatisfactory. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need do not receive support that is closely focused on their identified difficulties and this results in limited progress across a wide range of areas. All pupils make good progress in their personal and social development. This progress is an important factor that allows most pupils to adopt helpful patterns of behaviour and response and enables teachers to establish conditions in which profitable learning can take place.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

5. The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are a strength of the school. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good and have improved since the last inspection in 1997. Parents have confirmed that their children enjoy coming to school and are maturing and learning to take responsibility. The pupils are interested and involved in most lessons. There was a good example of this in a Years 5/6 literacy lesson, where many pupils were so engrossed in their work that they did not want to stop, even though it was breaktime. The pupils know the school routines well, understand what is expected of them, and settle down quickly to lessons. They are confident and keen to answer questions during classroom discussions. This was evident in a Year 5 literacy lesson, where they discussed descriptive writing. Many pupils are involved in after-school activities and residential visits, which they clearly enjoy. Good attitudes to school are an important contributory factor to successful learning and to the standards that the pupils achieve.
6. Behaviour in and around the school is good and this confirms the views of the parents. The pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. This is because the school's expectations for good behaviour are explained to the pupils and parents in the school brochure and the staff and adults in school manage behaviour consistently well. There were no exclusions from the school during the last school year. The pupils respect both teaching and non-teaching staff who successfully encourage them to consider the effect their actions could have on others. As a result, pupils accept the views and opinions of others. There was good example of this in a Year 6 science lesson, where the pupils shared ideas and opinions without fear of ridicule. Pupils' play is lively and boisterous but there were no bullying or racially motivated incidents during the inspection. The good behaviour of the pupils has a positive effect on learning and contributes to the friendly atmosphere in the school.
7. Relationships within the school are very good. Relationships between the pupils and between pupils and staff are caring and friendly. Pupils work together very well in lessons and support each other. There was a good example of this in a Year 6 numeracy lesson, where pupils worked together on 'probability' and celebrated each other's achievements. At breaks and lunchtimes, pupils play well together and talk sociably in the dining hall, regardless of race or gender. Staff encourage the pupils to socialise and sit with a pupil of the opposite gender. These very good relationships are a strong feature of the school.
8. The school is successful in promoting the personal development of its pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection. As a result, all pupils show respect for the feelings values and beliefs of others. This was evident in a Year 4 personal, social and health education lesson, where the pupils discussed friendship without fear or embarrassment. Pupils take responsibility for tasks around the school and are reliable and trustworthy. They act as class, library, plant and register monitors and assist with other duties as required. The pupils gain an understanding of the needs of others

through the school's fund-raising activities, such as the shoe box appeal for Eastern Europe. The school soon plans to introduce a School Council in order that the views of the pupils can be taken into consideration. Training for the headteacher and pupils has already taken place to ensure that all are properly prepared for this exciting initiative.

9. Despite the rigorous efforts of the headteacher and staff, the overall attendance rate is poor and well below the national average for primary schools. However, the school's efforts to raise the attendance rate are hindered by the number of families taking holidays in term-time, particularly in the month of September. Also, during the last year, attendance figures were adversely affected when a pupil moved to another school. The school was unable to remove this pupil from the school roll until a month after the pupil had stopped attending. Registration meets legal requirements and is efficiently undertaken, but a small minority of pupils are frequently late for school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. The overall quality of teaching is sound and contributes satisfactorily to the standards that pupils reach and their positive attitudes to learning. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in almost all of the lessons observed. Almost a half of all lessons observed were either good or very good. There was good teaching in nearly all classes and very good teaching in classes in Years 5 and 6. There was only one unsatisfactory lesson. This is an improvement on standards reported at the time of the previous inspection.
11. Throughout the school, teachers have a good knowledge of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and, as a result, the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good. Teachers plan well-structured literacy and numeracy lessons and ensure that pupils are clear about the purpose of their learning. This promotes a purposeful approach to tasks and activities. Pupils have regular opportunities to read and write as part of their literacy or additional English lessons. As a result, higher attaining pupils read for pleasure and write at length and with increasing independence. At the beginning of mathematics lessons, teachers use a regular quick-fire question and answer session successfully to engage pupils' interest and to promote their rapid recall of number facts and accurate mental calculation. This adds significantly to the development of pupils' numeracy skills. Teachers make satisfactory use of ICT to support pupils' learning. There are some examples of pupils using this technology as a source of information and for presenting written work, for example in English, art and science. The school's new ICT suite has improved the teaching of computer skills and teachers are taking full advantage of the facilities it offers to extend ICT into other areas of the curriculum. However, there are currently too few opportunities for pupils to reinforce and extend their literacy and numeracy skills through work in other subjects. This slows the rate at which average and lower attaining pupils gain confidence and competence in the use of these important skills.
12. Throughout the school, teachers plan and prepare thoroughly for their lessons. Lively, well-paced introductions and stimulating resources engage pupils quickly in their learning. For example, in a very successful science lesson in Year 6, the teacher used an interesting selection of equipment to focus and hold pupils' attention on the task and to provide them with a 'hands on' experience to reinforce their learning. As a result, the quality of learning for these pupils was very good. They rose to the challenge to devise and conduct independent investigations and they made good progress. Planning for classroom assistants and voluntary helpers is effective. These supporting adults know what they are expected to do and how they should do it. This was seen to good effect in an English lesson in Year 4. The transition from whole-

class activity to group work was 'seamless'. Pupils of all levels of attainment got value from the lesson because they received the support that they needed. This enabled them to succeed and make progress even though the teacher was working with one particular group throughout this phase of the lesson. Plans also incorporate adequate time for a whole-class discussion at the end of the lesson. Teachers use this time effectively to sum up and reinforce what pupils have learned, celebrate pupils' achievements and so lay the foundation for new learning.

13. Positive relationships between teachers and pupils form the basis for much of the good teaching and learning. Teachers readily respond with encouragement to pupils' efforts. They show the value they place on pupils' work by mounting and displaying it throughout the school. Most teachers manage pupils well, so that they are ready and willing to participate in lessons. They make sure that pupils understand what they are to do and they recognise and reward their efforts. In response, most pupils become actively involved and to work hard. For example, in a very successful Literacy lesson in Year 5/6, pupils grew in confidence and willingly explained their thinking because the teacher created a very positive atmosphere. She presented the information about official language well, kept pupils fully involved and gave plenty of praise and recognition for pupils' efforts and achievements. There are, however, occasions when pupils become restless and inattentive or begin to misbehave. When teachers deal with incidents quickly, as in a Year 4 physical education lesson, using strategies to calm and refocus pupils, teaching and learning proceed unhindered.
14. Teachers employ a suitable range of teaching styles. There is a careful balance between direct teaching of the whole class and working with groups and individuals. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to make choices and to begin to take responsibility for some aspects of their work. This is particularly evident in lessons for the older pupils. For example, in an effective physical education lesson in Year 6, the teacher challenged the pupils to work in groups to devise dance sequences and then provided the opportunity for them to practise, explore and become more confident. During this phase of the lesson, the teacher's very effective work with individual pupils and groups enabled them to refine and improve their performance further. Nevertheless, a failure to allow pupils to make choices and be independent in their work was a contributory factor in the unsatisfactory teaching that was observed in one lesson. Teachers use homework satisfactorily to extend and complement the work pupils do in school. However, the frequency of homework and the amounts set vary from class to class.
15. On-going assessments are beginning to influence teachers' planning for pupils of differing abilities. In English and mathematics, teachers use assessment data satisfactorily to pitch their teaching at an overall level that builds on pupils' prior learning and attainment. They also use assessment information to group pupils and to plan tasks for those of differing abilities. Teachers evaluate each lesson, identifying on a weekly or sometimes on a daily basis those pupils who need additional support or who need to be moved on more quickly. These procedures generally ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress but are not precise enough to secure best progress at all times. Procedures for the on-going assessment and recording of pupils' attainment and progress have only been in place for a short time. Carried out at termly intervals, they have not yet produced the information necessary for teachers to refine their planning for pupils of differing abilities. Furthermore, whilst teachers mark work regularly, in many cases their comments do not show pupils how well they have done or what they need to do to improve. Consequently, lower attaining pupils can be left behind or higher attainers be 'marking time' when new units of work begin. Teachers often plan tasks on the basis of broad target levels from the National

Curriculum rather than on the basis of what pupils know, understand and can do. This lack of attention to detail reduces the progress that some pupils make.

16. Teachers and support staff in all year groups work hard to ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive the support that they need to participate in activities alongside others in the class. For example, teachers use thoughtful questioning to draw in the weaker pupils, to give them the opportunity to experience success in front of their peers and to assess their understanding as, for example in the Year 5 religious education lesson. However, individual education plans are not specific enough to guide teachers in matching tasks to pupils' most immediate learning needs. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are often withdrawn from class to work with a visiting teacher. The planning for these withdrawal sessions lacks coherence. It fails to focus consistently on pupils' identified learning targets and on the work that other pupils are undertaking at that time. This is not in the best interests of these pupils and is unsatisfactory because pupils withdrawn in this way are not able to benefit from all that the school offers to its other pupils. Teachers set suitably challenging work for more able and for gifted pupils in English, mathematics and science and so enable them to attain high standards in their work by the time that they leave the school. This is most apparent in Years 5 and 6 but does not always extend to other subjects such as religious education, where simple drawing and colouring activities make few demands on more able pupils.

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

17. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum for pupils aged 7 to 11 successfully and religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The school places considerable emphasis upon the teaching of mathematics and literacy, to ensure that pupils have secure basic skills in these key areas. Arrangements for teaching ICT are better than at the time of the previous inspection. Whole-class lessons in the ICT suite allow staff to teach computer and other associated skills more effectively, so that pupils make more rapid gains in confidence and competence.
18. The allocation of curriculum time to individual subjects is satisfactory overall. The school follows local education authority guidance in establishing the time to be given to each subject. However, the school needs to be rigorous in ensuring the effective use of the time given to individual subjects. At present, the limited evidence of recorded work available for some subjects, such as history and geography, does not indicate that they are taught to any depth. Following general practice in many schools, history and geography are taught as part of a two-year cycle, as are art and design and technology. This is an efficient way in which to structure the timetable, but does lead to extended periods when pupils do not advance their learning in particular subjects. This can affect the steady development of skills and understanding in those areas.
19. The school has a good curriculum to support pupils' personal, social and health education. Although there is no formal policy, all the expected elements are taught, including sex education, drug awareness and citizenship. Some components are taught discretely or in circle time, when pupils sit together and have an opportunity to discuss their concerns and to listen to others. Other aspects, such as sex education or health education, are covered effectively as part of work in science or physical education. The school deals with particular local concerns, such as drugs awareness and water safety, in an annual Safety Week, supported by various local agencies. The school prepares pupils successfully for the next stage of their education.

20. In several key areas, the quality of curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection.
- There is now a long-term curriculum plan, organised on a two-year rolling programme. This brings greater coherence to the curriculum as a whole and ensures that all elements of the different subjects receive adequate attention.
 - There is more detailed support for teachers' planning for each subject. This is mostly based on the recently published national guidelines but also takes account of the school's particular organisational requirements. This is particularly beneficial if teachers have limited specialist skills in subjects such as design and technology or science.
 - The school has rectified weaknesses in the time given to design and technology and the curriculum in ICT now fulfils all requirements. As a result, these subjects are taught more thoroughly.
 - The school is beginning to identify cross-curricular links, so that time is used efficiently. Therefore, activities in music or art will often be closely aligned to work in, for example, history or geography. This brings added purpose to activities and makes them more relevant to the pupils.
21. In addition, the school has adopted the strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy with some success. The National Literacy Strategy is securely established with good practice evident throughout the school. Teachers are beginning to find opportunities for pupils to use their developing literacy skills as part of their work in other subjects but there is further work to be done here. For example, opportunities in science for pupils to develop independence in recording their investigations are largely restricted to pupils in Years 5 and 6, whilst other pupils often fill in undemanding worksheets. Similarly, there are too few opportunities for pupils to engage in extended writing in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. The school has also implemented the National Numeracy Strategy successfully. This is having a positive effect upon standards in mathematics. Many pupils have secure number skills. Again, however, the school is not effectively planning for the use of numeracy skills across the curriculum.
22. Most pupils have satisfactory equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum. However, whilst this is an inclusive school, which takes appropriate account of pupils' ages, attainment, gender, ethnicity and needs in the provision that it makes, there are weaknesses in the arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and in the implementation of the Code of Practice². The targets on pupils' individual education plans are too imprecise. Consequently, they do not provide enough guidance for teachers' planning or the criteria against which to evaluate progress. Such targets as there are do not reflect sufficiently in planning for these pupils across the curriculum as a whole. Consequently, they are not getting the intensive support that they need in order to overcome their difficulties. At present, these pupils make insufficient progress in relation to their targets. The school also needs to monitor more closely the withdrawal of pupils from lessons. For some pupils, this happens on a regular basis from week to week and gives rise to the risk of missed opportunities in other areas of the curriculum.
23. The programme for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. The range of activities includes a craft club, bird-watching club, recorder group, instrumental teaching and several sports clubs. There is also an after-school drama club, which has recently been introduced, supported as an initiative of the New Opportunities Fund. Teachers

² Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1933 Education Act

add to the quality of pupils' learning with a programme of visits outside school, including an annual residential visit, and a range of visitors to the school. The school has satisfactory links with the community, in particular the local church, the Earth Centre and various local Wetlands reserves. However, the links with neighbouring schools and partner institutions are unsatisfactory. There are too few opportunities for staff to strengthen the continuity of pupils' learning through the sharing of information with the infant or secondary schools. Procedures for welcoming new children to the school are well established and there is effective sharing of information with parents.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

24. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils is good, although the promotion of pupils' spiritual development across the curriculum is incidental rather than coherently planned. However, there were instances, for example in a Year 6 science lesson when pupils experienced real joy and excitement in their learning. The spiritual dimensions of some areas of the curriculum, such as music and dance, remain underdeveloped. Religious education lessons and some daily assemblies provide suitable opportunities for pupils to gain insights into the beliefs of others and to appreciate the importance of prayer in some people's lives. The acts of collective worship usually provide adequate time for reflection on some of life's fundamental issues and regularly include time for silence or prayer. The weekly visit of a local minister is a strongly spiritual occasion and is much enjoyed by the pupils. Year 5 pupils have visited the local church and have responded to their visit with some extended writing. Whilst the festivals of other cultures are acknowledged through the religious education curriculum, this is not reflected in the displays, books or resources available around the school.
25. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils are clearly taught the principles of right and wrong and about the need to care for property and the school environment. Teachers negotiate behaviour rules with their pupils and display them in every classroom. Because pupils have been involved in the making of rules, most feel committed to them and encourage classmates to follow them for the benefit of all concerned. The school's comprehensive arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education include the teaching of moral and social issues. Teachers actively promote opportunities for such discussions, encouraging pupils to develop a caring and tolerant attitude. Circle time is a recent development, but pupils already understand the conventions and are beginning to talk confidently about their feelings, showing concern and consideration for others.
26. Provision for pupils' social development is good and, as a result, most pupils relate effectively to others. Social relationships within the school are good. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to work together in groups and to support each other's learning. In an effective physical education lesson in Year 6, pupils worked co-operatively in mixed gender groups, sharing ideas and collaborating well to produce a group dance. Another good example also occurred in Year 6, when a group enthusiastically absorbed a pupil with special educational needs who had been out of the room and had not had the opportunity to integrate with any of the other groups. Pupils learn to take responsibility for themselves and others and, as a result, the school functions as a caring and orderly community. Pupils contribute to this community by undertaking jobs such as taking care of the library, returning registers and learning to care for others. Pupils also contribute to the wider community by raising money for a range of charities and learning about how to care for those less fortunate than themselves.

27. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall although the arrangements for some aspects are good. The works of authors and poets feature prominently in literacy lessons and the works of famous artists frequently provide the starting points for projects in art. Topics in geography and history provide pupils with insights in to aspects of the community in which they live, both now and in the past and displays around the school include good examples of classic art and design reproductions and displays relating to recent work in history. The school has a strong tradition in the performing arts and many pupils have the opportunity to perform in productions such as the recent staging of 'Joseph' or to play musical instruments in assemblies or concerts. However, whilst the school provides opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths in religious education, the wider appreciation of the traditions of other cultural groups represented in our society is largely neglected. The multicultural dimension of pupils' learning is weak, poorly promoted and barely reflected in displays or resources.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. This is a caring and friendly school, with a strong commitment to supporting the pupils' personal development. Parents confirm that the headteacher and staff are approachable and swiftly respond to any of their concerns. During the inspection parents were seen talking to staff in the classrooms before the start of the school day.
29. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good and have improved since the last inspection. The school staff conscientiously follow the procedures in the governing body's health and safety policy. Fire precautions, electrical checks and whole-school risk assessments are carried out regularly. Staff and lunchtime assistants supervise the pupils carefully at breaks and lunchtimes. There are good arrangements for dealing with accidents; four members of staff, including the headteacher, have been trained in first-aid procedures and one other member of staff is a qualified nurse. The headteacher is the named person responsible for child protection and 'looked after' children. There is now a child protection policy that conforms to locally agreed guidelines. Most staff are aware of procedures and have received regular training. The headteacher acknowledges the need to include lunchtime assistants during the next child protection training session.
30. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The headteacher and staff are doing all they can to raise attendance levels. The school brochure and other communications with parents stress the need for regular and punctual attendance and in order to motivate pupils, the school awards certificates for good attendance. The administrator rigorously monitors attendance, punctuality and medical appointments and the headteacher carries out frequent analysis of attendance data. However, although strongly discouraged, some families still take holidays in term-time. For all other absences, the school operates a first day response scheme so that the administrator telephones the homes of pupils who are absent from school as soon as the teacher records the absence. When parents cannot be contacted a letter is sent home. Most parents respond well and immediately inform the school when their child cannot attend. However, the educational welfare officer provides good support by monitoring attendance every two weeks and visiting the homes of pupils when problems occur.
31. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. There is an effective discipline policy, which has recently been reviewed. The policy makes clear what the school expects from the staff, defines misbehaviour and outlines procedures for dealing with incidents such as bullying. The school brochure and leaflets explain to parents how they can support the school and

effectively reinforce the school's expectations for good behaviour. Because the staff consistently implement the policy guidelines to manage behaviour, the pupils understand what is expected of them and almost invariably respond well. There is an appropriate scheme of sanctions and pupils are rewarded for good behaviour and achievement with certificates and class points at the weekly work assembly. Class points enable a full class of pupils to receive a reward such as a game of football at lunchtime. Pupils respond well to both rewards and sanctions because they regard them as fair and worthwhile. Serious Incidents of challenging behaviour or bullying are recorded in the behaviour log but the headteacher confirms that such incidents are rare. If they do occur, the pupils concerned and their parents are immediately involved in discussions with the headteacher to resolve the matter.

32. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good. The procedures are supported by the very good relationships within the school. Personal, social and health education is taught within assemblies and lessons such as religious education and science. The school is also developing a discussion period known as 'circle time' where all the pupils can talk openly about relevant issues such as friendship. A good example of this was seen in a Year 3 lesson, where the pupils openly discussed their thoughts and feelings about family, friends, Jesus and God. These lessons also make a valuable contribution to the pupils' personal development. Teachers and classroom assistants care for and support the personal development of pupils with special educational needs effectively. These pupils are valued and included in most activities. Older pupils have recently become involved in setting their personal targets for behaviour, literacy and numeracy. This enables them to assess their own learning and decide how they could improve their work. The school maintains effective links with education and health professionals, such as the school nurse, the educational psychologist and the education welfare officer, who also support the academic and personal development of the pupils. The success that the school achieves in the support and guidance of the pupils has a good effect on the pupils' behaviour and on their attitudes to learning.
33. Although the school has revised its systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, some of the weaknesses reported at the time of the previous inspection still exist. The school has made satisfactory progress in introducing a more systematic approach to assessment throughout the school. Current procedures include a range of tests and assessments, which provide information about pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. The school knows what pupils achieve in national tests and carries out further optional tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. There are termly assessments in English and mathematics and all teachers carefully record the results of these. Teachers' termly plans highlight suitable opportunities for assessment in other subjects. However, assessment procedures have only just been introduced in most other subjects and are not yet providing the information that teachers need in order to improve their planning.
34. Despite these improving arrangements, the school's use of assessment information to guide curricular planning and support pupils' academic progress is unsatisfactory overall. This is because:
- the school's systems for analysing assessment data are relatively new and have not produced reliable information about trends over time or the relative strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning or in the school's curriculum;
 - assessments in science and in all subjects other than English and mathematics are not rigorous enough to provide a clear picture of what pupils know, understand and can do;
 - the frequency and detail of the recording of assessments is inconsistent;

- planning for new units of work is often on the basis of broad target levels from the National Curriculum because teachers do not have the information that they need in order to plan tasks on the basis of pupils' prior attainments in the subject. This means that there are times when work is either too easy or too difficult for particular pupils and this reduces the progress that they make;
- teachers and support staff do not make enough use of the information they have on pupils with special educational needs. Targets from individual education plans do not form the basis of teaching in subjects across the curriculum as a whole and so these pupils do not always make the progress that they should.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Parents have expressed good support for the school. During the inspection, parents described the school as welcoming and confirmed that the school treats each child as an individual. Nevertheless, the parents' questionnaire indicated that some parents have some concerns. The inspection team confirmed that there is a limited range of after-school activities, but what the school offers is satisfactory and not untypical of schools of this size. Teachers use homework satisfactorily to reinforce pupils' learning. However, arrangements have not been formalised to ensure parents are aware what subjects will be given as homework each day and, as a result, amounts and frequency of homework do vary. The inspection finds no grounds for supporting the concerns of a minority of parents relating to pupils' behaviour, information about pupils' progress and links with parents, which are all good.
36. The school has worked hard to develop good links with parents, which have improved since the last inspection. The school sends letters home to keep parents informed about forthcoming events and pupils' achievements. The headteacher and staff are accessible to parents and always deal with their concerns swiftly and efficiently. There is a suitable home/school agreement and the majority of parents have signed and returned it. Parents' meetings and school productions such as 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat' presented last Christmas are well attended.
37. Parental involvement has a good effect on the life of the school. Parents past and present and grandparents are members of the Friends of Doncaster Road School. The group meets every Thursday morning to organise social and fund-raising events, which are well supported by parents. Money raised by these events provides additional resources such as cookers, computers and playground equipment or provides additional funding for educational visits. The group also provides additional support by making classroom resources when needed.
38. The quality of information for parents is satisfactory. Frequent newsletters are sent home and the school has hosted sessions for parents to help them to understand the recently introduced literacy and numeracy lessons. Unfortunately, attendance at these sessions was low. The school brochure is informative and meets legal requirements but the governors' report does not. The report lacks information regarding the disabled, the governing body and special educational needs. Parents can obtain helpful leaflets to assist them in supporting, for example, the school's discipline policy but information about the content of the curriculum and about homework is limited. Parents have every opportunity to find out how their children are getting on in school. They can consult staff formally each term to discuss their children's progress and the annual pupils' progress reports are good. They include all the required information and identify areas in which the pupil could improve. However, reporting of non-core subjects such as history and geography is brief.

39. The contribution that parents make to their children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. Some parents help their children with homework tasks and most listen to their children read. All parents are aware that homework will be given but procedures have not been formalised. The home/school reading record books are a valuable channel of communication between home and school and some parents use them well. The parents of pupils with special educational needs take part in meetings to review their children's progress and contribute to the setting of future targets. In this way they make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. The headteacher provides effective leadership. He has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which gives him a clear view of how it can be improved. The headteacher has very clear educational aims, values and principles. These lie at the heart of all of the school's work and give rise to a purposeful atmosphere and an effective climate for learning, within which pupils feel secure and gain significantly in confidence. The atmosphere within the school fully reflects its aims, which are a commitment to working together for quality and good standards in all aspects of pupils' education. The headteacher takes a strong lead in these areas and sets high standards in the work he undertakes in support of staff, pupils and their families. As a result, levels of teamwork and mutual support are high and the school shows the potential for further improvement.
41. The school still does not have a well-developed senior management team and most of the tasks of school management fall on the headteacher. Members of staff have accepted responsibility for co-ordinating the development of curriculum subjects, managing the provision for pupils with special educational needs and overseeing aspects such as staff development. However, the school has not provided them with the time or opportunity to fulfil these responsibilities thoroughly. Consequently, the processes of monitoring and evaluating the school's work are not as rigorous as they should be. There is some monitoring of standards and quality by classroom observations but these observations do not always have a clearly identified purpose or extend to all subjects. Whilst they have resulted in good levels of teamwork and commitment on the part of the staff and have ensured that most issues raised at the previous inspection have been satisfactorily addressed, they have yet to provide the quality of management information needed for really effective whole-school development planning.
42. Through the work of its committees and the regular involvement of individuals, members of the governing body are overseeing most aspects of the work of the school effectively. Governors are becoming involved in aspects of policy, planning and the monitoring of standards and quality. Committees are firmly established and are becoming increasingly effective in holding the school to account and in setting targets that shape the direction of improvement initiatives. Some of the school's governors are recently appointed. They bring a wide range of community, business and professional expertise to the governing body and use their experience effectively to support the school. The chair of governors gathers information at first hand about how the school functions. He observes lessons and holds discussions with the headteacher and staff. However, whilst this 'hands on' approach is involving more and more governors, it does not yet extend to all of the governing body and this leads to some variations in the quality of governors' monitoring and in their awareness of relative strengths and weaknesses. For example they are particularly rigorous in their monitoring and taking action on matters of health and safety and in their drive to improve the school's resources and facilities for ICT but have not yet identified special educational needs as an area of concern.

43. The management and organisation of provision for pupils with special educational needs are unsatisfactory because the school does not give the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) the time to do the job properly. The school's policy is clearly written and has regard for the requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice. However, the actual quality of provision for these pupils is unacceptably variable because current monitoring arrangements are inadequate. Weaknesses in current arrangements are:
- the targets on pupils' individual education plans are not sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, relevant or set within a clear time scale. Consequently, they do not provide adequate guidance for teachers' planning or the criteria against which to evaluate progress;
 - such targets as there are do not reflect sufficiently in planning for these pupils across the curriculum as a whole and so pupils are not getting the consistent and concerted programme of teaching that they need in order to overcome their difficulties;
 - teachers are not assessing lower attaining pupils often enough or making enough use of assessment information to 'fine tune' individual education plans and to ensure a close match between the tasks they set and the difficulties that pupils need to overcome;
 - current arrangements are unacceptably inconsistent in their approach to inclusion and equality of opportunity. When pupils are withdrawn from class for additional small group or one-to-one teaching, some miss the same lesson each week or are absent for the introduction to an important session such as numeracy. There are presently no safeguards to ensure that the same content is covered in both groups or that pupils are not disadvantaged in respect of any on-going lesson or topic;
 - the monitoring of the school's arrangements for special educational needs by the SENCO, headteacher and governing body is not rigorous enough to identify weaknesses in the system
44. The number of teaching and support staff is appropriate to the needs of the school. There is a good mix of age, experience and expertise amongst the teaching staff. The governing body has introduced suitable arrangements for monitoring and managing the performance of staff. Appropriate objectives have been set for each member of staff and these are to be reviewed annually. All newly-appointed teachers receive good support from other members of staff. This enables them to settle into the school and become increasingly effective. The procedures for the induction of newly qualified teachers are good. Newly-qualified teachers receive very good support from an experienced mentor as well as having access to a full programme of training and visits that help them to develop and improve the quality of their teaching.
45. The classroom assistants work closely with the teachers and support pupils effectively in their learning. In this small school, classroom assistants know the pupils really well and relationships between pupils and all of the adults in the classroom are very good. This promotes a very good climate for learning and ensures a good level of personal support for pupils of all levels of attainment. Where classroom assistants work with lower attaining pupils or with those with Statements of Special Educational Need, the same sensitive, good quality personal support is evident. However, because teaching does not always focus on targets identified in Statements or in individual education plans, some of the benefit of this additional support can be lost.
46. The quality of the school's accommodation has improved since the last inspection. In recent years, pupils have benefited from improved cloakroom and toilet facilities and from improvements to the school library and the building of a computer suite. The storage of large apparatus for physical education and of other resources, such as

staging and musical instruments still impinges on the use of the school hall. However, plans for additional storage facilities are prepared and work is due to begin in the near future. Teachers work hard to create a bright and interesting learning environment and the whole site is well maintained and cleaned to a very good standard by the site manager and the school's premises staff. The school is currently waiting for ramps and toilet facilities to be installed, suitable for wheelchair access. The current lack of proper facilities prevents the school from admitting pupils with certain physical disabilities and makes access to some parts of the school very difficult for parents or carers who use wheelchairs.

47. The school has satisfactory resources for most areas of the curriculum and teachers make efficient use of the available books and equipment. Some of the equipment, such as that for gymnastics, needs upgrading but this has been identified by the co-ordinator and there are plans to do so as finances allow. There is a suitable range of reading and reference books, that make a sound contribution to pupils' developing literacy skills and to work across the curriculum. However, the current stocks of books and other resources do not contain enough images of the richness and diversity of other cultures. The school has recently received additional computers and software. Current resources for ICT allow teachers to cover all aspects of the required curriculum in sufficient depth and timetable arrangements ensure that pupils in all year groups have satisfactory access to computers as part of their learning across the curriculum. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection

48. The headteacher and administrative assistant make very good use of computer technology to improve the efficiency of the school. The administrator maintains pupils' records, attendance and assessment data and the school's budget on the office computer. She has a high level of administrative and ICT skills and uses them very effectively to analyse data, identify trends, track the school's budget and prepare reports for the headteacher, governing body and local authority. This enables the headteacher and governors to make decisions on the basis of accurate and up-to-date information and so adds significantly to the overall efficiency of school management and administration. The governors' finance committee is satisfactory in its monitoring of the school's budget. As a result, specific grants are spent for their designated purpose and the school operates within its budget. Budget setting takes full account of the long-term plans of the school and different priorities are carefully matched against the funds available. As a result, the school is successful in meeting its targets in the school improvement plan. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. In order to extend the school's current achievements and to further raise standards of attainment, the governors, headteacher and staff should jointly:

- (1) improve teachers' planning in the medium and shorter term by:
 - i) identifying the criteria that are to be used in assessing pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects;
 - ii) ensuring that all staff receive the necessary training to apply these criteria consistently;
 - iii) devising a manageable way of recording assessment information so that it is readily available to teachers when topics or skills are revisited;
 - iv) ensuring that teachers use assessment information more systematically to identify what pupils of different levels of attainment, but particularly the lower attaining, need to learn next.
(paragraphs: 15, 33-34, 52, 56, 59, 69, 75, 78, 82, 86, 91, 94, 97 and 101)

- (2) improve the progress of pupils with special educational needs by:
 - i) enhancing the quality of individual education plans so that the targets that they contain are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and are set within a clear time scale;
 - ii) ensuring that all adults who work with them use these pupils' individual targets in their planning so that, wherever possible, the targets form the basis of tasks and activities in all subjects of the curriculum;
 - iii) ensuring that pupils who are withdrawn from lessons in order to receive additional support are not missing learning opportunities that are offered to others in the class.
 - iv) ensuring that the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs has enough time to monitor the school's arrangements regularly and to secure greater consistency and in all aspects of assessment, planning and support for these pupils;
(paragraphs: 4, 16, 22, 43, 45, 52, 57, 62 and 73)

- (3) improve the management of the curriculum and the monitoring of standards and quality by:
 - i) agreeing and delegating management roles and responsibilities for the deputy headteacher, senior staff and curriculum co-ordinators;
 - ii) ensuring that all staff with management responsibilities undertake training that enables them to observe teaching and learning and evaluate to evaluate other aspects of the school's work effectively;
 - iii) establishing an on-going programme of classroom observations as part of the curriculum development process in all subjects;
 - iv) using the outcomes of monitoring to inform staff development, curriculum and whole school improvement initiatives.
(paragraphs: 41, 68, 75, 79 and 101-102)

Other issues that should be considered by the school:

- a) ensure that pupils have more regular opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills through their work in other subjects; (paragraphs: 11, 21, 52, 66, 89 and 104)
- b) improve the continuity of pupils' learning by forming closer links with neighbouring schools; (paragraph: 23)
- c) improve pupils' cultural development by making sure that teaching in all subjects gives greater emphasis to the richness and diversity of other cultures. (paragraphs: 27, 47 and 76)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

27

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
Number	0	3	9	14	1	0	0
Percentage	0	11	33	52	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents 4 percentage points.

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)	128
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	38
Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	33
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8
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 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	11	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	8	11
	Girls	7	6	8
	Total	14	14	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (69)	56 (59)	76 (66)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	9	11
	Girls	6	8	7
	Total	12	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	48 (62)	68 (59)	72 (76)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	127
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	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)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 / 01
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	£
Total income	311,731
Total expenditure	297,191
Expenditure per pupil	2,436
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,532
Balance carried forward to next year	22,072

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 52.3%

Number of questionnaires sent out	128
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	52	9	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	58	3	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	49	12	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	59	9	3	1
The teaching is good.	53	41	0	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	52	18	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	34	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	42	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	25	52	18	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	49	33	9	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	47	10	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	52	15	0	6

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

ENGLISH

50. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001, pupils' attainments in English were well below the national average but in line with standards in similar schools. However, standards in English are rising and are better now than at the time of the previous inspection. Over the last four years, the school's results in English have improved at a similar rate to results in schools nationally. The findings of the inspection indicate that pupils in Year 6 are achieving satisfactory standards in relation to their attainment on entry. Whilst standards are likely to be below average overall, the proportion of pupils who are on course to attain or exceed the nationally expected standard by the end of Year 6 is greater than it was in the 1998 tests when these pupils were seven years old.
51. Factors that contribute to pupils' achievements by the time they leave the school, include:
- the school has successfully adopted the National Literacy Strategy; English lessons are well structured and the teaching of literacy skills is balanced and thorough;
 - the school allocates additional time beyond the daily literacy hour for pupils to enjoy books and reinforce their reading skills;
 - teachers plan tasks that provide opportunities for extended writing. These are sometimes homework projects;
 - the school identifies and supports those pupils who need additional help with reading and writing;
 - in Year 6, pupils are organised into groups according to prior attainment for some lessons and teachers set work at levels that successfully challenge all pupils, including the more able;
 - pupils have good attitudes to learning in English. They are eager to contribute their ideas orally and apply themselves well to reading and writing tasks.
52. There are, however, weaknesses in the school's arrangements that result in varying rates of progress for some pupils and are currently barriers to the raising of standards. These are:
- procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are not frequent or systematic enough. Consequently, teachers do not have enough information about what pupils know, understand and can do to plan tasks for pupils of differing levels of attainment that are closely matched to their prior attainment and that promote rapid and consistent progress;
 - planning for pupils with special educational needs does not take enough account of the small steps that they need to take in order to overcome their difficulties. As a result, these pupils do not always make as much progress that they should;
 - arrangements for withdrawing pupils, either for additional literacy support or for one-to-one support that is part of special educational needs provision, do not always work in the pupils' best interests. They cause them to miss important teaching and learning opportunities that other pupils receive;
 - teachers do not plan enough work in other subjects, which effectively extends pupils' reading and writing skills.
53. Standards in speaking and listening are about average. By the time that they leave the school, most pupils are confident speakers and competent listeners. Within the context of the school community, they are effective communicators but many have not

learned to adapt their vocabulary and style of speech to the needs of other audiences. They use language that is rich in local idiom and dialect but do not easily adopt more standard forms of English. Year 3 pupils enjoyed discussing a familiar poem and considering what 'accidents' might befall the characters. They were animated as they composed additional verses, using their own carefully selected words. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 listened carefully to the sound and rhythms of words, to support their reading and spelling. Throughout the school pupils demonstrate their careful listening by the thoughtful answers they give to teachers' challenging questions, as for example in the Years 5/6 lesson on 'official' language. By Year 6, pupils use their speaking and listening skills effectively to support their learning in other subjects. Higher attaining pupils speak confidently in more formal settings, such as evaluating their own or others' work in physical education or explaining to the class how they have organised a scientific investigation.

54. Standards in reading are below average. Almost all pupils gain and reinforce the basic skills of reading satisfactorily. They learn to recognise and understand a suitable range of common words as part of their 'on sight' vocabulary. They also learn use an understanding of individual letter sounds and the sounds made by different combinations of letters to read unfamiliar words. However, many average and lower attaining pupils remain at this mechanical stage of reading development. They have not made the breakthrough to independence and the deeper levels of comprehension that allow reading to become a source of pleasure and a tool for learning. Most pupils can read simple texts competently. They follow the main events in stories and remember who the main characters are. They use simple techniques such as looking at the pictures to support their understanding. Most know something about how reference books are organised but struggle to locate information efficiently or to cope with the more complex style and vocabulary in which it is expressed. A significant minority of higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 are doing better than this. They are becoming committed, enthusiastic readers. One pupil talked at length and in great detail about his reading of the second volume in 'The Lord of the Rings' trilogy. His account showed an impressive depth of understanding and clear insights into characters.
55. Standards in writing are also below average overall. The fact that many pupils do not yet read widely and that much of their speech reflects the local idiom shows clearly in their writing. The structure of their writing is often very basic as is their choice of vocabulary, although often at this simple level spelling and punctuation are usually quite accurate. The literacy strategy has ensured that older pupils have experienced a wider range of styles and their completed work in Year 6 contains examples of imaginative narratives, poetry, persuasive writing, letters and factual accounts. Higher attaining pupils write at considerable length when presenting the case for and against fox hunting but most average and lower attaining pupils struggle to organise their 'arguments' coherently or to sustain the style of the piece. Most pupils know that words can be chosen for their particular effect and Years 5/6 pupils do well in writing and interpreting 'official language'. However, there is little sign of this more adventurous use of language in their writing across the curriculum. This is because there are few opportunities for pupils to write at length in subjects other than English. In many lessons pupils record their work by filling in worksheets with single words or short phrases and sentences and this restricts their progress in using and applying the literacy skills that they learn. By Year 6, almost all pupils display consistently fluent, legible handwriting. As part of their work in ICT, pupils are introduced to word processing programs, which they use effectively to produce well-presented work. However, there is no evidence of pupils using this technology as an aid to drafting, editing and improving their work.

56. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of very good teaching In Years 5 and 6. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They are clear about what they want the pupils to learn and often share this with them at the beginning of the lesson. As a result, pupils are interested and approach their work purposefully. Teachers use well-targeted questions to stimulate pupils' thinking, check their understanding and reinforce their learning. Teachers are beginning to use current systems of assessment and record keeping satisfactorily. They use the results of tests and observations as a basis for setting individual targets. However, these systems have not been in place for long enough to provide the information that teachers need in order to refine their planning. Their planning for different groups of pupils is usually on the basis of broad target levels from the National Curriculum and not on the basis of what individuals and groups know, understand and can do. Consequently, pupils are sometimes given work that is too easy or at other times too difficult and this reduces the progress that they make during the lesson. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly although the quality of marking varies considerably and so does not always contribute as effectively to teachers' on-going assessments as it should. Nevertheless, in Years 5 and 6 marking is often valuable, as it consistently indicates what pupils can do to improve as well encouraging their efforts.
57. Teachers work closely with classroom assistants and voluntary helpers, who make a worthwhile contribution to pupils' learning. They give particular support to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, enabling them to participate purposefully. However, despite good levels of personal support, pupils with special educational needs do not always make best progress during lessons. This is because their individual education plans are not detailed enough to identify exactly what these pupils should be doing on a daily basis and how they should be doing it in order to overcome the specific difficulties that they face. Teachers regularly set reading and spelling homework and occasionally more extended writing tasks that reinforce pupils' learning satisfactorily.
58. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. They are consistently supportive, receptive to pupils' contributions and successful in boosting pupils' self-esteem. In most lessons, teachers engage pupils' interest very actively with their lively approach and often with a touch of humour. This promotes pupils' positive attitudes to work and eager involvement in lessons. Pupils follow their teachers' instructions and almost all behave co-operatively and well. Pupils of all levels of attainment work hard, persevere in the face of difficulties and make a real effort to improve.
59. The co-ordinator provides effective subject leadership. She has successfully led the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, providing training and support for all staff that have contributed to an overall improvement in the quality of teaching. This has included regular lesson observations with feedback to teachers on the quality of their work. She has initiated the careful analysis of national test results so as to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. She has devised a system for termly assessment and is already trialling 'end of unit' assessments designed to provide better information for teachers' planning. The co-ordinator has reorganised the library and improved the book stock making it a better resource for pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

60. In the 2001 national mathematics tests at the end of Year 6, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 was below average. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 was similar to most schools nationally. The school's results in mathematics, in comparison with those in similar schools, were above average. Pupils' work seen during the inspection is consistent with these results, although the percentage of pupils working at Level 5 is much higher than last year. Considering the pupils' low attainment when they entered the school in Year 3 this represents good progress and good achievement for many pupils.
61. The reasons why many pupils are making better progress than they did in previous years follow.
- The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching. The Strategy provides a broad range of mathematical topics and helps to focus teaching more precisely.
 - The school is benefiting from much more stable staffing in terms of experience and sharing planning.
 - Time is now used much more effectively in mathematics lessons to ensure that pupils cover the work they are supposed to do and not a minute is wasted.
 - Because the attainment of pupils entering school in Year 3 is improving, they are making faster progress than many pupils in the past who started at a much lower stage. For example, pupils currently in Year 3 achieved standards in the national tests in Year 2, which were twice as good as those achieved by Year 6 pupils when they were seven years of age.
62. Although progress for many pupils has improved, those with special educational needs do not make sufficient progress. Their individual education plans do not identify areas in mathematics that they do not understand or specify targets that they can achieve. This means that work that is planned for them in lessons does not always match what they are capable of doing.
63. Work in younger pupils' books shows that they cover a broad range of work that is appropriate for their ages. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a good understanding of basic number concepts. They have made good progress since they joined the school. Progress of older pupils is rather slower because of their limited knowledge and understanding of mathematics and the time it takes for them to catch up with what is expected. At present the school does not have a sufficiently clear view of the precise standards that pupils are achieving throughout the school. It has recently introduced a system of individual target setting to try to ensure that pupils continue to make progress as they move through the school. It is important that the school continues this process in order for it to respond rapidly to the needs of the higher attaining pupils it has started to admit.
64. Pupils in Year 6 work accurately with fractions, decimals and percentages. They multiply numbers together using long multiplication and brackets. They know and can name many of the properties of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They calculate the area and perimeter of regular and compound shapes using formulae. They place co-ordinates correctly and identify lines of reflective symmetry. They know the difference between 'mean', 'mode' and 'median' and translate data into line graphs and bar charts.
65. Pupils in Year 6 have a sound grasp of multiplication tables and different strategies to carry out mental work quickly. They enjoy this aspect of their work and the first part of

lessons gives them good opportunities to develop speed and accuracy in their ability to 'work things out in their heads'. For example, many pupils in Year 6 were able to identify correctly pairs of numbers that would add together to make one hundred. However, there were a number of pupils who found this difficult and they had no opportunities to answer questions that were easier for them to work out. Although planning shows satisfactory emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of number, shape, space and measures and data handling, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge, for example in problem solving.

66. There are few links between mathematics and other subjects that help to develop pupils' mathematical understanding. In geography, older pupils carried out surveys of the area and used bar charts to represent the information they found. Information and communication technology makes little contribution to the development of pupils' skills, despite its considerable potential to do so. On one occasion pupils in Year 5 were observed using a spreadsheet to work out mean values. There are also few displays around the school that indicate work that has been covered, especially related to opportunities for problem solving or to create interest in mathematics amongst pupils. Most mathematics displays are made by teachers or commercially produced. There are, however, informative displays of different forms of mathematical language around the school.
67. Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics. When teaching is interesting and stimulating they are attentive and co-operate well together. There are usually good opportunities for pupils to answer questions and to suggest answers. When teaching is less rigorous pupils respond less positively. For example, the presentation of the work in their books in Years 3 and 4 is less consistent and the amount that pupils produce is more variable.
68. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons well. In the best lessons their enthusiasm for mathematics is quickly transmitted to their pupils, so making them want to work harder and do even better. In good lessons the learning focus for the lesson is made clear to pupils at the start. This focuses the lesson well and enables teachers to make good on-going assessments of how well pupils are learning. Teachers generally have appropriate expectations of what the pupils should be achieving and in some lessons where this is a particularly strong feature, challenging work is provided for higher attaining pupils. In the best lessons there is a lively pace, which helps to sustain pupils' interest and enthusiasm. There has been little formal monitoring of mathematics teaching recently in order to ensure consistency from class to class.
69. Teachers' marking is inconsistent from class to class. Where marking is weak it does not give pupils a clear understanding of what they have to do to improve. Homework is used satisfactorily to support what pupils learn in school. The school has a good range of resources for mathematics.

SCIENCE

70. In the most recent tests for 11 year olds in 2001, standards in science were below the national average but above standards in similar schools. Inspection evidence suggests that standards are continuing to rise. In the current Year 6, standards are about average. Most pupils are on course to attain the nationally expected standard by the time that they leave the school, with about a third of all pupils set to exceed national expectations. This is an improvement on the standards reported at the time

of the previous inspection and on the school's results in intervening the years. Standards are rising because:

- improved resources and guidance to support teachers' planning are resulting in a more balanced coverage of the science curriculum as a whole;
- there is more emphasis on teaching the skills of scientific investigation;
- there is good and very good teaching in Years 5 and 6;
- topics are appealing to pupils yet challenging enough to bring the best out of more able pupils;
- pupils respond positively during science lessons and this adds to the quality of their learning.

71. By the time that they leave the school, pupils have a good understanding of the principles of scientific investigation. They plan simple experiments that are reliable and fair. For example, when pupils in Years 5/6 investigate how different substances dissolve, they are careful to control the variables that could invalidate their tests and when in doubt repeat their tests in order to confirm the results. They know about life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. Pupils know about different materials. For example pupils in Years 3 and 4 describe some of the materials used in cars and suggest how their properties make them suitable. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 classify materials as solids, liquids and gasses and understand that changes in state can occur when energy is imparted. They know that some changes are reversible and so understand processes such as freezing and melting, evaporation and condensation. They also know that some materials will dissolve and others will not or that some are attracted to magnets. They use this knowledge effectively in work on separating mixtures of materials. Most pupils describe accurately how forces such as friction and gravity affect motion, with more able pupils understanding the concept of 'balancing forces' when talking about why vehicles move. They know about the solar system, explain the apparent motion of the sun and moon and explain how light travels and how shadows are formed.
72. There is insufficient evidence against which to evaluate the overall quality of teaching and learning or of pupils' attitudes to science. This is because it was only possible to observe three science lessons and these all took place in Years 5 and 6. In these lessons, teaching varied from very good to unsatisfactory. The features of the more successful lessons that promoted effective learning were:
- teachers' secure grasp of the subject matter resulting in confident and authoritative teaching;
 - tasks that make pupils think and involve them in practical activities;
 - a very clear focus on the skills of scientific investigation with pupils required to apply their knowledge and understanding in order to make predictions, plan and carry out fair and reliable tests, evaluate results and draw conclusions;
 - pupils being given the opportunity to make choices, to show initiative and to take responsibility for their work;
 - teachers' effective management of complex activities based on high expectations of pupils' behaviour, response and capacity to cope with challenging work;
 - pupils with special educational needs receive effective personal support from staff and fellow pupils that enables them to be fully involved in all practical activities.
73. An area of relative weakness also relates to pupils with special educational needs. This is because their individual learning targets do not always feature prominently in the tasks they undertake and whilst they usually make sound progress in scientific terms, their overall progress is inhibited. When teaching was unsatisfactory, the teacher over-directed the activity. Whilst pupils made some small gains in

understanding the relationship between forces and motion, they were not given adequate opportunities to reinforce or extend their investigative skills.

74. In the lessons observed, pupils responded well and at times very well. They were enthusiastic about the prospect of the various activities yet channelled their enthusiasm into productive work. They were thoughtful about their work, making useful suggestions about how the tasks could be accomplished and using their 'mistakes' as a way of improving their investigative technique. They worked co-operatively in pairs and persevered in the face of difficulty.
75. The management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator is introducing national guidelines alongside the school's new scheme of work. He has also devised whole-school procedures for teachers to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding at the end of each term. However, these have not been in place for long enough to influence teachers' planning. Most teachers carry out informal assessments that help highlight areas of weakness and allow them to plan the content of future teaching accordingly but the assessment and recording of pupils' skills in science is inconsistent and remains an area of weakness in the current curricular arrangements. The co-ordinator has had some opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning but over the last year these have been sporadic. As a result there is no clear agenda for improvement beyond the introduction of the new scheme of work and assessment arrangements.

ART AND DESIGN

76. Pupils of all levels of attainment throughout the school attain satisfactory standards in their work in art and design. Pupils' work covers a satisfactory range of two- and three-dimensional projects. These incorporate the use of various media including pastels, chalk, pencil, paper, fabric and card and techniques such as drawing, colour mixing, collage, print making and computer art. Pupils' knowledge and understanding build progressively. Drawings of Victorian household objects by pupils in Years 3 and 4 are well proportioned and show good attention to detail. Drawing skills develop further as pupils move through the school so that by Years 5 and 6, pupils' drawings of natural objects show a greater awareness of how to use line and shading effectively that results in some high quality pieces of work. The youngest pupils work effectively with paints, mixing them to achieve particular colours. Older pupils mix secondary and tertiary colours and produce more subtle tones and tints. Pupils explore pattern. In Years 3 and 4 they make patterns based on the repeating geometrical patterns found in the Islamic culture. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 work in the style of William Morris or use the computer to repeat intricate patterns or to flip or rotate elements of the pattern. Pupils know the work of famous artists. Throughout the school there are striking examples of pupils' work in the style of artists such as Monet and Van Gogh. Pupils in Year 6 produce large-scale reproductions of the works of these artists, which greatly enhance the school hall and other parts of the building. This aspect of pupils' experience in art makes a strong contribution to pupils' cultural development, although examples from non-Western traditions in this and in other projects are under-represented.
77. In the one lesson that was seen, teaching was good. The teacher had secure subject knowledge and used it effectively to present teaching points clearly. She used on-going assessments effectively to identify and introduce the skills that pupils needed to learn in order to succeed with the task. Most pupils showed interest and were keen to contribute ideas and respond to questions. However, some pupils tended to lose concentration and began to behave inappropriately. The teacher managed these incidents well, using the school's agreed policies consistently to ensure that these

pupils returned to the task and that disruptions were kept to a minimum. This allowed all pupils, including those with learning or behavioural difficulties, to be fully involved and able to benefit from the lesson.

78. The overall quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory. Planning for art is firmly based on the most recent national guidelines. This ensures that pupils receive a balanced programme of activities and that the teachers introduce the various skills and techniques in a logical order. However, there is no formal link between planning and assessment. Teachers are introducing procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in art. However, these are not yet in place in all classes, with the result that teachers often do not have the information that they need to plan topics on the basis of a clear understanding of what pupils have achieved and what they need to learn next.
79. The co-ordinator for art provides sound leadership. He provides satisfactory support for teachers' planning on an informal basis and has maintained the school's resources so that they are sufficient to allow teachers to teach to the recently introduced guidelines. There are, however, no opportunities for the co-ordinator to observe teaching and to evaluate aspects of pupils' learning. This reduces his effectiveness in building on the strengths and in addressing areas of weakness that exist in the current arrangements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80. There were no design and technology lessons during the inspection. Therefore, additional evidence is drawn from the scrutiny of pupils' work and the subject portfolio, artefacts displayed around the school, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with staff. This evidence indicates that standards in design and technology are in line with what is expected nationally by the age of 11 years. This is a much improved picture to that reported in the previous inspection. The progress made since that time, particularly in the guidance now available to support teachers' planning, has been good. The subject is now more firmly established in the curriculum and all aspects receive satisfactory attention.
81. The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of experiences for pupils that includes working with paper, card, recyclable materials and wood. This ensures that pupils' making skills improve steadily as they move through the school. In Years 3 and 4 pupils have recently designed and made moving monsters and pop-up books. This has involved them in gaining a basic understanding of pneumatics and made demands on their construction skills. Many younger pupils are still very dependent on staff for guidance and support. Their knowledge of 'how things work' remains limited. In Year 4, the quality of their work is better. They have successfully made pop-up storybooks. Some of these are well constructed, with a greater focus on the design process. The care taken in some of the construction work indicates that pupils have good attitudes to the subject. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have designed and constructed musical instruments, demonstrating improved craft skills and achieving a presentable finish to their work. They have successfully constructed moving toys, using off-centre cams. These are accompanied by increasingly detailed design and evaluation sheets. Their design and evaluative skills are developing well. However, much input on basic making techniques is still necessary, suggesting that these skills have not, in the past, been firmly rooted at an early stage. Pupils now moving through the school are acquiring skills, such as cutting, shaping and joining different materials more systematically as the curriculum becomes more securely established. This should enable standards to improve further by the age of 11 years.

82. The co-ordinator has been successful in taking the subject forward. She has a clear view of what has been achieved so far and of the weaker aspects, which still exist. She provides advice to colleagues and has developed detailed guidance based on national documentation, which provides a clear framework for the teaching of both knowledge and skills. Assessment remains a weaker feature. There are too few assessment procedures to enable staff to monitor the development of pupils' skills in the subject. This is an area for development.

GEOGRAPHY

83. Standards are as expected in geography for pupils at the age of 11 years. This is the same judgement that was made in the previous inspection. Three lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are also made on a scrutiny of pupils' work and displays and discussions with teachers. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress.
84. This school, like many others, does not teach geography every term, preferring to devote blocks of time to it each year. Work that teachers plan to cover in geography this year includes a study of environmental change in Years 3 and 4 and of contrasting settlements (village and large urban communities) in Years 5 and 6. Because of the limited time available for the subject, much of the work is done orally and there are restricted opportunities for writing. In fact, there are missed opportunities to promote literacy through geography and the school acknowledges this as an area for improvement.
85. There are inconsistencies in the depth of subject coverage between classes. For example, in the mixed Years 5/6 class, the interpretation of material was altogether more imaginative than in any other class. There, pupils made good use of data such as analyses of surveys and questionnaires to elicit people's views on local facilities and whether or not they meet people's needs. In Year 5, pupils successfully linked features from aerial photographs to an Ordnance Survey map. They coped well with this task and had a good knowledge of the more common map symbols and could interpret a key. Some teachers occasionally use walks and fieldwork well to support and enhance pupils' learning; for example, a village study day for older pupils. Overall, pupils' geographical skills are adequately developed in the work they cover and they make steady progress. However, whilst the school covers all of the required elements of the curriculum, the way that geography is currently planned means that there are long intervals between different elements of their work. This results in large gaps in their knowledge and a need to revise thoroughly before starting new work.
86. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work. In Year 5 they thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to use aerial photographs and to try to use their knowledge practically to identify specific features on a map. Teaching in the three lessons was satisfactory overall. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and have appropriate expectations of the amount and quality of work that pupils should do. However, there are few occasions when teachers thoroughly assess what pupils know. The school plans to introduce detailed record sheets to provide a clear view of pupils' skills.

HISTORY

87. No lessons were timetabled during the inspection. A judgement on standards is based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and displays and discussions with staff. Standards in history are as expected for 11-year-olds. This is a similar judgement to that made in the previous inspection.

88. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 know about the Victorian era, with older and younger pupils studying different aspects of that era. Pupils in Year 3 learn to make time lines, marking in key dates during the reign of Queen Victoria. They study domestic artefacts of the period, extending their understanding of 'life below stairs'. In Year 4 pupils know about Doctor Barnardo and his work with Victorian children. There is limited written work from either year group linked to their Victorian topic. Much of the information they receive is in the form of information sheets and there is little requirement or opportunity for research or extended writing by pupils.
89. In Years 5 and 6 pupils undertake a study of local history. Pupils in Year 5 know about the history of the school and its community. They know how to use original sources to learn about the foundation of the school. For example, they used early floor plans to consider how it had changed in the intervening period. Pupils in Year 6 used and annotated more complex reference texts in their work on local history. Teachers have made good use of local resources and visits to extend pupils' understanding. Occasionally pupils make good use of the Internet for research purposes. However, in both years, just as in Years 3 and 4, there are very few opportunities for literacy to play any part in the subject. The few examples of pupils' written work show a lack of care in presentation.
90. Pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of enquiry and research skills when they join the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make sound progress in their knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past and they learn the skills of historical enquiry. Planning for the subject is satisfactory and covers all the required elements of the National Curriculum. Teachers make good use of artefacts and a wide range of resources to help develop historical enquiry and the school makes good use of loan services to support this.
91. No judgement can be made on pupils' attitudes or teaching. However, there is very little meaningful assessment of pupils' understanding in history and this makes it difficult for the school to know about the standards that pupils actually achieve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

92. Standards in ICT are rising. Pupils are gaining knowledge, understanding and skills at a better rate and most now attain satisfactory standards for their age. This is a considerable improvement on the low standards reported at the time of the last inspection. Standards are rising because the quality of teaching and learning are better than they were. Factors contributing to these improvements are:
- the school's facilities and resources have increased greatly. A new, well-equipped computer suite is now in use and classrooms are also furnished with computers that are suitable for teachers to use in their teaching;
 - access to the new equipment and the good support of the co-ordinator and other colleagues has led to a rapid increase in teachers' confidence and competence in ICT work. This is improving the teaching of the basic ICT skills;
 - the school covers all aspects of the ICT curriculum more thoroughly;
 - pupils and teachers are using computer skills to improve learning in other subjects. For example, they can get onto the Internet from all the rooms that house computers and there is good evidence in relation to the use of ICT in literacy, history, geography and aspects of mathematics. Teachers are now planning regularly to achieve this;
 - teaching is generally of good quality. The teachers' commitment to ICT and very good control of their classes, lead pupils to work with real enthusiasm and behave

- very well. Some choose to spend play-times learning to use some of the programs available;
- pupils' attitudes are good. Their ability to listen carefully to instructions and to concentrate for good periods considerably helps their learning. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 3 lesson that was observed.
93. Pupils in Year 3 approach computers with confidence. They use a variety of keys such as 'enter' and 'delete' to produce and amend text on the screen. They confidently extract information about food values from labels on packaging and enter this on a database. They then use the database to answer a series of questions. This requires the use of a drop-down menu to select options and they manage this efficiently and with confidence. When they have finally displayed the necessary information as a pie chart or bar chart, they know how to annotate and print off their chosen graph. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrate sound word processing skills when they arrange text and pictures to resemble a newspaper. In Year 5, they enter test scores on to a spreadsheet and then use a facility on the program to calculate totals and averages. Year 5 pupils have also used a paint program to produce artwork after the style of Matisse. In Year 6, pupils use the Internet efficiently to find information, for example for their literacy work on H. G. Wells. They log on, find the appropriate website and confidently find the information they seek.
94. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and has a clear view of standards and of what has to be done to move the subject forward. She, with the support of the headteacher, has worked hard to ensure that the subject is well resourced. She provides good leadership and supports her colleagues well. However, procedures for assessing pupils' skills and progress are very generalised and do not provide sharp and easily accessible information as to pupils' competence. This is an area for development.

MUSIC

95. At the last inspection, there was no judgement on standards in music as no lessons were observed. However, strengths were identified in the opportunities for and standards achieved in instrumental music and the school orchestra. The situation at the current inspection is very similar. No class music lessons were taught during the days of the inspection so it is not possible to make a judgement on the standards achieved by the age of 11 or on the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, the quality of singing observed during whole-school assemblies remains satisfactory.
96. Discussions with the subject co-ordinator and an examination of schemes of work and of teachers' planning indicate that the school makes satisfactory arrangements for the teaching of music. A specialist musician teaches all of the class music lessons. The co-ordinator has introduced a comprehensive scheme of work, based on the recently published national guidance. This ensures that pupils have good opportunities in all elements of the subject - performance, composition and listening - and each of these is a focus for activities in one of the three terms. There are regular opportunities for the progressive development of composition skills as pupils get older. There are good opportunities to listen to music, both in assembly and during class lessons. Teachers' current planning makes limited provision for the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in music.
97. The co-ordinator ensures that music has a high profile throughout the school. Extra-curricular music has long been a strength of the school and pupils clearly have very positive attitudes towards instrumental music. A group of recorder players and flautists played confidently in assembly. About a third of all pupils are regularly

involved in musical activities that include choir, orchestra, individual instrumental lessons and school productions. Currently, around 25 pupils take recorder lessons. Another 20 are involved in specialist music lessons in brass, woodwind and stringed instruments and the more confident players are beginning to prepare for public examinations. The school choir, building on the strengths in singing evident around the school, sings at the major festivals during the year. Pupils and teachers have access to a good range and quality of resources for music. There are, however, very limited assessment procedures, which cannot be effectively implemented because of the large group sizes in which the subject is taught (two classes together) and the relative infrequency of lessons. This is an area for development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

98. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach the expected standards in those aspects of the physical education curriculum that were seen during the inspection. Inspection evidence and teachers' planning for physical education indicate that all elements of the National Curriculum receive appropriate attention. Pupils of all levels of attainment make satisfactory progress in the areas covered. Pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties receive sound support that enables them to take a full part in most physical education lessons, experience success and make satisfactory progress.
99. Pupils in Year 3 move expressively in response to music. They control and co-ordinate their movements well, altering the rhythm, speed and level of their movements in response to music and sound effects. Pupils in Year 4 select balancing movements and combine them into simple gymnastic sequences. By Years 6, pupils know the importance of warming up before exercise and perform routines carefully to exercise different parts of their bodies. They combine movements into more complex sequences, which they practise, refine and perform with a good degree of accuracy, precision and control. They evaluate their own work and the work of others in order to improve the quality of their finished work. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to swim and most reach the expected standard by the time that they leave the school. Pupils take part in outdoor and adventurous activities as part of a residential visit and there are regular sessions outside of lessons that give pupils the chance to participate in coaching and competitive sports.
100. The quality of teaching and of pupils' learning is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is sound. It identifies appropriate objectives. When these are shared with pupils, for example in an effective dance lesson in Year 3, they give a clear focus to teaching and learning that improves pupils' progress. However, because procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainments in physical education have only just been introduced, most planning is based on broad target levels from the National Curriculum rather than on what pupils know, understand and can do. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They give clear explanations and monitor pupils' response carefully. This ensures that all pupils are able to work confidently and to make appropriate progress. Most teachers have successfully established positive patterns of behaviour and response and they use an appropriate balance of praise and challenge. This allows the lesson to flow, keeps pupils active and involved and effectively maintains the pace of their learning.
101. The co-ordinator for physical education is doing a good job in leading and managing the development of the subject. In the four years since her appointment she has:
- rewritten the school's policy and scheme of work to take account of the most recent national guidance as well as the school's particular organisational requirements. This now provides comprehensive guidance for teachers' planning;
 - organised training for all of the staff in some aspects of physical education;

- improved the school's resources;
- begun to introduce an assessment system.

There are, however, no arrangements to allow the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and to evaluate aspects of pupils' learning. This reduces her capacity to build on the strengths and to rectify areas of weakness that exist in the current arrangements. Nevertheless, the co-ordinator has a clear agenda for improvement. This includes:

- introducing lesson observations as a means of monitoring standards and quality;
- developing the assessment system so that it provides information to improve teachers' planning;
- upgrading items of large gymnastic apparatus and mats.

Inspection evidence suggests that these are suitable priorities that have the potential to improve the school's already largely satisfactory arrangements.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

102. Standards in religious education are satisfactory. Pupils of all levels of attainment make sound progress and achieve many of the objectives that are set out in locally agreed guidance. This is a considerable improvement on the poor standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. Standards have improved because:
- the co-ordinator for religious education has written a new policy and scheme of work that is closely linked to local and national guidelines. This brings greater consistency to teaching and learning because it provides better support for teachers' planning;
 - the co-ordinator has attended relevant training to enable her to introduce the new scheme successfully;
 - the school's resources are better than they were, particularly for the multi-faith elements of the curriculum;
 - the co-ordinator has carried out occasional lesson observations and, as a result, has been able to provide feedback and support for colleagues;
 - a visiting minister presents high-quality assemblies and acts of worship every week. These events add considerably to the quality of pupils' learning and promote positive attitudes to this area of the curriculum.
103. By the end of Year 6, pupils know some of the teachings of Christianity and of other world faiths. They know about holy books such as the Bible, the Qur'an and the Guru Granth Sahib and relate some of the stories and events contained in them. They know that accounts, such as those telling of Jesus' birth or crucifixion, are part of the history of Christianity, whilst stories, such as the Sikh parable of the water-carrier, teach the faithful how to live their lives. They understand religious symbols such as the cross, the fish and the Waheguru and know what these symbols mean to followers of the faith. Pupils know about places of worship and have some understanding of rites and observances that take place in them. For example, they know how Muslims use a prayer mat in their worship and about the communal meal that takes place in the Sikh temple. They know about celebrations such as harvest and Ramadan and about some of the duties of the faithful.
104. In the one lesson that was seen during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory. The teacher had a secure understanding of the duties of Muslims and presented information clearly, making suitable comparisons with other faiths. She used simple role-play as well as question and answer work to keep pupils interested and involved. Additional events such as visits to the local church, the weekly 'special' assembly and a visit from a person who had recently converted to Islam add to the quality of pupils learning and experience and promote a positive response from the pupils. Some of the tasks that pupils undertake are undemanding and their written work is of a lower

standard than that produced in English lessons. As a result, work in this subject does not adequately extend pupils' literacy skills or help pupils with special educational needs overcome their difficulties.