

INSPECTION REPORT

LANGAR CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Langar

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122763

Headteacher: Mr Brian Hillary

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jill Palmer
18152

Dates of inspection: 19 – 21 June 2001

Inspection number: 196291

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Lane Langar Nottingham Nottinghamshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Waite
Date of previous inspection:	4 March 1997

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18152	Jill Palmer	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it
			Science	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Art and design	How well are pupils taught
			Music	How well is the school led and managed
			Religious education	What should the school do to improve further
			Special educational needs	
			Foundation Stage	
15522	Bernard Morgan	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents
18838	Eileen McKen	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
			Information technology	
			Design and technology	
			Geography	
			History	
			Physical education	
			Equal opportunities	
			English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Langar Church of England School is a Voluntary Controlled Primary School, much smaller than other primary schools nationally. It is situated in the village of Langar, in South East Nottinghamshire. There are 54 pupils on roll, seven of whom are in the Reception class. There are no pupils from an ethnic minority background. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average. At the time of the inspection, ten pupils were identified at stages one to three on the special educational needs register; there are no pupils with statements of special educational need. The attainment of pupils on entry is broadly average. The very small number of pupils admitted each year means that their average attainment can swing either above or below national averages.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. In the work seen during the inspection, overall standards of attainment in English, including literacy, mathematics including numeracy and science are high for pupils currently aged seven and eleven. Standards in reading and writing are very high for pupils aged eleven. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are fully included in all the work of the school. The overall quality of teaching seen during the inspection was very good. The leadership and management of the headteacher and governing body are excellent. The school is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- The curriculum for all pupils is exciting and stimulating and makes very good use of the local and wider community.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Consequently pupils are achieving standards that are above those expected nationally in all subjects of the curriculum.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and the governing body are outstanding. There is a shared vision amongst all who work in the school and a strong drive to constantly improve the school.
- The school provides pupils with a very good ethos that promotes very good attitudes to learning, very good behaviour and remarkably good relationships between pupils. Each pupil is treated as an individual and made to feel special.
- Very effective links with parents.

What could be improved

- There are no significant weaknesses.

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 made very good progress in addressing the issues resulting from the last inspection in March 1997. Overall improvement in national tests and teacher assessment results is variable, because of the very small numbers of pupils taking part, but other evidence shows that standards overall, in all subjects of the curriculum, are high. Planning for the youngest children has been developed and is of very good quality, following the national programme of work for pupils of this age. This planning links very well with the National

Curriculum. The planning for teaching in the long and shorter term now places good emphasis upon the continuous and progressive development of skills through-out the school. Very good emphasis is now placed upon the more practical aspects of mathematics and science. There are schemes of work in place for all the subjects of the curriculum. The school also makes good use of nationally recommended programmes of work for literacy and numeracy. There are very good assessment procedures, supported by long and short-term targets for pupils. Information and communication technology is used well to support the curriculum. The pupils are encouraged to be independent in their learning and this is particularly evident in writing and mathematical and scientific investigations.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

As this village school is much smaller than other primary schools, the number of pupils in each year group is very low. This means that any particular year group's average performance cannot always be measured reliably against national averages. Overall results can swing either above or below national averages, if a single pupil does especially well or particularly badly. This needs to be borne in mind when interpreting the school's overall results. Combined evidence from the last four years indicates that on average the school's English results in national test and assessments for eleven-year-olds have been much higher than those expected nationally. The results in mathematics have been more variable, ranging from well above to below national average. The results in science have been generally above those expected nationally. The provisional results for 2001 for pupils aged eleven show that standards in English, mathematics and science will be well above those expected nationally. The comparison made with similar schools is based upon the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. As no pupils have been declared as eligible, these results are not a reliable comparison. There is evidence in the pupils' current work that shows that standards are rising throughout the school in all these three subjects. Standards in information and communication technology are high throughout the school. This equates to very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below those expected nationally at seven and eleven. In religious education, standards are above the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' progress in English, including literacy, mathematics including numeracy and science is very good throughout the school. Standards and progress overall, in all other subjects of the curriculum is at least good.

The very small numbers of pupils in each year group do not make it possible to draw meaningful conclusions about any differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are keen and eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour both in and out of the classrooms is very good. Pupils are friendly and courteous to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships of all kinds are very good. Pupils accept responsibility for their learning and contribute well to school life. The older pupils look after the younger ones.
Attendance	Attendance is good and incidence of unauthorised absence is improving.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development are a major strength and contribute significantly to the pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Thirty-six observations of teaching were made during the inspection. All class teachers were seen teaching. The teaching overall was of very good quality. Teaching was excellent in 17 percent (6) of the lessons. Three of these lessons were with the Early Years and Reception children, one lesson with the five to seven-year-olds and two lessons with the seven to eleven-year-olds. Very good teaching was seen in 58 percent (21) of lessons. In 19 percent of lessons (7) teaching was good and in six percent (2) the teaching was satisfactory. When the teaching is of very high quality, the lessons were very well planned for the different age groups, and there was a good degree of challenge for all pupils who were encouraged to work independently. The teachers know their pupils very well and very good assessment of their work results in clear and focussed targets being set for future learning. Only when there was a lack of focus upon the development of necessary skills or an imbalance of time between teacher talk and pupil activity, did the teaching become less than very good. Very good and excellent teaching was observed in English, including literacy sessions and mathematics including numeracy across the school. The teaching was very good in the one science lesson observed.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and includes opportunities matched to the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is enhanced by very well chosen visits to places of interest, the use of the local environment and community and excellent provision for extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good. Activities challenge the pupils and the quality of the support they receive enables them to reach the individual targets set for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for personal development overall, and for cultural development is good, reflecting the Christian ethos and values that are central to the school's work. Provision for the spiritual, social and moral development of the pupils is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school attaches great importance to the pupils' welfare. Support for the pastoral development and the monitoring of pupils' academic progress is very good.

All subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and personal, social and health education are included in the pupils' learning programmes. The range of activities offered outside teaching time is excellent. The curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in aspects of English and mathematics. The school works very well with the parents who make an excellent contribution to the work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership and educational direction for the work of the school. This has led to very good improvement in all areas of the school's work. The roles and responsibilities of the staff are very well defined. These enable them to support the headteacher and contribute very effectively to the leadership and management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent. The governing body is very strong in its diversity of knowledge and experience which benefits the school extremely well. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities appropriately.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has a very clear awareness of the school's potential for further improvement, based upon the monitoring and evaluation of its performance by all members of staff and members of the governing body. This has enabled them to identify appropriate priorities for action and to implement strategic plans to improve provision and raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well to support the curriculum and pupils' progress. Very good use is made of the considerable skills of staff, parents, governors and the community to the benefit of the pupils.

The headteacher has the support of the staff, governors and parents in driving the school forward. The very good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum, together with the very good provision of learning resources and the adequacy of the accommodation are factors contributing to the school's success. The school applies the principles of best value very well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children's enjoyment of school. • Behaviour is very good. • Teaching is good. • The improved communication with parents. • The good progress that their children are making. • The strong leadership and management of the headteacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They would like more information about their children's progress. • They do not think that the children get the right amount of work to do at home.

The inspectors fully support the positive views of the parents. The school provides three parent meetings per year. Parents who attended the inspection meeting were pleased with the quality of the information shared on these occasions. The school operates an open-door policy before and after school hours. Many parents were observed during the inspection speaking with the teachers and sharing the work of the day with the teacher and their child. The inspectors believe that all is being done to keep the parents as informed as possible about the children's progress.

The school has a clear homework policy that was produced as a result of consultation with the parents. The inspectors looked at the implementation of this policy during the inspection and it is clearly being followed. There were several occasions in lessons when reference was made to homework and pupils were observed returning homework and using their homework diaries to record set work. The inspectors recognise that all is being done by the school to ensure that homework is set and completed in accordance with the needs of individual pupils, and with the school's homework policy.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 As Langar is a very small primary school, the number of pupils in each year group is very low. This means that a particular year group's average performance cannot always be measured reliably against national averages. Overall results can swing either above or below national averages, if a single pupil does especially well or particularly badly. This needs to be borne in mind when interpreting the school's overall results.
- 2 The very small number of pupils in each year group means that it is not possible to draw meaningful conclusions about any differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
- 3 The pupils start school with standards that are broadly average. By the age of five they achieve standards that are slightly above average in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. Standards in mathematics, physical and creative development are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. They respond positively to the very good quality of teaching and the quality of the adult support in the Early Years and Reception and make good progress by the time they enter Year 1.
- 4 Evidence from the last four years indicates that the school's results in national tests and assessments for pupils' aged seven are higher than the national averages in reading, writing and science. The results in mathematics have been less stable and overall in line with national averages. For pupils aged eleven the results over time in English have been generally much higher than those expected nationally. The results in mathematics have been more variable, ranging from well above to below national average. The results in science have been generally above those expected nationally. The provisional 2001 results for pupils aged eleven reveal that standards in English, mathematics and science will be above those expected nationally. Comparisons made with similar schools are based upon the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. As no pupils have been declared as eligible, these comparisons are not reliable. There is evidence in the pupils' current work that shows standards are rising throughout the school in each of these three subjects.
- 5 At the time of the inspection there were four children in the Early Year's Group, attending school on four afternoons a week and seven Reception children under the age of six. During the inspection the observations in the classroom indicate that work for this group is very well planned to meet their needs. The children in the Foundation Group are taught with the Reception children on four afternoons of the week. The Reception children are taught with the Year 1 and 2 pupils every morning. The work provided for both groups is challenging and they generally attain standards higher than those expected for children under the age of six. For example, during an afternoon session, the youngest children spoke clearly and with good knowledge when talking about the space rockets they had made. They are beginning to form letters correctly and they can confidently count to ten with help. The Reception children interact very

well with Year 1 and 2 pupils and patiently wait to take their turn in conversations. They can write and sound their letters of the alphabet correctly. They know how to sequence numbers around the clock face and say the numbers back and forwards to twelve. The children's are effectively developing their understanding across a range of subjects and they are attaining standards that are at least in line with those expected for this age group nationally.

- 6 In the five to seven-year-old class, evidence from the lessons observed, supported by that from discussions with pupils and an examination of their work, indicates that in English including literacy, mathematics including numeracy and science, the majority of seven-year-olds attain higher standards than those that are typical for their age. In all the lessons observed in these subjects, attainment was judged to be higher than that expected for pupils in this age group.
- 7 Standards in all aspects of English, including speaking and listening are well above those expected for seven-year-olds. For example, in a literacy lesson, Year 1 and 2 pupils were able to explain very clearly the rules of the game "Pass the Bomb", sequencing their actions accurately. They can also recognise combinations of sounds and provide a long list of more complex words containing the same rhyming sounds. All pupils can spell simple and more complex words accurately. Year 2 pupils can write at length and have produced their own story and poetry books. They use their skills of writing in many different ways, for example, when they decided to auction their play house and sell it as a seaside house. This work is of a very high standard.
- 8 In all aspects of mathematics the seven-year-old pupils are attaining standards that are generally above those expected nationally. The pupils use their knowledge and understanding in mathematics well to solve problems and record information in other curriculum areas. For example, they have produced bar charts to record the number of different plants growing in the school grounds. In a numeracy lesson, pupils were able to work out the time when adding or subtracting 15 and 30 minutes. Pupils can work out number problems using the four rules of number to 1,000, classify two and three dimensional shapes and use Venn diagrams to record whether numbers are multiples of ten or not. The careful planning of lessons, together with the provision of work at different levels of difficulty, ensures that pupils at all levels of attainment are suitably challenged during lessons.
- 9 The small number of pupils in Years 3 to 6, (four, seven, seven and five respectively), make it difficult to compare meaningfully the pupils' levels of attainment with those expected nationally for pupils aged eleven years. However, the indications from the lessons observed, discussion with pupils and an examination of their work, suggest that in speaking and listening, reading and writing they have attained standards that are well above those expected for pupils of this age. Many interesting and exciting activities are provided for these pupils to develop and practice their skills in literacy. All pupils speak confidently about a range of topics. They are prepared to debate sensibly, listening to one another's point of view. Spelling and writing are of a very high standard. The presentation of their work is particularly good, and incorporates a wide range of different writing styles, including writing fact and fiction books, complete with index, chapters, illustrations and backed by research when appropriate.

- 10 In mathematics, the pupils' skills in numeracy are above those expected nationally. The younger pupils can multiply quickly and accurately using single digit numbers whilst older pupils can use a range of methods, including mental skills, jottings and written strategies, to multiply more complex numbers together. They can use quadrants when positioning shapes and have a very good understanding of reflective and rotational symmetry. All pupils can use their knowledge and skills in numeracy very well to solve challenging problems. Very good use is made of information and communication technology when recording results from investigations that they have carried out. Their research is well recorded on a variety of different graphs and charts. Often problems are set for homework and because of their complexity they take a while to solve. Parents commented positively at their meeting with the inspectors about the degree of challenge for the pupils and for them.
- 11 Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy skills are practised very well across a range of subjects. Progress in literacy and numeracy is very good.
- 12 Attainment in science is above that expected nationally for all pupils aged seven and eleven. Work in the pupils' books, work on display and curriculum planning shows that all relevant aspects of science are taught. The school places great emphasis upon finding out information and carrying out practical research. For example, the pupils in the lower school have visited Snibston Discovery Park to find out more about 'forces' and what causes different vehicles to move. The very high quality work produced as a result clearly demonstrates a very good understanding of different types of 'forces' and a clear understanding of how to present their results in a scientific way. Pupils in the upper school have recently taken part in a Field Study trip to North Wales. Their work, very closely linked with geography, displays an understanding of materials, their properties and environmental issues surrounding the building of a power station and the effect upon the wildlife in the area.
- 13 The findings of the inspectors about the work of pupils currently in the school are that the standards in English including literacy, mathematics including numeracy, and in science have improved greatly since the last inspection. Great emphasis is now placed upon the practical application of knowledge and skills in both mathematics and science, where before they were weaknesses. There is a good degree of challenge across all three subjects.
- 14 Progress in information and communication technology is good and attainment by the age of seven and eleven is above that expected nationally. Very good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school use the computers to support their work across the curriculum. Pupils in the upper school are learning new skills related to gaining access to the Internet, visiting websites and sending e-mails to one another. The work in pupils' folders and on display shows that the research carried out across the curriculum subjects, is well presented and makes good use of the computer programs available. The pupils often word process their books, using a wide range of fonts and methods of presentation, carefully chosen and in keeping with the content of their work.
- 15 In religious education, evidence from discussions with the pupils, the work in their books and from curriculum planning indicates that pupils aged seven and eleven are

attaining standards above those set out in the local authority's Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The school's planning records show that all aspects of religious education are taught with a great emphasis upon raising the pupils' awareness, tolerance and understanding of different faiths.

- 16 Evidence from lesson observations, discussions with pupils, the work in their books and on display and from curriculum planning records, indicates that attainment in all other subjects is above that expected nationally at seven and eleven. The standards attained by the pupils aged seven are above those expected nationally in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection in art and geography and good progress in design and technology, history, physical education and music. The standards attained by pupils aged eleven are well above those expected nationally in design and technology and geography. Standards in art and design, history, music and physical education are higher than those expected nationally. Very good progress has been made in design and technology and geography. Good progress has been made in art and design, history, music and physical education.
- 17 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are fully included in all the work of the school and are encouraged to share the things that they can do well with other members of the class. All pupils are aware of their own strengths and what they need to improve upon, and this is a strong, contributory factor to the raising of attainment and the good progress made by pupils of all abilities throughout the school.
- 18 There have been very good improvements in the way that the curriculum is planned and the quality of teaching since the last inspection. These have played a major role in improving the standards generally across the school in all aspects of the curriculum.
- 19 The school has set statutory targets for the pupils. In order to meet these targets the school sets focussed, individual targets for the pupils. The teachers use these well when planning new work for the pupils.
- 20 The school does not currently take part in moderation meetings with other schools in order to assure themselves that they are pitching their work at the right level and to gain a more general view of expectations across a range of schools.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 21 The very good standards of behaviour, pupils' very good attitudes towards the school and the very good relationships make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning.
- 22 Children under five are very well encouraged and supported when they begin school, they respond very well and settle quickly to the routines and enjoy the activities provided. They then move on easily through the school and continue to develop very positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour in and around the school is very good, pupils are polite, open and converse easily and sensibly with visitors. They play well together at break and lunchtimes. In the dining room they behave well and display mature attitudes, talking sensibly with friends.

- 23 Behaviour in lessons is also very good, with pupils showing interest in the activities provided. They work well together. This is well supported by teachers. In a personal social and health education lesson, for example, the younger pupils were learning and practising sharing, listening and organising their thoughts so as to be clear about what they were going to say. There were many examples of pupils taking responsibility for their own learning. In a Year 5 and 6 geography lesson, which followed a visit to Wales, pupils worked independently on tasks related to their own experiences. Similarly in a Year 3 and 4 geography lesson, pupils were involved in setting up their own tasks and agreed areas for exploration with the teacher. Throughout the school examples were seen of pupils enjoying learning, contributing confidently and clearly to the class work. Pupils concentrate well and sustain their interest in tasks as for example in a religious education lesson where older pupils thought carefully and reflectively on aspects of Buddhism before making their contribution to discussion.
- 24 The school has no record of exclusions in the last year. No evidence of bullying or harassment was seen during the inspection. The school does have procedures to deal with any such incidents should they occur. Parents express confidence in the school's ability to deal with any such matters.
- 25 Pupils' personal development is also well promoted by the school. Staff know pupils very well and use their knowledge effectively to support and encourage them. As a result they are displaying very mature and sensible attitudes to their work and one another. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils work hard for teachers, who they know are working hard for them. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and supporting their school. For example, they produce a newsletter with pupils taking specific responsibility for a task, they help around school when, for example, they help to get out and put away play equipment at break and lunchtime. Pupils also take an active part in setting classroom and playground rules. By the time they reach the end of their time in the school at the end of Year 6 they are confident articulate young people, who are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- 26 Levels of attendance are good and are above those found nationally. The school has successfully reduced the level of unauthorised absence previously recorded. Sessions and lessons begin promptly with registration procedures completed quickly and in accordance with requirements. Pupils settle quickly to work.
- 27 Parents clearly indicate that pupils like school, that behaviour is good and that pupils are helped to become mature and responsible. Evidence from the inspection very clearly supports these views. The last inspection, whilst finding many positive features to this aspect noted that there were few opportunities for pupils to generate ideas or solve problems independently. It is clear that given the very good standards now being attained that the school has made very good progress in this aspect of its work. This aspect, particularly the very good behaviour seen, the very good personal development of pupils and the very good relationships, is now a real strength of the school

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 28 The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is very good overall

throughout the school. All teachers were seen teaching. Thirty-six observations of teaching were made during the inspection. Teaching was excellent in 17 percent (6) of the lessons, very good in 58 percent (21), good in 19 percent (7) and satisfactory in the remaining six percent (2). There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Six excellent lessons were seen, three of which were with the Early Years children including Reception, one lesson with the five to seven year-old pupils and two lessons with the seven to eleven year-old pupils.

- 29 The teachers are very hard working and take care to address all aspects of the pupils' development. They know their pupils very well and this knowledge is used very effectively to provide carefully planned lessons that meet the needs of everyone, including those with special educational needs and those who are potentially higher attainers. Teachers are very creative and successfully involve the pupils in their learning. A particular strength in the teaching throughout the school is the encouragement given to pupils to work independently. The teachers are successful in providing a rich range of exciting and relevant learning activities that pupils respond to with eagerness and motivation. The teachers challenge all the pupils by asking probing questions that require them to think and apply their previous learning when searching for an answer. Very good encouragement is given to older pupils to reason, make deductions and inferences when answering questions. For example, in a literacy lesson, the older pupils read a text about the effects of television upon children. The pupils raised issues about the reliability of the research that had been carried out in making judgements and deductions upon the ultimate effects of watching too much television. Only when there was a lack of focus upon the development of necessary skills or an imbalance of time between teacher talk and pupil activity, did the teaching become less than very good.
- 30 Teachers, support staff, many parents and the community all work together very well to provide the pupils with a very good quality of education. Under the very effective leadership of the headteacher, who has a teaching responsibility for part of the week, the teachers, nursery nurse and learning support assistants work together very well as a team. They successfully provide each pupil with work that is as closely matched to his or her individual needs as possible. The mixed ages present in each class are very well managed. On many occasions the skilful teaching harnesses the skills of older pupils to benefit the younger ones.
- 31 Pupils are expected to think for themselves and to make the effort to find out information whenever appropriate, including searching the Internet. Lessons are planned with clear learning intentions and these are shared with the pupils so that they know what is expected of them. Regular opportunities are provided for the youngest children to work on their own with the nursery nurse and also with older pupils. Likewise in the seven to eleven year-olds class, all year groups work together for some lessons but are divided in to youngest and oldest groups for literacy and numeracy lessons. There are also opportunities provided for the oldest pupils in the lower school to work with the youngest in the upper school. These groupings are very carefully planned to ensure that there is an appropriate level of challenge for all pupils, particularly in English, mathematics and the development of intellectual skills.
- 32 Throughout the school, the literacy and numeracy lessons are very well managed and

the basic skills of reading, writing and number are very well taught. The lessons are creative and provide exciting and relevant activities that make sure that all pupils learn well. For example, very good use was made of a game to motivate and excite the younger pupils and to develop very good levels of concentration and reinforce their use of phonics. In this lesson a game of “Pass the Bomb” was played. The pupils worked extremely hard to think of rhyming words, in sequence, whilst passing the bomb, which eventually ‘exploded’. In a numeracy lesson with the older pupils, the brisk pace of short oral and mental arithmetic activities, targeted at individuals, engaged all the pupils and resulted in very high level learning of multiplication facts.

- 33 The teachers make very good use of the rich environment of the school. The pupils enjoy the activities that involve studying the natural world and using locally accessible resources and those further afield. The Year 3 and 4 pupils were observed carrying out a survey in the immediate area outside the school. They had independently made their decisions about their areas of research on the changing environment and were observed working very enthusiastically collecting information and recording this on their chosen chart. Older pupils were observed busily following up their previous week’s Field Trip to Wales. The extremely well produced booklet of activities provided a very good basis for the high quality map work observed during the inspection. The commitment and efforts of the teaching staff in planning these activities and the excellent use of resources is a very important reason why the rate of learning in the school is very good. This is why the pupils progress from the generally average standards of attainment when they begin school to the overall higher standards by the age of eleven.
- 34 The pupils are very well behaved during the lessons. The lessons move with good pace and the activities closely match the pupils’ abilities. Time is rarely wasted, even when moving from one site to the other. The teachers treat the pupils with respect and the pupils respond by treating adults and one another likewise. Their ideas are valued, and they are encouraged to share their views with others. During the inspection, all pupils were observed speaking confidently to their classmates in both formal and informal discussions. They are also encouraged to be open and honest when evaluating how well they are doing and how they could make improvements. The teachers reward desirable behaviour and good academic performance. Pupils’ work is valued and appreciated. This is demonstrated by the efforts that staff put into creating very good displays of pupils’ work. Many hours have been spent in mounting and presenting pupils’ work and creating class books of poetry and story writing. The good quality of presentation by staff does not go unnoticed by pupils, who use it as a model for standards in their own work.
- 35 There is early identification of special educational needs. There are good quality individual education plans. The targets are clear and measurable. In lessons, the pupils with special educational needs are well supported both by the teachers and learning support assistants.
- 36 Marking, which is usually prompt and is often carried out alongside the pupil, supports the pupils’ knowledge of how they are doing. It is particularly effective when teachers phrase comments to give pupils a clear picture of how they could make their own work even better. The teacher’s comments on the work of the older pupils are excellent.

They not only identify what the pupil has done well in relationship to the learning intention, but identify what the pupil needs to do to improve even further. Homework is thoughtfully planned, particularly in mathematics and general research work, complementing the work already going on in the school. The support given to this by many parents is a key factor in the rising standards and good progress that the pupils make.

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

- 37 The quality and range of the curriculum provided for all pupils is very good. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is broad and balanced. The extra time needed to walk to the hall for physical education represents a small but significant amount of time in the teaching day but does not encroach on the required time for the curriculum due to the slightly longer day. All pupils benefit from a curriculum that is stimulating and relevant to the needs of all including those with special educational needs. The quality of planning is good. Subjects that were weak during the last inspection show very good improvement. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are both in place and the foundation subjects are taught in blocks with an overall cycle of two years for the younger pupils and four years for the older pupils. A skills based approach is used to ensure continuous and progressive learning.
- 38 Children in the Early Years are given a very good range of learning experiences and this supports their brisk pace of learning and the standards they achieve. The needs of the children are being met through a wide variety of first-hand experiences that engage their interest and challenge them appropriately. Adult intervention is both timely and sensitive. The ethos evident promotes confidence and independence as children develop the ability to make informed decisions. Because Reception children work with Year 1 and 2 pupils, mental skills in mathematics and knowledge about the world around them is well developed and ensures achievement of the early learning goals.
- 39 Both literacy and numeracy are very well taught following the national strategies. There has been very good improvement of the teaching of using and applying mathematics and science. The more able Year 6 pupils are given extra mathematics homework on problem solving.
- 40 The statutory curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities that are supported by all members of staff, parents, governors and the wider community. Activities include information and communication technology, athletics, basketball, cricket, football and rounders. Music (woodwind, guitar and brass) and French tuition are also provided. Inclusion is very much at the heart of the way in which the school works. The school holds curriculum days when pupils take part in such activities as information and communication technology, music workshops and African drumming. These all add to the richness of the curriculum offered. All pupils enjoy the same access to the curriculum. Strategies to ensure that similar opportunities are available to all are good. For example, very good use is made of learning support assistants who are well aware of the targets set for pupils, have a good understanding of the pupils and how they learn and therefore provide very good support to individuals and small groups.

- 41 A nationally recognised tracking project is being used to track Year 1, 3 and 5 pupils and optional national tests for Year 4 pupils. There are effective systems for data analysis, information from which is used to set individual targets and to adjust curricular provision. Pupils keep their own records of achievement and have reward books in which they set their own criteria.
- 42 The provision for pupils on the special education needs register and those who are gifted and talented is very good. Individual education plans are focussed on pupils' specific needs and as such ensure the effectiveness of support provided. Support staff are well informed and this ensures pupils make good progress. Detailed records are kept and parents are fully involved in the process.
- 43 In response to key issues from the previous inspection, developments in using and applying mathematical and scientific skills have taken place. Classes and teaching time have been reorganised to provide more effective delivery of the curriculum, particularly the teaching of specific skills. Professional development over the last eighteen months has focussed upon raising the standards of teaching and learning. This has been successful and there has been very good improvement.
- 44 The provision for personal, social and health education is very good. The development of health education and the attention to drug misuse is coherent and appropriate to the age and needs of the pupils. There is a policy to address sex education and drug awareness is taught. Personal, social and health education is timetabled for all pupils and it is effectively developed during assemblies. Pupils have a sound knowledge of health issues such as healthy eating and know that they can make choices. Pupils have been positively involved in helping a pupil with nut allergy. They help to read wrappers on food and generally watch out for him.
- 45 Many opportunities are provided to foster the development of inter-personal skills when pupils are asked to work in small groups such as one older, one younger, a friend and one other. All children have the opportunity to be classroom monitors. They listen well to their teachers and to each other and are willing contributors when questions are asked or views sought. They respond sensitively to each other when sharing news. Opportunities are provided for pupils to make decisions such as which problems are easiest to calculate or how they intend to make a pneumatic monster.
- 46 The school has very good links with the community. The parents support this view. There is a strong Parent Teacher Association, which is actively involved in raising money. The school regularly invite visitors to talk to the pupils. The pupils make good use of the surrounding environment and have recently been invited by a local farmer to make use of a meadow at the back of the school.
- 47 Good use is made of the Internet in accessing information and materials, which support teaching and learning. The school does not currently have links with other countries through the Internet. Locally a cluster of schools, Fosse Five, has been formed, and pupils and staff have benefited tremendously from being able to work with a larger group. For example, joint staff training and curriculum planning. There are very good links with the local nursery and high school.

- 48 The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development. Many opportunities are provided for the children to reflect. A good example was the school election, where they set up and ran their own school election. Other opportunities are part of lessons such as sharing news, learning about each other and learning about other parts of the world, for example the Amazon and Egypt. Pupils are encouraged to look at plants, animals and stones on the beach and to think about differences, touch, texture, smell and sound. The work of artists and composers also contribute to the pupils' spiritual experience. They make visits to other places of worship.
- 49 The standard of behaviour reflects the high expectation that teachers have of pupils. The principles of right and wrong are clearly taught. Pupils are involved in setting classroom and playground rules. A number of charities are supported by pupils, for example National Children's Home.
- 50 The school has a high regard for the personal and social development of its pupils. This is the cornerstone of the curriculum. A lot of time is valuably used to give the children the chance to talk and share their feelings. This successfully promotes very high levels of personal independence amongst pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- 51 Cultural development is good. Pupils learn about life in other places such as Ghana, South America and India. They also learn about life through the ages, for example Britain since 1948. They learn about composers and artists including local artists and their crafts. They learn dances from other cultures such as American square dancing. However, the school has identified that more could be done regarding the multi-ethnic nature of Britain. For example, studies about Britain since 1948 could include the arrival of HMS Windrush from the Caribbean.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 52 The school provides a safe, secure and caring environment in which its pupils respond well to the opportunities offered to them. It has good arrangements in place to meet its responsibilities for health and safety principles and practices. The school occupies two sites but security arrangements have been considered and provided appropriately. Similarly the school takes care to ensure the safety of pupils who need to move between sites for lunchtimes and for some lessons. Arrangements for first aid have received attention with training having been provided for staff. Child protection procedures have been established using the advice of the local authority. The headteacher is the named person. Staff are aware of the procedures.
- 53 The school has a clear and effective behaviour policy, staff apply it consistently and pupils contribute by setting rules for their classrooms and the playground. No pupils have been excluded in the last year but the school has appropriate arrangements in place to respond to any case that may arise. The result is that behaviour in and around the school and in lessons is very good, pupils take care of each other and listen to other each other's views with care and respect. During the inspection no incidents of bullying or harassment were seen. Parents say clearly that they feel that the school

works hard to encourage good behaviour.

- 54 The school has sound procedures for monitoring attendance. Parents and pupils know of the school's arrangements. The school has dealt recently with the level of unauthorised absences and these have improved as a result. Though rarely needed, the school has appropriate arrangements in hand to deal with any cases of absence which may arise.
- 55 The personal development of pupils is monitored through the maintenance of a record of achievement file which records amongst other items the pupils' success in gaining rewards for good behaviour and work over time, pupils respond well to the school's systems to encourage effort and achievement. The success achieved by pupils is recognised by fellow pupils as well as by staff.
- 56 The school has developed a good policy to support the pupils' welfare and learning through personal, social and health education. Pupils respond well to this, a good example was seen when pupils were encouraged to get to know and work with those who they may not regularly work with. Pupils quickly engaged in the task, asking good questions and using the information obtained with confidence.
- 57 The school carries out assessment of pupils as they enter school in order to establish a baseline. Assessments continue at regular intervals through the school. In addition the school makes use of information obtained from national testing. The information obtained is used well to enable the school to set targets for its own performance. Care is taken to recognise the implications of the small numbers in the year groups involved. The information is also used well by teachers to plan for their classes. Teachers know pupils very well and combine this knowledge with the data to set targets for pupils following discussion with parents.
- 58 The last inspection report noted good features in this aspect of their work. Evidence now shows this to be a strength of the school, particularly the supportive procedures for promoting the behaviour and attitudes of pupils and for monitoring and promoting personal and academic development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 59 Parents of prospective pupils are provided with helpful and well-produced material about the school and about how they can support their own child's learning. Induction arrangements, which include home visits, are very well handled. These enable pupils to settle quickly to school life. These arrangements also contribute significantly to pupils developing positive attitudes to school and learning. The prospectus, which meets requirements, is informative and very well produced. It clearly sets out the school's aims and gives a good picture of its work. Parents receive regular information about activities, including a newsletter produced by the pupils. In compiling this newsletter, pupils take responsibility for all of the roles required to write and produce it. Routine administrative matters are also dealt with in an efficient and supportive manner. The governors' annual report to parents, which also meets requirements, is similarly well produced. It too provides a good range of information about the school and records its successes and developments. Parents speak warmly about the way in which the school communicates with them and note the improvement seen since the last inspection.
- 60 Parents receive information about pupil progress and targets on a termly basis. This forms the basis of subsequent discussions with staff. Annual written reports are detailed and meet requirements. Details provided include information on academic progress and personal development together with comments on areas for improvement. Parents of pupils with special educational needs also receive appropriate reports and are fully involved in reviews of progress as required.
- 61 In addition to these formal contacts, parents have opportunity to discuss any matters informally with staff. Parents value the information provided and the opportunity for discussion with staff.
- 62 The school has a clear policy for home-work for all pupils. It is based on reinforcing work covered in lessons. The provision ranges from reading for the youngest pupils to work in reading, writing and mathematics for older pupils. The school has a clear plan of work linked to its programmes of study. Work is set regularly and informatively marked. Pupils have reading and homework diaries, which parents contribute to regularly and which are referred to by staff. For example, Year 1 pupils read to a governor, who used their diaries to write her comments in. Inspection evidence shows that the school makes appropriate provision in this area. The school has successfully introduced a home-school agreement to which parents have responded well.
- 63 Parental support is also welcomed in school. However, the size of the classrooms at the Barnstone Road site means that numbers involved are necessarily small at any one time. Nevertheless the school values such support and during the inspection an example of effective support for pupils' learning was seen during a design and technology session for Year 1 and 2 pupils. Here the teacher had taken care to brief helpers on the aims of the session paying attention to the need for safe working. The school also receives support when taking pupils on educational trips.
- 64 The school is very fortunate in the support it receives from its Parents and Friends Association. This is a very active group, which organises a wide range of activities.

They have donated significant additional resources to the school. Examples include the provision of gymnastic equipment, information and communication technology equipment including computers, digital camera and scanner. In addition outdoor play equipment has been provided which the children appreciate. The school makes good use of the additional equipment to enhance learning. The association is currently offering very significant resources as a contribution to the school's plans to extend the Barnstone Road buildings which are due to begin in the summer break of 2001. The school is indeed fortunate to have the support of such an active and committed association.

- 65 The school provides opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities and educational visits to support learning and development. In this good use is made of links established with a group of local schools (The Fosse Five). In addition pupils in Years 5 and 6 have opportunity to take part in a residential visit which contributes to planned academic work and their personal development.
- 66 Parents speak highly of the school and recognise the hard work and commitment of the headteacher and his staff. They clearly say that the school has made improvements in many areas of this aspect of its work. These views are supported by inspection evidence. This aspect is now a considerable strength of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 67 The school has a clear commitment to providing the very best education for the pupils both academically and socially. The school successfully meets its aim: *"to sustain an environment based on reciprocal respect, care and support which promotes in each child the desire and opportunity to achieve his or her full potential"*, very well. The pupils enjoy learning, they approach new situations confidently, have concern for the welfare of all within the community and are a credit to their school, their friends, their parents and themselves. This is achieved through the excellent leadership and management of the school by the headteacher, the key staff and the governors.
- 68 The headteacher has been in post for two years. During this time very good general improvement has been made. The key issues resulting from the last inspection have been dealt with successfully, in particular the raising of standards across all the subjects of the National Curriculum.
- 69 Pupils benefit from the exceptional leadership qualities of the headteacher, who creates a strong, caring ethos that pervades all aspects of the school. He is the driving force behind the school's improvement and earns the respect of pupils, staff, parents and the community. This respect has successfully created a strong co-operation between staff that successfully promotes good rates of learning and higher standards. First and foremost, the headteacher cares for everyone involved in the school and engenders very high levels of respect and loyalty amongst the staff. He aims for high standards in all the school's work. In order to achieve this, he leads by example in his management and teaching. The needs of the pupils govern all decisions and there is a shared commitment to raising the standard of pupils' academic performance. In order to succeed in this commitment he has raised the full-time teaching complement to three teachers, involving him in teaching groups of pupils for a greater part of the week.

The class groups have been reorganised for some lessons to ensure that the teachers' expertise and time spent with the pupils is used to maximum effect.

- 70 Together the staff and headteacher accurately identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school's performance and organisation. This information is used to create an effective school development plan that accurately identifies priorities for further improvement. These priorities are effectively funded to support their successful implementation. The overall monitoring of the school's performance is very rigorous and very effective. The school makes good use of the analysis of assessment results and comparative data to evaluate its own performance and to identify aspects to be improved. Each day's lessons are thoroughly planned. This planning supports all staff very well in the work that they do with the pupils and helps to ensure that the teaching and learning is of a high standard. All staff are hard working and committed to ensuring that the pupils receive the best education. This is accomplished through the very good teaching of the broad, balanced and enriched curriculum.
- 71 There is a very good programme for staff development, informed by the needs of the school and the teachers' identified needs for professional development. The school works well with the 'family of schools' sharing expertise and ideas for the benefit of the pupils.
- 72 The school budget is soundly administered, making good use of new technologies. Governors exercise close financial control and make effective use of specific grants. Budget planning reflects the governing body's determination to maintain one full-time teacher for each key stage and to provide funds towards the building of an extension to the school to provide more teaching and learning space. The principles of best value are known, understood and used to very good effect.
- 73 The governing body very effectively fulfils its statutory responsibilities. All governors take a keen interest in the life and work of the school. They each bring their own area of expertise to the school, which they willingly share, benefiting the school considerably. The governors have a very clear awareness of the school's strengths and areas for further development. They maintain a very good balance between supporting and questioning the school's actions. They carry out their role of 'critical friend' extremely well. This enables them to support the school very effectively in improving provision and raising standards.
- 74 The majority of parents are very supportive of the school and work very hard to raise further funds. A considerable amount of money has been raised for the school to buy additional resources. There is a clear recognition from the parents of the very hard working staff and improvement in standards brought about by a reorganisation of the curriculum and class structures. Their acknowledgement of the school's success is manifested in their determination to improve the school's accommodation and provide the teachers and pupils with comfortable working conditions.
- 75 The governing body has set annual performance objectives for the headteacher, and reviews progress in achieving these regularly. The requirements relating to the performance management of staff are known and are currently being addressed. Arrangements for the annual review of staff pay are well established. The targets for

improved pupils' performance, set annually, are based on relevant information gathered and analysed as a preface to setting targets that are realistic but challenging.

- 76 The number, breadth of knowledge and expertise of the teachers and support staff make an effective contribution to the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. Support staff working with pupils who have special educational needs are effective in promoting their learning whilst encouraging a sense of personal responsibility. The administrative assistant carries out her duties efficiently and effectively. The internal accommodation, whilst very restrictive, is used very well to support the successful delivery of the curriculum. It is extremely clean, attractive and welcoming. The very pleasant and well-planned grounds of the school provide a very good outdoor learning environment for the pupils. The learning resources are good, appropriate and accessible.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 77 No significant weaknesses were identified as a result of this inspection; hence no key issues for action are identified in this report.
- 78 In their response to this report, however, the governors, headteacher and staff may wish to give particular attention to the following matters:-
- i. In order that the school's high standards in all aspects of the curriculum are maintained, the teachers need to look at ways of moderating their agreed standards with those of other schools. (Paragraph 20, 127, 160)
 - ii. There are no pupils in the school from ethnic minority backgrounds. In order to raise pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of our country, the school should seek out ways of achieving this, for example, making a link with an inner city school and arranging exchanges. (Paragraph 51, 169)

The numbers in brackets relate to the main paragraphs of this report where these issues are mentioned.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	36
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	21	7	2	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	54
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	8

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	54
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: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	152,926
Total expenditure	147,811
Expenditure per pupil	3,359
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,966
Balance carried forward to next year	14,081

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	49
Number of questionnaires returned	28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	43	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	61	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	46	4	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	57	11	11	4
The teaching is good.	46	46	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	43	14	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	18	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	25	7	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	29	64	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	43	54	4	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	39	7	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	54	32	7	4	4

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 79 This is a very small school with just fifty-four pupils on roll. At the time of the inspection, there were seven children in the Reception Year. Four other children were in the Early Years group. These children attend school on just four afternoons a week, as part of their induction programme. The Reception children work with the Early Years group on these afternoons. The remainder of their learning takes place with the five to seven-year-old pupils. A nursery nurse staffs the Early Years class. A full-time teacher teaches the five to seven year-old pupils. Both the teacher and the nursery nurse plan and work exceptionally well together and provide a very good learning environment for young children.
- 80 The children start school with standards that are broadly average. Most children enter the Reception class with a level of attainment that is slightly above average in language and literacy and social development. Standards in mathematics, physical and creative development are in line with those expected for children of this age. There are, however, fluctuations from year to year. Their speaking and listening skills are well developed. Most are keen to try all activities. Children soon become used to sharing equipment and taking turns. Children make good progress in all areas of their learning and, by the time they are five, many are working within the National Curriculum. The school is particularly diligent in monitoring the progress that the children make. Because of this very good process, any children who have a particular strength or weakness in any area of their learning are very quickly identified. A special programme of work is developed for these children and learning support is provided. Children with special educational needs make good progress in the learning. Good, steady progress has been made since the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 81 Children settle happily into the Early Years and Reception and their personal and social development is very good. By the age of five, the children attain standards that are generally above those expected for children of this age. Most are confident and have very good relationships with each other and with adults. They share, take turns and co-operate in their play. They abide by the rules and routines in the class and understand the difference between right and wrong. The children show respect for materials and property, and concern for each other. Many organise activities for themselves, for example, when practising their writing in the writing corner or when playing in the sand. They use materials with great confidence when, for example, they make space rockets from a range of found materials and different kinds of adhesives. They listen to music, such as the *Planet Suite*, and make sensible comments about how the music makes them feel. Often music is played for the pupils in Reception whilst they are working. They have very positive attitudes to their learning which results from the very good and excellent teaching they receive. The high quality teaching supports their personal and social development through making sure that expected routines are carried out and that all children know and understand what is expected of them.

Communication, language and literacy

- 82 By the time they are five, their attainment is at least in line with that expected. The children make good progress and by the time they are five they are working well into the National Curriculum. They speak confidently to adults and one another. They share their work excitedly when, for example, they talk about the rockets that they have made. They develop good skills in listening attentively to stories, rhymes and their teacher. They enjoy listening to music whilst they are working. Children learn to use rhyming words. They enjoy taking part in games, such as “Pass the Bomb”, when thinking quickly of rhyming words. The youngest children are beginning to recognise their written names and they can write some of the letters clearly when practising in the writing corner. The older children can consistently write letters legibly. They know how to handle books, and the youngest children know that print carries meaning.
- 83 The teacher very successfully helps the children to reinforce the letter sounds by having a sound for the day, which the children choose from a Mister Man’s pocket. The older children are beginning to read fluently and talk about their books. They are developing strategies for working out unfamiliar words. All children show good control of pencils and crayons when drawing and writing. They are encouraged to copy their name and some can write a simple sentence using a capital letter and full stop correctly. The teachers encourage the use of correct language by presenting a good model themselves. This has a positive effect on learning. The teaching is very good overall.

Mathematical development

- 84 By the time the children are five, their attainment is in line with that expected. Most can solve simple problems involving numbers below ten. They can sequence numbers around the clock face, saying and using the number names, in order. They use words such as ‘cylinder’ and ‘sphere’ when choosing their materials for making a space rocket. They enjoy saying number rhymes and the teacher uses visual aids very well to reinforce number sequences. The children make good progress in their learning and this is well developed through their activities in the sand, when they count and order ‘aliens’, and when they sing and say number rhymes. The very good teaching supports the children’s learning very well. Through the use of challenging tasks, thinking skills are encouraged and developed. There is good use of mathematical language in explaining and questioning. Planning is very thorough, with clear learning objectives, which are used as a measure for assessing the children’s progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 85 The children make good progress in this aspect of their learning and they attain standards, by the time they are five that are above those expected. The children speak knowledgeably about the everyday experiences and events in their lives. This was very evident in a ‘sharing’ lesson when they joined with the older pupils to share their news. The children have a good understanding of the environment. When working with found materials they talk about the shapes and consider which shapes would best fit together to make a space rocket, having looked carefully at pictures beforehand. They use a variety of different ways to stick their shapes together and are not afraid to

experiment and get it wrong. In discussion with the teacher, they decide what will and won't work and they try again. They experiment confidently with different lengths and thickness of elastic when propelling their 'rockets' to see how far they can make them travel. The children use the computer with confidence and have good control of the mouse when drawing letter shapes. They talk about the wide collection of different toy vehicles with knowledge and understanding of their purpose and use. The very good teaching promotes thinking skills and reinforces language development very well. The children are positively encouraged to explore and investigate. A wild area enhances the experiences of the children, and extensive, well-maintained school grounds that have been developed to encourage wildlife.

Physical development

- 86 By the time they are five, the children's physical development reaches the expected standard. The teacher's very good planning shows that the children have opportunities to develop a range of skills using small apparatus. The children learn how to run, jump, hop, skip and jog, taking care not to run into one another. There is a soft area in the playground where the children practise these skills. These skills were observed being used and practised when children were learning about right, left, and how to follow instructions. They had to move in whatever way they wished, following the teacher's instructions, reinforcing their understanding of direction. All the children follow instructions well. The children handle tools and construction materials very well. The management and organisation of play is very good. The children have a secure area in which to play. Although there is good provision for outdoor play, the school is currently raising money to buy larger outdoor play equipment.

Creative development

- 87 By the time they are five, children's creative development reaches the expected standard. Children have opportunities to use paint, make models out of found materials and use clay. They have good control of pencils and crayons when working in their books. They use paintbrushes confidently, applying their paint with due care, and with an obvious plan of what they want to achieve. They listen to music thoughtfully and take inspiration from what they hear. For example, the teacher used the music of *Fingal's Cave* to stimulate the children's imagination about the sea. When asked to talk about their paintings, one child talked about the rough sea and how the sea changed colour as it approached the cave, which was painted black. Music is regularly used as an inspiration, as well as a calming influence whilst the children are working. *The Planet Suite* was played as the children built their space rockets. The music of Vivaldi was used as a calming influence in a writing lesson. In assemblies, the children sing well and in tune. Through very good teaching the children are encouraged to listen and look carefully.

ENGLISH

- 88 In the last few years the number of pupils in the Year 6 group has been very small. This makes it difficult to compare meaningfully the school's results, for any one year, with the national information about standards at age eleven. However, the combined information from the last four years indicates that the school's results in national tests and assessments for pupils' aged seven are higher than the national average in reading and writing. For pupils aged eleven the results over time in English have been generally much higher than those expected nationally. The 2001 provisional results indicate that standards in English for seven and eleven-year-old pupils will be higher than those expected nationally. The comparison made with similar schools is based upon the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. As no pupils have been declared as eligible, the results are not a fair comparison. There is evidence in the pupils' current work that shows that the very high standards in English are being maintained.
- 89 Evidence from the lessons, supported by that from an examination of the pupils' work, discussions with pupils and hearing them read, indicates that in English, including literacy, seven-year-olds attain much higher standards than those that are typical for their age. In all lessons observed attainment was judged to be higher than that expected for pupils in this age group. Attainment in speaking and listening is high. Pupils speak with great confidence when responding to the teacher's questions and when sharing their news with one another. In reading, the pupils can read a variety of texts, fact and fiction, they can talk about what they have read and make deductions about what will happen next in their story. The pupils write well, and at length. They can produce complete sentences with capital letters and full stops and use good descriptive language, often using speech marks to report the spoken word. Together they produce books of stories and poetry.
- 90 By the time they are eleven, pupils attain standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing that are well above those expected for pupils of this age group. All pupils speak confidently about a range of topics, entering into sensible debates and reasoned arguments in a very mature way. They respect the views of others and are prepared to concede if appropriate. Spelling and writing are of a very high standard. Many opportunities are provided for the pupils to develop their writing in many ways and they have produced books that illustrate a very wide range of factual and fictional writing.

Speaking and listening.

- 91 All pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening, including those with special educational needs. Throughout the school pupils listen carefully, show lively interest and respect for what the teacher, the learning support assistant and other pupils have to say. Younger pupils confidently take part in class discussions, when, for example, they share their news. In one lesson they patiently waited and took their turn to talk about their news, listening very carefully. They retained the information very well and asked probing questions of one another at the end of the session in order to find out more information. In a science lesson, the skilful questioning by the teacher encouraged the pupils to talk about their experiment on measuring speed and distance

and how they could make the vehicles travel further. Older pupils use language confidently, enriching and extending their vocabulary through class discussion and debate. On the day of the general election, the pupils carried out their own school election and the 'nominated candidates' were observed canvassing the other pupils in the school, presenting very well reasoned arguments about why they should be voted for. In a literacy lesson, the oldest pupils held a discussion about the effects of television and sensibly questioned the validity of the information presented. Very good questioning by the teacher in a geography lesson encouraged very good responses from many pupils, who used appropriate geographical terms very well. Throughout the time of the inspection the pupils were very involved in their learning. The teachers supported the learning that was taking place, but in several lessons the pupils, through discussion and debate, took charge of their own learning. The planning for speaking and listening is continuously developed and incorporated well into the planning for literacy and other subjects of the curriculum.

Reading

- 92 Pupils throughout the school make very good progress in learning to read, including those with special educational needs. The youngest pupils make a good start in learning to read, building well upon the good recognition of sounds and letters already begun in the Early Years. A variety of approaches to reading are used dependant on the needs of the individual pupil. However, the school uses the literacy strategy well to support the pupils in learning to read phonetically. Pupils enjoy a good degree of success in early reading. Very early in their school life they are introduced to books and they regularly take home their reading books. The youngest pupils 'play read', looking at pictures and making up their own stories. However, once the pupils have started to learn sounds and simple words, they read with increasing enthusiasm. During the shared reading sessions in the literacy lessons, the pupils follow the text very well. They enjoy reading books such as *'My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes'*. In an observed lesson, the pupils followed the text carefully, thoroughly enjoying the rhyming words. Very good reinforcement of phonetic sounds took place in this lesson. Further reinforcement took place in a game of "Pass the Bomb". The pupils very quickly in turn called out a string of rhyming words containing a specific sound whilst passing the 'bomb'. Their minds worked very quickly to produce some complex words and good quality learning resulted. Further reinforcement of rhyming words and the associated phonic combinations of letters took place in a writing lesson, when the pupils wrote poems, ending every line with a rhyming word. Most pupils knew about author and illustrator and they could point out where their names could be found at the beginning of the book. Year 2 pupils know the purpose of an index is to locate information quickly and could make very good comparisons and deductions when reading about life in Ghana.
- 93 Older pupils continue to make good progress when reading is used as a basis for other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils were observed reading individually and in groups. All pupils use reading as a means of finding out information and can recognise the difference between texts that are informative, factual and present persuasive arguments. In a literacy lesson the older pupils scanned a text containing persuasive argument. Very valid comments were made about the text, such as: "It only takes one person's point of view"; "It's true – it's based on fact". They also explored how the

author of the text had used language, in particular ‘discursive connectives’, to structure his arguments. All pupils can explain the meaning of words such as ‘solitary’, ‘withdrawn’, ‘stamina’, ‘rigorous’ and ‘gregarious’. The pupils use reference books, the Internet and websites very well to find out information about their topics. This work is often continued at home. The parents are often involved in these activities and openly admitted that they too often learned new information with their children when assisting them in their work. Very good use was made of a picture-only book to prompt good discussion about the environment and the changes that humans have made to it through the ages.

Writing

- 94 Very good progress is made in writing as the pupils move through the school. The youngest pupils progress from learning how to form letters correctly and their phonetic sounds, to building up more complex words. Regular learning of spellings takes place from Year 1 and pupils soon build up a good bank of words from which to draw when writing their stories and news accounts. Many pupils write fluently by the time that they are seven. They write good stories with clear beginnings and endings, using speech marks when appropriate. They write for a wide range of purposes. A very great emphasis is placed upon independent writing and pupils use their wordbooks and other sources to check their spellings. There are numerous books, produced by the teacher, containing writing used for a wide variety of purposes. There are stories and poems, thank-you letters to visitors, ‘Dinosaur Facts’, and examples of writing produced at home in the Gallery book. The pupils are encouraged to use their writing in a variety of ways. An excellent example of this was seen in a display of work produced when the pupils sold their seaside house. They designed and produced a newspaper in which they advertised the house, designed for sale and auction posters, wrote leaflets of information about the property and held an auction. After having successfully sold the house they made a list of all that needed doing in order to turn it into a holiday home. This is a typical example of how, throughout the school, the pupils are encouraged to use their writing skills as a means to gather and record a wide variety of information.
- 95 Older pupils make very good progress in writing as a result of the very sound achievements in the lower school. They write for a wide variety of purposes, producing their own books of fiction and factual information. They, too, attempt large projects. For example, when they held their own election campaign. They produced some of their work on the word processor, and each individual candidate had a manifesto produced by the ‘candidates’. Personal information was provided on each candidate, information on how to vote an electoral register was produced and a returning officer appointed. The written information was of the highest standard. The digital camera was used to produce photographs of each candidate along with information, after interviews, about their views and beliefs. Older pupils use their writing skills very well as a resource when carrying out their research or writing their fiction books. These books are sometimes produced for a younger audience and presented in a way that would encourage such an audience to read them. These books contain all the relevant parts, including indexes, page numbers and illustrations, often produced on the computer. Overall the school provides very good, planned opportunities for pupils to develop, independently, their skills in writing. The

presentation of the written work is consistently good throughout the school.

- 96 The pupils are provided with very good feedback on their work and the teacher's comments, verbal for the younger pupils and written for the older pupils, are constructive and developmental. The pupils are also encouraged to evaluate their own written work. Overall the quality of teaching in English, including literacy, is very good throughout the school. It is never less than good and on occasions excellent. The teachers cope very well with the wide-ranging abilities of pupils in each class. There is a good balance between direct teaching, group and individual work and plenary sessions when pupils are brought together to evaluate and discuss the learning that has taken place. The teaching sessions are planned following the guidelines in the National Literacy Strategy. The planning for lessons is very good, with well-organised activities for the ability and age groups of pupils. The lessons move at a brisk pace and assessment is used very effectively to plan further work for the pupils and for setting individual targets. Teachers' discipline in lessons is very good and is mainly exerted through very clear routines, procedures and class rules, which have been agreed and written by the pupils.
- 97 Pupils respond very well in English lessons. They have very sensible attitudes to learning and they take full advantage of the opportunities presented to them to use their initiative and work independently. Relationships are very good between pupils and teachers. The pupils show great respect for the teachers and the learning support assistants. The pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the classes and the support for these pupils is well established. The pupils are very accepting of the needs of others in their class and they help one another when in difficulty without prompting. The interactive discussions throughout the school make a positive contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- 98 The subject is very well managed and led by an enthusiastic and dedicated teacher who has a positive effect on both pupils and staff. There is clear and concise literacy policy and all staff are aware of the contents of this. The staff work very closely as a team and they are constantly evaluating and adjusting their planning and teaching practices to better meet the needs of the pupils so that they can make the best possible progress in English.

MATHEMATICS

- 99 During the course of the inspection five mathematics lessons were seen in the three classes, books and displays in classrooms were scrutinised and there were discussions with staff and some pupils.
- 100 At the age of seven and eleven, there were too few pupils taking the 2000 National Curriculum tests to compare the school's results with all schools nationally or with similar schools. However, evidence from the last four years indicates that the results for seven-year-old pupils in mathematics have been unstable but overall in line with national averages. For pupils aged eleven the longer-term results show that results have also been variable, ranging from well above to below national averages. The provisional 2001 results for pupils aged eleven reveal that standards in mathematics

will be above those expected nationally. In the 2000 standard assessment tests for seven-year-old pupils performance is above the national average. Results for pupils aged eleven were in line with the national average but well below that of similar schools. Teacher assessment matched pupil outcomes for pupils aged seven but not for pupils aged eleven, this difference only represented one pupil because of the small numbers.

- 101 Comparisons with similar schools are based upon the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. As no pupils have been declared as eligible, these comparisons are not reliable.
- 102 Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that overall attainment in mathematics for pupils aged seven and eleven is above average. Standards in applying and using mathematics have shown very good improvement. Standards in number, algebra, shape, space, measures and handling data have shown good improvement. Although there was a dip in attainment for pupils aged eleven between 1997 and 1999 there has been good improvement and the school now compares favourably with the performance of similar schools.
- 103 The evidence from the inspection supports a picture of improving standards for all pupils including those with special educational needs. Standards of pupils identified as gifted or talented are also good. From a good start in the Early Years all pupils make at least good progress throughout the school. The rate of progress improves significantly in Years 3 to 6, due to the high quality of teaching that the pupils receive.
- 104 The introduction of the national programme for teaching numeracy has had a very positive impact. This is particularly so in the area of developing pupils mental mathematical skills. Also the additional provision for the more able at the local comprehensive school and the re-organisation of classes to enable older pupils to be taught as lower and upper school groups for numeracy. The weekly mathematics homework builds on investigative skills being taught in the classroom. Oral and written tests every six weeks formally assess the pupils' progress.
- 105 The younger pupils are developing good counting skills, they count in ones up to ten and twos up to 20 in tandem to the movement of a pendulum. They recognise and write the numbers. When working on time they recognise and can make times in hours and half hours using both clock faces and digital clocks. By the age of seven most pupils understand place value in numbers of at least four digits. They add and subtract two digit numbers, count money up to £1, understand odds and evens in telephone numbers. In work on shape, space and measures all pupils identify and classify regular two and three-dimensional shapes using characteristics such as side, corners, edge and face. They use three-dimensional shapes for building. Information collected by pupils is used to produce simple graphs and charts. The pupils record travel to school in block graphs.
- 106 The older pupils build on the work they have done in the lower school and all, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. They develop their mental mathematics skills very well. The younger pupils multiply single digits by four and seven, improving on their speed with almost 100% accuracy. Older pupils are able

to multiply accurately in a number of different ways. They use mental skills, jottings and written strategies to calculate their answers. The eldest work confidently with decimal numbers. Pupils had some difficulty when multiplying two digit square numbers. The majority work well with numbers above 1000 when adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing. Pupils understand reflective symmetry and make good use of computer programs to consolidate learning about turns. Pupils use formulae to calculate area; they construct triangles and measure angles. In data handling pupils plan investigations, collect data, which they record in frequency tables and translate into pie charts on computers.

- 107 Provision for the development of mathematics skills is good as demonstrated by the number of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning and to practise and apply their knowledge, skills and understanding in new situations. There are some good example of mathematics being used in individual subjects, for example in science, where pupils measure the distance travelled by cars; history timelines to show time periods, for example in 2000BC to 2000AD; and bar graphs in geography recording the parking outside the school at different times of the day.
- 108 The quality of learning is very good overall. Excellent teaching was seen in both classes. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Since the previous inspection the school has placed great emphasis on developing pupils skills in using and applying mathematics, as is evidenced by the work in their books and their participation in lessons. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and supplemented it with the Heinemann and Rigby schemes. The structure of the National Numeracy Strategy is implemented consistently and to good effect. The regular use of games appeal well to pupils, engaging and sustaining their enthusiasm, as evidenced by a pupil's comment, "I love loop games". Good questioning skills probe pupils' understanding and requires them to explain their thinking and reflect on their learning.
- 109 Work is normally set to meet the needs of the pupils. Very good relationships and good self-discipline allow teachers to work with target groups whilst the rest of the class concentrate very well on their work. The pupils respond very well to the quality of teaching and the pupils work well together. Standards of behaviour are very good. Teachers make very good use of the learning support assistant's time.
- 110 Homework set to a regular pattern known to pupils and parents this reinforces the week's teaching and develops pupil's ability to apply their learning, for example, drawing shapes with one line of symmetry linked to a lesson of drawing quadrilaterals and identifying those which are symmetrical and those not. On the chalkboard there is always a mathematical problem that poses a challenge. It is set out in such a way that all abilities of pupils can contribute something to the answer.
- 111 The quality of assessment is very good. There is ongoing assessment, which is used to modify teaching plans. Teachers' marking is very constructive and aimed at improving understanding and presentation. For example, "Fine D but the dots spoil it" or "Move one column to right" to aid division by ten.
- 112 In all classes pupils' and teachers' displays of mathematical vocabulary and symbols prompt pupils understanding and learning. For example, time words such as, *'half*

past, *'quarter to'*, *'o'clock'*,

- 113 The planning for mathematics is good and there is a development plan for future developments. The numeracy governor visits the school weekly and has monitored numeracy lessons.

SCIENCE

- 114 In the last five years the number of pupils in the Year 2 and Year 6 groups have been small. This makes it difficult to compare meaningfully the school's results, for any one year, with the national information about standards at ages seven and eleven. However, when information for these years is considered, the school's results in national tests and teacher assessment have been high, compared with national figures. The evidence collected during the inspection suggests that, throughout the school, standards in science are above those typically found nationally for seven and eleven-year-old pupils in primary schools.
- 115 The 2001 provisional results indicate that standards in science for pupils aged seven and eleven will be higher than those expected nationally. The comparison made with similar schools is based upon the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. As no pupils have been declared as eligible, the results are not a fair comparison. There is evidence in the pupils' current work that shows that the high standards in science are being maintained.
- 116 Pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding in science. Throughout the school great emphasis is placed upon finding out information and carrying out practical research. For example, the younger pupils have visited a Discovery Park to find out more about forces and what causes different vehicles to move. The very high quality of the work produced clearly demonstrates a very good understanding of different types of forces and a clear understanding of how to present their results in a scientific way. Older pupils have recently taken part in a Field Study trip to North Wales. Their work, very closely linked with geography, displays an understanding of all aspects of science and includes the study of animals and plants, the study of rocks and their formation and environmental issues surrounding the building of a power station and the effects upon wildlife in the area.
- 117 The findings of the inspectors, from looking at pupils' work, curriculum planning and talking to the pupils is that standards in science, for pupils aged seven and eleven, have improved greatly since the last inspection. Great emphasis is now placed upon the practical application of knowledge and understanding in the investigations that the pupils carry out, where before this was a weakness. There is a good degree of challenge in this subject. For example, the work that pupils produced after their visit to Snibston Discovery Park is of a very high standard. The work is individual to each pupil. There are pieces of writing, drawings and photographs linked to balancing, twisting, pushing, and pulling. There is also work on magnetic force, water force and leg force. All this work was based on their practical experiences of the different forces. Pupils in Key Stage 1 record their work independently in their books and also make very good use of data base programs on the computer. They have carried out investigations into the best conditions for growing seeds and the best paper for

wrapping parcels. The pupils have classified different types of living things, learned about their own bodies and produced a record of the different foods that other pupils like. Older pupils have investigated the hardness of rocks, how and why different materials are used for different purposes, pneumatics and how forcing air through a narrow opening produces energy. Very good links are made with other subjects of the curriculum, for example, when pupils use their knowledge of electricity to produce effects in their haunted houses.

- 118 A real strength in the recording of the work carried out throughout the school is that it is totally independent and individual to each pupil. Pupils of all abilities make good progress. Very good use is made of information and communication technology in science.
- 119 During the inspection only one science lesson was observed. This was with the younger pupils. The quality of teaching was very good. The pupils were setting up an investigation to compare the speed and distance travelled by two vehicles. Very effective questioning of the pupils helped them to recall a previous lesson when they decided upon the criteria for their investigations. The pupils were able to talk very well about their own particular experiments and outline the potential problems that would stop their investigations from being a fair test. For example, keeping the track straight, everyone starting from the same place, and all using the same measuring sticks. The pupils' learning in this lesson was of a very high quality. They carried out their experiments with enthusiasm and sensible attitudes. The teacher encouraged them to evaluate the outcomes of their practical work at the end of the lesson. The pupils reflected well and were able to make sensible comments about whether their test had been fair or not.
- 120 The response of the pupils to their learning is very good. They are willing to talk about their work and do so with great enthusiasm and knowledge. The pupils' attitudes to science are very positive and they show enjoyment for the subject from a very early age.
- 121 The subject is very well managed by the co-ordinator. The planning is very detailed and effective and based upon a combination of nationally recommended planning and other science schemes. The resources for teaching science are very good and used well by the teachers. Time is found to evaluate the work that takes place in science, building upon the good practice and with clear identification of where the teachers think improvements could be made. There has been very good improvement in the planning for and teaching of investigative science since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

- 122 The limited evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that overall the standards in art and design throughout the school are above those typically found in primary school nationally for pupils aged seven and eleven. All pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the standards being attained by pupils aged seven.
- 123 The pupils' work on display in the school is of a high standard. The teachers make

time and put good effort into displaying the pupils' work. The result is that the work is valued by adults and pupils and often provides a focal point for work in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, the youngest pupils have painted pictures to represent their interpretation of the music *Fingal's Cave*. These paintings were produced as part of their topic on the sea. The quality of artwork in these paintings is good. The pupils have used the paint well and thought carefully about the colours that best represent the music. They have explained their paintings to the teacher who has included their comments on the display. Other displays include observational drawing and rubbings of the textures in building materials and the patterns observed on buildings. They have clearly shown how the rough and coarse building materials produce diagonal patterns and they have produced their own patterns using these as inspiration. Clay tiles have been produced to represent sections of the buildings. The older pupils have produced observational drawings of places and objects around the school site, using pencil, charcoal and crayon. There are exceptionally good pencil sketches of the church and thumbnail sketches produced in the style of Lowry. Studies are made of the work of artists such as Van Gogh, Rubens and Dufy. The pupils consider the styles and techniques of these artists when painting their own rural landscape scenes and seascapes. The pupils throughout the school use a range of materials, techniques and skills very well to interpret what they see.

- 124 During the inspection, only one art and design lesson was observed. This lesson was with the older pupils. The teaching in this lesson was of a very good standard. The objectives for this lesson were very clearly explained and very well demonstrated. Very good discussion took place whilst the pupils were working, and good evaluations by the pupils allowed them to improve their compositions, developed from sketches previously made. They made very good use of their sketchbooks, in which they tried out their ideas before beginning their larger composition. The teacher led a very good session at the end of the lesson encouraging the pupils to talk about the effectiveness of the range of techniques used.
- 125 The co-ordinator shares both expertise and enthusiasm with other members of staff and ensures that they are well supported in their planning for art and design lessons. The teachers discuss the outcomes of lessons and make appropriate adjustments to the curriculum and provision of resources as a result.
- 126 The resources for art and design are good. There is a good selection of basic materials that can be used for a wide variety of activities. The school has a good selection of posters on the work of well-known artists. The subject makes a very good contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of the pupils.
- 127 The teachers do not yet look at ways of moderating their agreed standards with those of other schools in order to help them to gain an overall view of standards and expectations in art and design generally.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 128 Standards in design and technology are high by the age of seven and very high by the age of eleven. Overall the standard of work has shown good improvement for pupils aged seven and very good improvement for pupils aged eleven. By the age of eleven

pupils have experienced a wide range of well-planned activities that successfully develop pupils' skills of planning, making and evaluating using design and technology skills.

- 129 The younger pupils use pictures and words to show what they want to do. They use fruit to make fruit salad, thinking about what they need, how to make it, what problems they are likely to encounter. They draw and label lorry parts. They have converted a house into a seaside home and kitted it out appropriately. In this project the pupils had to call upon a wide range of learning skills in order to decide how they were going to advertise, write information posters, hold an auction and redesign the house as a holiday home. In selecting appropriate tools and materials they talk about their knowledge of parts and materials when, for example, discussing how to hold wheels on an axle and how to make carts to take a teddy to a picnic. They review their own progress very well.
- 130 Older pupils have made a range of items including pencil pots, sunglasses, a haunted house, slippers and bag. They make furniture for the house, attach plastic scary toys and make circuits to provide lighting and sound effects, effectively creating the desired effects. They have designed and made bags and slippers after investigating different types, making patterns and in some instances producing high quality patterns on the fabrics used.
- 131 Two lessons were observed with the younger pupils. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and teacher expectations are appropriate. Design and technology is planned so that pupils are given a broad and balanced curriculum. Although of a good standard, pupils' skills would benefit from learning specific techniques, for example, joining a range of materials.
- 132 There are clear links with other subjects such as information and communication technology, mathematics and science. This gives added meaning to tasks and adds to their relevance. For example, the younger pupils use a computer database to record information on the speed at which their cars travel down ramps. They constructed the ramps and some pupils were observed reconstructing them to try and make the cars go faster and further. Older pupils have designed and built a haunted house. They have used their previous knowledge about making electrical circuits to produce a very good range of special effects in their houses. The standard of this work is very high.
- 133 The subject is well co-ordinated so that the school is adequately resourced. The policy and scheme are regularly monitored and tailored to the needs of the school and the pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

- 134 Two geography lessons in Key Stage 2 were seen during the inspection period. Scrutiny of books and work on display shows that standards are high for pupils aged seven and very high for pupils aged eleven. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress. There has been very good improvement in the teaching of the subject and the standards attained by pupils of all ages.

- 135 The younger pupils learn about the local area. They study the old school building and demonstrate good awareness of social and environmental issues of parking near the school. They are able to present arguments based on evidence and draw plans to illustrate the situation.
- 136 Older pupils have a good understanding of physical process, they understand how changing features can improve and damage the environment. They design their own research and set up tasks and agree areas for exploration.
- 137 Pupils use their geographical skills in making use of a range of maps and first hand evidence from visits to make comparison between different landscapes, for example, spoil heaps and slate quarries to consider human's influence on the environment such as polluted water, reservoirs, hydroelectricity and so on. The recent Field Trip to Wales incorporated all of these elements. The curriculum is also well enhanced by the use of the local environment.
- 138 The teaching of the older pupils is very good. The excellent planning ensures that activities are clear and focussed and allow pupils to take responsibility for their learning. They set up tasks to find out about boundaries, contents of gardens and types of houses. Pupils are sensible and behaviour is very good and their work is of a high standard. Very good resources enhance the quality of pupils' learning and they make very good progress.
- 139 Geography makes a good contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. In particular the residential visit to Bangor where they participated in activities such as visiting a power station, a copper mine and a bird reserve on Anglesey. They also took part in field studies and sketching activities as well as visiting other places such as the Menai Bridge.
- 140 There is a well-planned rolling programme of work over two years for pupils aged five to seven years and over four years for pupils aged seven to eleven. This programme covers the required curriculum very thoroughly and is extended to include other activities such as the residential visits attended by pupils in Years 5 and 6. Staff work very well together to plan and monitor the curriculum. The formation of Fosse Five group of schools allows the teachers to share expertise and provide a broader range of experience for pupils.

HISTORY

- 141 Only one history lesson, for older pupils, was seen during the inspection period. Pupils' books and displays were also examined.
- 142 The school has made good progress in history since the last inspection with standards improving from being in line with national expectations to higher than those expected for seven and eleven-year-olds. All pupils including those with special education needs achieve well and make good progress.
- 143 The younger pupils place both events and objects in chronological order, they know

about people and events and changes in the past through their study of homes long ago and the seaside one hundred years ago. They ask questions about the past.

- 144 Older pupils use primary and secondary evidence; visitors, maps, pictures and artefacts to find out about the past. They use the Internet to research the importance of the Nile. They then record their findings in a booklet using own words and pictures. Pupils prepare very searching questions, ask them of a visitor and make extensive notes, using bullet points when studying Britain since 1948.
- 145 The quality of provision is very good as evidenced by extensive planning based on the nationally recommended guidelines. The teaching seen was very good and encouraged clear thinking and articulation of questions, respect for others, turn taking and the requirement to listen to questions being asked and answers given. High quality displays encourage pupil interaction.
- 146 The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development. When pupils learn about the lives of real people such as their visitor and events such as decimalisation, they understand the very real experiences of others and the impact on their lives.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 147 During the inspection no direct teaching was seen, however, there were observations of pupils using computers and the support provide by teachers was very effective. Pupils are able to develop their understanding of new software and to use their knowledge, skills and understanding of computers to make use of information previously stored. Evidence from attractively displayed work and talking to pupils indicates that standards in information and communication technology are above national expectations at seven and eleven years of age. These standards reflect a very good rate of improvement since the last inspection.
- 148 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make very good progress. They are able to switch on the computer and find the required program. They have good mouse control, can add additional questions, interrogate a class database and are able to close the program, responding appropriately to all prompts. Pupils use Internet web-sites to find out about Santa's house in the mountains.
- 149 Older pupils are competent in design and production of party invitations and effectively evaluate the quality of their work, for example, using too much colour. Some very high quality work was produced as pupils organised their own election complete with electoral role, candidates, voting slips and manifestos dealing with issues pertinent to the school. Pupils attended an adventure holiday taking part in a range of activities linked with information and communication technology such as printed graphs of heart rate whilst abseiling and hand held computers for logging archery scores. A wide variety of computer programs are used to support many areas of the curriculum. Examples of this work was on display during the inspection.
- 150 Pupils use Power Point and communicate using e-mail. During the recent floods some pupils were able to access mathematics work when the school was affected by

flooding.

- 151 The resources for information and communication technology have improved significantly since the last inspection. Support from parents led to a prize of £12,000 which has allowed the school to develop the hardware considerably.
- 152 Despite technical difficulties the provision for pupils is very good. The pupils use control technology, data handling, e-mail and spread sheets in their work. They also access the Internet. The school is seeking to establish video conferencing with Fosse Five (the local cluster of schools), this would greatly enhance the quality of the curriculum offered to the pupils and give access to a larger peer group. Pupils attending the information and communication technology club e-mail newsletter articles home.
- 153 The school makes good use of the nationally recommended scheme for information and communication technology. Teachers keep detailed records of pupil's information and communication technology experiences and it is intended that they will begin using a skills checklist from the autumn term. All pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress.
- 154 There is a very clear and appropriately detailed information and communication technology development plan, with realistic timescales for completion. This is supported by an internet access policy.

MUSIC

- 155 The limited evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that overall the standards in music at the age of seven and eleven are above those found in primary schools nationally. All pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. The pupils sing out clearly and with confidence, pitching their notes well. Performances, in which all pupils have opportunity to take part, are of a high standard and enjoyed by pupils, parents and the wider community.
- 156 Music lessons throughout the school are planned to incorporate the playing of a wide range of tuned and untuned instruments, singing, composing and listening to music. The music of composers such as Vivaldi, Bach and Holst is listened to in lessons whilst the pupils are working on other subjects of the curriculum as well as in the music lessons. The limited work in the books shows that pupils have the opportunity to compose their own music. They use graphic scores to represent the music they have written and also to represent the music that they listen to.
- 157 Only one lesson, with the older pupils, was observed during the inspection. The teaching in this lesson was good. The teacher encouraged the pupils to use correct musical terms such as '*crescendo*', '*diminuendo*' and '*dynamics*' when describing how the songs should be performed. The enthusiasm of the teacher encouraged the pupils to sing out and enjoy their practice of songs from the *The Pied Piper*. Immediately following the inspection, the pupils were to give a performance in the church. No voice warm-up activity was used at the beginning of this lesson and consequently it took a while for the pupils to accurately pitch their notes.

- 158 Pupils have the opportunity to listen to music from different cultures and times in history. This makes a good contribution to their cultural development.
- 159 There are opportunities provided for pupils to play the recorder. There are also very good opportunities provided for pupils to learn to play other musical instruments, taught by parents and by musicians from the local education authority. All pupils have opportunity to take part in the school productions and those who can play other instruments have opportunity to share their music with other pupils in the school. The parents recognised the high quality of musicianship in the school.
- 160 The school does not yet have a means of gaining a more general view of standards and expectations in music. This would enable the school to not only maintain the high standards, but also improve standards even further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 161 Two lessons were seen in physical education, one in each class. Schemes of work, displays and the events folder were examined. Standards in physical education are above those expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. This is a good improvement in standards since the last inspection.
- 162 The younger pupils were observed warming up slowly, responding well to the teacher's hand movements. They worked with partners to develop good striking and catching skills using bats and balls.
- 163 Older pupils learn a range of dance movements including Irish dance and line dancing. In the lesson seen they learned American square dancing. Boys and girls partnered each other with only a minor degree of reluctance. They have a very relaxed approach to the dance and learn the movements easily. The majority enjoyed the lesson and their learning was good.
- 164 The teaching is good and hence pupils make good progress in learning new skills. A wide range of activities overcomes the lack of large apparatus, with professional coaches available for football, cricket and athletics. There is an extensive programme for swimming that is supported by a detailed scheme including provision for water safety. A parent who is a trained instructor provides swimming tuition. The school meets the needs of the national programme for physical education. Other activities such as rounders, tennis, rugby, hockey and basketball are also available. The Tops Sport programme is used to plan for the skills pupils need to learn.
- 165 This varied programme contributes greatly to pupils' social, spiritual and cultural development. The competitive element enhances the quality of some sports. The pupils learn to deal with being losers as well as winners.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 166 Standards in religious education at the age of seven and eleven are above the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has made good improvement

since the last inspection. The pupils have a particularly good understanding of Christianity by the time they leave the school. They also have a good understanding of other faiths and their similarities and differences in comparison with the Christianity. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.

- 167 The younger pupils understand that there are special times and places. They know, for example, that birthdays are special and consider the very best present that they and baby Jesus could have. They understand that the church is a special place. They are developing an understanding of special ceremonies and know that Baptism is a way of welcoming Christian people into the Christian Faith. They read about the stories from the Bible and understand that the Ten Commandments form the basis of the Christian and Jewish way of life. They have learned about the life of a Jewish family and the ceremonies of the Jewish Faith. In their books they have written with good understanding about the *'Menorah'*, *'Torah'* and *'Mezuzah'*. They have a sound knowledge of the Jewish Faith. The pupils also learn about the lives of people, alive and dead, who have become famous for helping others. The older pupils build on the knowledge acquired in previous lessons. They continue to learn about the life of Jesus and the stories from the Bible. They find out about the lives of people such as Alexander Fleming and John Cadbury. Much of the work in religious education is very well linked to other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in geography they have compared their way of life to the lives of people in Africa and how people find the courage to face the future. The pupils also continue to learn about faiths other than Christianity.
- 168 Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and these were with the older pupils. The teaching in these lessons was very good. The teacher encouraged the pupils to recall their previous learning about Buddhism by asking well-structured questions. Artefacts were handled with respect and sensitivity. The pupils used words such as *'Tripitaka'* and *'Mantra'*. When asked about the 'essence' of this faith, pupils answered with such phrases as, *"They see life as a big wheel, no beginning and no end but with learning experiences along the way"*. The pupils learned very well in these lessons, identifying what is the most important thing in their lives and making a *'Mandala'* to record this. Discussion in the lessons was of a very high level and the work produced by the pupils reflected very well their understanding of this faith.
- 169 The school makes good use of the local church and the vicar visits the school on occasions to lead the assemblies. The children benefit from the experiences of visiting speakers, although these are normally from the Christian faith. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well and links the work in religious education very well to the wider curriculum. Religious education makes a very significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has identified the need to widen the pupils' experience of other faiths and cultures. The resources for teaching religious education are very good.