

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LANGOLD DYSCARR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Worksop

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 132814

Acting Headteacher: Mr David Cartwright

Reporting inspector: John Messer  
15477

Dates of inspection: 3 - 6 February 2003

Inspection number: 249010

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Road Langold Worksop Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	S81 9PX
Telephone number:	01909 730396
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mrs Janice Greaves
Date of previous inspection:	N/a

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15477	John Messer	Registered inspector	Art and design Design and technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9499	Phiroze Daruwala	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
21910	Gordon Longton		Science Information and communication technology Religious education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14806	John Stevens	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Music Physical education	
32180	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	English Foundation stage History	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This new community primary school has 238 full-time pupils on roll together with a further 45 children who attend the nursery part-time for either the morning or afternoon sessions. The school, which was formed by the amalgamation of an infants' school and a junior school that shared the same site, opened in September 2001. The school is about the same size as most other primary schools and serves a large village in a former coal mining area. There is a high proportion of unemployment in the area. The full-time pupils are taught in eight mixed-age classes. There are rather more boys than girls in the school. Just under a quarter of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. Just over a third of pupils are entered on the school's register of special educational needs, which is above average. Most of the pupils on the school's register of pupils with educational needs have moderate learning difficulties or behavioural problems. Nearly all of the pupils are from white English speaking backgrounds and most live in the village, within walking distance of the school. Many come from relatively disadvantaged home backgrounds. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below average. In recent years it has been difficult to recruit teachers to temporary teaching posts.

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

This is a rapidly improving school that provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has significant strengths as well as many areas for further development. The first year of the new school's existence was a difficult time due to staffing problems, a lack of clear direction and uncertain leadership. Since September 2002, when a new acting headteacher took control, the school has made improvements on many fronts. The leadership by the headteacher is very good. The school is well managed and the chair of governors makes a strong contribution to the leadership and management of the school. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, although the standards they attain are mostly below average, attainment is rising. The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn effectively in lessons. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The very good leadership provided by the acting headteacher has had a profound effect on school improvements;
- The quality of teaching is good; teachers are hardworking, caring and committed to improving standards;
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and classroom assistants make a strong contribution to their effective learning;
- Throughout the school relationships are good and this helps pupils to learn confidently;
- Most pupils are well behaved, eager to please and keen to learn. They are interested in their work and have positive attitudes to school;
- The school has established a positive new identity and a caring ethos of togetherness and teamwork that involves all associated with the school.

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

- The rate of improvement in the standards that pupils attain in writing;
- The use of computers in classrooms to support teaching and learning;
- The day-by-day assessment of pupils' development in the nursery to provide information for planning the next steps in learning effectively;
- The use of time, the way timetables are organised and the amount of teaching time in Years 3 to 6, which falls below the recommended minimum;
- The contribution that parents make towards pupils' learning at home;
- Attendance and punctuality;

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

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

This is a new school and has not been inspected before.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	N/a	N/a	E	D
Mathematics	N/a	N/a	E	E
Science	N/a	N/a	E	E

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

As a result of the good teaching in the nursery and Reception classes, children's achievement is satisfactory, although most are unlikely to attain the early learning goals in all the areas of learning specified in national guidance. The good teaching in Years 1 and 2 enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily and attain average standards in reading but standards are still below average in writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. The good teaching in Years 3 to 6 helps pupils to learn well in lessons. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are improving rapidly, although the rate of improvement in Years 1 and 2 is not as rapid in writing as in the other subjects. The good quality of teaching across the school has not been sustained consistently over a long enough period to have had its full impact on pupils' achievement and the standards they attain. By the end of Year 6 standards are below average in English, mathematics and science. In the national tests and assessments for pupils in Year 2 in 2002 the school's performance was well below national averages and ranked among the lowest five per cent of schools nationally in reading, writing and mathematics and was well below average in science; for pupils in Year 6 it was well below national averages in English, mathematics and science. Inspection findings indicate that standards have improved in all these subjects but, again, the improvement in writing in Years 3 to 6 is not as rapid as in the other subjects. The school set easily attainable targets for the proportion of pupils in Year 6 who were expected to attain the national target of Level 4 in English and mathematics in the tests in 2002 and exceeded its targets. More challenging targets have been set this year and the school is on course to meet them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and most are willing to please. A small minority of the older pupils are difficult to motivate and are disenchanting with school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils are well behaved in lessons and at playtimes. A small number of the older pupils are difficult to manage and present very challenging behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work well in pairs and in groups. They enjoy taking on responsibilities and the good relationships help to create a harmonious atmosphere.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Most pupils like coming to school but too many attend irregularly.



Punctuality is unsatisfactory; a significant number of pupils arrive late and so miss vital parts of lessons. This prevents them from learning as effectively as they should.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	good	good	good

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

Teaching across the school is good. There are many gaps in pupils' prior learning, however, which indicates that the quality of teaching has not been consistently good in the past. As a result, the good teaching which has now been established does not always lead to good achievement. There is a deficit in learning that teachers have to make up. A particular strength of the teaching is the good relationships that are promoted between teachers and pupils because this helps pupils to learn effectively and in a supportive and friendly environment. Teachers' planning is good and the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Good attention is paid to the needs of higher-attaining pupils who are usually provided with appropriately challenging tasks. 'Booster classes' and strategies associated with the National Literacy Strategy, such as 'additional literacy support' and 'early literacy support', are helping pupils to catch up and to learn effectively.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; although the strong emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy as a matter of priority means that the development of other subjects has been on hold. The full range of subjects is taught.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teaching is good, pupils achieve well and make good progress towards their targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for moral and social development is good and pupils develop a caring approach to one another. Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactorily provided for.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. A supportive and caring learning environment has been established. Pupils' progress is assessed well and the results inform planning.

The school strives to involve parents in their children's learning but a significant proportion of parents do not respond positively. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught but, where coverage is superficial, as in design and technology, the quality of learning experiences is restricted.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting headteacher provides very good leadership. The deputy headteacher gives sound support and the roles of subject co-ordinators are developing well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The new governing body is keen to support the school and, in the climate of openness promoted by the acting headteacher, is getting to grips with

	the issues that face the school. It fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily and it is ably led.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good systems are in place that help the school to identify areas for improvement. The acting headteacher has taken a strong lead in monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality and consistency of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Overall good. Limited funds are used carefully but computers in classrooms are underused. The school is aware of this and has ordered new software and equipment to promote more extensive use of computers.

Accommodation is spacious but there is no water supply or sinks in most classrooms and this restricts learning opportunities. Toilets are not well maintained and lack soap and paper towels. Resources for learning are barely satisfactory. There was considerable confusion about financial allocations when the two schools were amalgamated. The new school governing body was obliged to spend a substantial sum of money on improving the lavatories. This left little money with which to launch the new school. Nevertheless, staffing levels are adequate to support pupils' learning. The governing body understands the importance of seeking to get the best value when purchasing goods and services. Governors also compare the school's results with those of similar schools but have no systematic methods of consulting parents on their views about provision. The office manager gives exceptionally good guidance and support. The acting headteacher leads a team that have developed a strong determination to improve standards.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>• They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The amount of homework pupils receive.</li> <li>• Information about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• The working partnership with parents.</li> </ul>

Only 7 per cent of parents returned questionnaires so the table above represents a narrow glimpse of parents' opinions. Parents are pleased with the improvements that have been achieved. The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views and finds that there is some substance in the concerns expressed by a minority. Homework is adequate but there are few activities outside lessons. The school provides satisfactory information to parents about how their children are getting on. A minority of parents believe that teaching pupils in mixed-age groups rather than in single year groups is detrimental to pupils' learning. Inspectors see no clear rationale for the class groupings. Parents believe that the behaviour of a small number of the older boys adversely affects the learning of the other pupils in the class and inspection findings confirm this opinion.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

*'Standards', the judgement of how well pupils are doing compared to others of the same age nationally, may be judged from national test results, or against the levels defined in the National Curriculum or the early learning goals as 'expected' at certain ages. The other judgement, 'achievement', is a judgement made against pupils' starting points. The achievement judgement shows whether, in the longer term, enough progress is being made.*

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

1. Children enter the nursery with standards of attainment that are well below average in all areas of learning. These are reflected in the initial teacher assessments and the records of achievement. As a result of good teaching throughout the Foundation Stage children achieve well. Those in the Reception class are well placed to achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, by the time they transfer to Year 1, children's attainment in communication, language and literacy, mathematical skills and creative development are likely to be below average.
2. Due to the good teaching that pupils receive in Years 1 to 6, pupils learn effectively in lessons and their attainment is improving. However there is a great deal of catching up to do. Many gaps in pupils' prior learning are clearly evident and this indicates that the quality of teaching has not been so consistently good in the past. This restricts pupils' achievement. Although most pupils achieve satisfactorily in most subjects from Year 1 to Year 6, the gaps in their knowledge and understanding mean that they do not always have firm foundations on which to build further achievements. The older pupils in particular are not attaining the standards normally expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average in English, mathematics and science as well as in history and art and design. Although most pupils read fluently, a significant minority of the older pupils struggle with their reading because they have in the past not been taught reading strategies systematically. Few write extended pieces of work with accurate spellings and appropriate punctuation. Many lack confidence with number and cannot recall number facts. Most pupils have a sound understanding of materials as well as life and living processes but their ability to explain the results of their experiments, using scientific language, is limited. The school's first set of results in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 were poor. The school's performance, when compared with schools that have pupils from similar social backgrounds, was below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Nearly three-quarters of pupils failed to attain the national target of Level 4 in writing and the proportion who attained the higher Level 5 standards in English, mathematics and science was well below national averages. These tests were taken over eight months ago and there is now clear evidence that pupils in the current Year 6 will attain better results in the tests in 2003, due to be taken in under four months' time. The school's good computerised assessment systems predict that pupils are highly likely to attain standards that are much closer to national averages. This improving trend is confirmed by inspection findings. By the end of Year 6, pupils are likely to attain standards that are below average in art and design and design and technology and history. This is mainly because the school has been urgently concentrating on raising standards in other areas, particularly reading, writing and mathematics. It is also partly because facilities to develop activities that require water are poor; very few classroom have a water supply. Standards in speaking and listening, geography, information and communication technology and physical education are broadly average. The standards that pupils attain in religious education across the school meet the expectations described in the locally agreed syllabus. There was insufficient evidence available in Years 3 to 6 to form judgements about the standards that pupils attain in music. Across the school there was no evidence of any significant variations between the achievement of boys and girls.
3. The school set low targets for the proportion of pupils expected to attain the national target of Level 4 in the national tests in 2002: 55 per cent in English and 59 per cent in mathematics. This

in itself indicates that expectations of pupils' performance were too low. The school exceeded its targets. More challenging targets have been set for 2003, which the school is likely to meet.

4. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, most are likely to attain average standards in reading and speaking and listening. Standards are likely to be below average in writing, mathematics, science and history. Pupils are enthusiastic readers and enjoy taking books home. Their early writing skills are developing but the rate of progress lags behind the improvements in reading. Most are beginning to gain a sound understanding of addition and subtraction but few are yet able to discuss their work using mathematical language or explain why their answers are correct. In science many find difficulty in explaining why, for example, an electric light bulb glows when a circuit is completed. There is clear evidence that the mostly good teaching, which pupils are now receiving, is helping them to learn effectively in lessons and that standards are beginning to rise. The school's performance in the tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2002 was poor. Results were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics and were similar to those found in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. The results in writing were particularly poor, with only a quarter of pupils attaining the national target of Level 2. No pupils attained the higher Level 3 standard in reading or writing. The teacher assessments in science also indicated that pupils' performance was well below average. By the end of the year, current Year 2 pupils are likely to attain average standards in art and design, information and communication technology, music and physical education. In design and technology and geography, there was insufficient evidence available to form judgements about standards.
  
5. Although standards are rising across the school, in several year groups there is an unusually high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs. This is especially the case in Years 2 to 5 where up to fifty per cent of pupils in each year group have been identified as having learning difficulties or behavioural problems that affect their achievement and the standards that they attain. Overall, around a third of pupils are entered on the school's register of special educational needs. This, coupled with children's mostly well below average attainment on entry to the school, constrains achievement. Taking these constraints into account, and with the exception of writing, pupils are now attaining standards that, given the school's recent difficulties, are almost as high as might reasonably be expected. Another factor that contributes to limited achievement is the low attendance rate and, for many pupils, their late arrival at school for the morning session. Yet another major factor in pupils' uneven achievement is associated with staff absence. This has, for the most part, been successfully resolved and the school is looking forward to a more settled future.

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

6. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good, overall. They are generally keen to come to the school. Pupils from all year groups are mostly polite and friendly to visitors. They are keen to talk about their life at school and most pupils respond positively to the opportunities and experiences they are given. Most pupils also show positive attitudes to their work. They listen well, show perseverance and are eager to learn. This is a reflection of the mostly good teaching and prevalence of positive relationships throughout the school. Pupils respect their teachers and other adults in the school. They are willing to share equipment and to help one another. Pupils work well together in different groups and individually. The younger pupils in the nursery are cultivating positive attitudes to learning, especially through free and structured play activities, and their behaviour is generally good.
  
7. Children in the nursery and Reception classes have positive attitudes to school, although a few children in the nursery lack confidence initially and are reluctant to join in activities. They enjoy coming to the school and most show a good level of interest and involvement in their learning. This is generally remedied by the positive and encouraging attitudes of all staff that enables children to become increasingly independent and to develop good social skills. Children are given opportunities to take responsibility and even the youngest children are developing independence in changing for physical activities. Most concentrate well when engaged in their chosen activities and learn to listen carefully. They play well together and treat each other with respect when working in a small group. These positive attitudes and good behaviour enable the younger children to learn effectively.

8. The school day starts with a warm welcome from teachers and other adults in the school. Younger children quickly become used to school routines and settle down quickly in their classes. They enjoy and appreciate the variety of activities which have been prepared for them. During a morning 'breakfast club', pupils relate well to one another. They co-operate with one another when playing games and share conversation, ensuring that younger pupils are happy and participate in activities. Pupils of all ages play amicably together during break-times. They show friendship and goodwill towards one another. Although playtimes are lively and friendly, at times, behaviour becomes too boisterous and exuberant. In class pupils are mostly well behaved although a small number of boys misbehave and make a nuisance of themselves. On several occasions the school has been obliged to exclude six boys from the school temporarily because of their unruly behaviour. There was no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour during the inspection.
9. Pupils with special educational needs show willingness to learn. They make good relationships with the adults who care for them and with other pupils. They respond and behave well in lessons. For many, the targets for improvement relate to aspects of personal development, which include behaviour. At times, behaviour of some of these pupils does not conform to the school's high expectations. In lessons where pupils' attitudes are negative, their progress is hampered and the work of other pupils is disrupted. With the very effective support from learning support assistants, most of the pupils with special educational needs gain confidence and self-esteem and this enhances their ability to contribute effectively in lessons.
10. Pupils' personal development is a good feature in the school and one that is recognised and appreciated by parents. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to exercise responsibility. They show interest and enthusiasm to carry out the duties involved. Older pupils help younger pupils during breaks and lunchtimes and act as special friends or 'buddies'. Pupils respond well to the system of rewards and certificates for achievements in academic, sporting and social areas. Opportunities to take on additional responsibilities prepare pupils for mature citizenship. Pupils show respect and understanding for the feelings and beliefs of others and this is evident in religious education lessons. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils work and play in an environment that is free from bullying and sexism. Pupils show concern about others who are less fortunate than themselves. They are sensitive to the needs of others and contribute to a range of good causes. Through lessons, such as religious education, they develop a positive awareness of different beliefs and cultures. For instance, in one of the Year 5/6 classes, pupils studied the life of a Buddhist monks and nuns and how they teach and lead by example and work in a modern Buddhist community. Pupils were interested in this lesson and asked thoughtful questions about Buddhism. Pupils treat property, equipment and displays of work with respect.
11. Although pupils enjoy coming to the school, they are not always punctual in a small minority of cases. When they arrive late they often miss the crucial introductory parts of lessons. Overall, the level of attendance is unsatisfactory. Figures for the school for the academic year 2001-2002 show the rate of attendance of 93.3 per cent, which was well below the national average. In the same year, the rate of unauthorised absence was broadly in line with the national average.

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

12. The quality of teaching is good. Overall, teaching in just over a half of the lessons seen was good and in over a quarter very good and occasionally excellent; in around a fifth it was satisfactory and there was one unsatisfactory lesson. In the nursery and Reception classes teaching in over a half of lessons was good and in a third very good. In Years 1 and 2, teaching in a third of the lessons was satisfactory, in just over a third good and in nearly a quarter very good; in one lesson teaching was unsatisfactory. In Years 3 to 6 well over half the teaching was good, a quarter was very good and in one lesson it was excellent. Across the school the teaching of English, mathematics and science is good. Teaching is good in information and communication technology and religious education; it is satisfactory in all the other subjects where there was enough evidence on which to base judgements.

13. The headteacher has supported teachers well in developing the quality of their teaching. Documentation shows that teaching has been rigorously monitored and significant improvements have been made since the beginning of the school, year. Also, there is strong evidence that teachers' morale has improved and that there is now a shared sense of direction and the school is moving forward. It is clear that teaching has not been of such a consistently good quality in the recent past. There are many reasons for this, such as lack of clear guidelines, uncertain leadership and staff absence. The good teaching is now beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning and most pupils learn well in lessons. However, the good teaching has not been sustained over a long enough period to have had its full impact on pupils' achievement or on the standards that they attain. Nevertheless, it is now contributing strongly to rapidly rising standards.
14. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Detailed information is kept on the school's special education needs file. Pupils are identified as soon as possible in the nursery or in the Reception classes. Individual education programmes are written collaboratively by the class teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Pupils are assessed by the co-ordinator, who helps to determine what type of assistance is required. One of the local authority's behaviour support teachers visits the school and is working with teachers in Year 5/6. The impact of this initiative is not as yet proving very successful. Teachers share targets with pupils and there is a good understanding that these pupils require short, carefully structured steps in their learning so that they can experience success. Class teachers work very hard with pupils who have special educational needs and receive very good help from support staff.
15. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is mostly good and it is never less than satisfactory. Particular strengths are in teachers' relationships with and management of children. In both classes they create attractive and welcoming environments where children handle equipment confidently and listen attentively. Teachers have good personal skills in the teaching of all areas of learning. However, there are inconsistencies in the day-by-day assessment of children's learning, especially in language and mathematical activities. Children's advances in learning are not always recorded systematically. As a result teachers cannot be certain that their planning is appropriate to the children's widely varying stages of development. Children may be well prepared to make further advances or more consolidation may be required.
16. Literacy and numeracy are generally taught well. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy initiatives. Pupils are grouped by ability and work is usually modified well to match their widely varying stages of development. Lessons are carefully structured with good introductory sessions, a good range of activities to promote effective learning and a good review session towards the end of each lesson, when pupils and teachers discuss how effective the learning has been. In these sessions the teachers often use good questioning strategies to assess the degree of learning and whether or not pupils are ready to move to the next stage. Basic skills are taught well and most pupils make good advances in their learning during these lessons.
17. Teachers' planning and preparation are generally good and this is a major factor in promoting the good quality of pupils' learning in lessons. Where the lesson planning describes precisely what new skills, knowledge and understanding the teacher intends to impart, then the teaching is well focused. Where the teacher's lesson objectives are shared with the pupils, then the learning is generally purposeful. Where the lesson objectives are vague or convoluted, as in an art and design lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 for example, 'To try out tools and techniques and to apply these to materials and processes' then the intentions are not clear to the pupils. Actually the intention in this lesson was, quite simply, to teach pupils weaving skills.
18. Teachers generally have appropriate expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance. There are occasions when teachers' expectations are too low and they are prepared to accept work that is not of the highest quality that pupils are capable of producing. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 2, for example, pupils identified simple two and three-dimensional shapes but there was no systematic exploration and recording of the properties of the shapes. The pupils were not challenged appropriately and the higher-attaining pupils in particular found the tasks too easy.

Also, in this lesson, the grid produced by the teacher for classifying the shapes was poorly designed and did not provide a box for each of the shapes; opportunities were missed to reinforce spellings. One pupil, for example, wrote 'šilinda' for 'cylinder' because there was insufficient emphasis on teaching the required mathematical vocabulary. Time is not always used to best effect. Where 'milk' appeared on the timetable for 15 minutes very little new learning occurred. On occasions lessons finished long before the end of school as pupils left to collect their coats, re-entered the classroom and sat back in their places until five minutes before

the end of school when they lined up to leave the building. Timetables are not always well designed to provide a good variety of lessons; lessons are sometimes over-long and as a result pupils' interest wanes.

19. Great excitement was generated in a very good literacy lesson for pupils in Year 1. The lesson was based on a favourite book, 'The Bear Hunt,' that provided a wonderful vehicle for a wide range of creative activities in literacy, art and design, speaking and listening, physical education and drama. This book was a unifying feature of a series of good lessons. In the literacy lesson, on getting the different parts of the story in the right order, drama was used well to act out the six different scenes from the story. In an art and design lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher used good questioning skills to challenge pupils' thinking, asking, for example, 'Is it a good idea to put a bright sun in your picture of the dark, gloomy cave?'
20. For the most part teachers managed pupils' behaviour well. The school has a good behaviour management policy and it is applied consistently. However, there are occasions when teachers insist on pupils putting their hands up to answer questions and seconds later happily accept answers that are called out. In one class the teacher's voice level rose as she shouted instructions and this led to restlessness and increased noise levels generally.
21. For the most part resources are used well but computers in classrooms are underused. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and the best marking shows how work might be improved. The use of homework to extend and consolidate learning is satisfactory. Teachers have a good understanding of most of the subjects that they teach although several lack confidence in teaching music and several are not totally confident in teaching computer skills. One particularly strong feature of the teaching is the teachers' willingness to learn and their keenness to improve their practice. Classroom assistants make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. They have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and work well both in the classroom and, independently of the teacher, with small groups outside the classroom. The teachers and classroom assistants form a hardworking team and share a commitment to improving standards.

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

22. This is a newly established school but in a relatively short period of time it has developed a broad and a generally balanced curriculum covering all subjects. Planning documents show that all subjects are taught and the school meets the statutory requirements for teaching the National Curriculum and, through the locally agreed syllabus, religious education. Suitable emphasis has been given to literacy and numeracy, which has led to less emphasis being placed on the other subjects. The amount of time spent teaching pupils in Years 3 to 6 falls below the recommended minimum.
23. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The teachers' curricular plans generally follow the areas of learning specified in national guidance. The curricular provision in the Reception class is good and is rigorously guided by knowledge and assessment of children's attainment levels. The range of visits and visitors enhances learning, especially in children's knowledge and understanding of the world and personal and social development. Areas for curricular development have already been identified by the headteacher and co-ordinator and are



confirmed by inspection findings. These include the development of a more mathematical environment to enhance the use and understanding of mathematical language and the increased use of computers in the nursery. There are plans to introduce a more structured approach to the use of the outdoor environment with a particular emphasis on providing more opportunities for children to develop language skills.

24. The acting headteacher, who took up his appointment in September 2002, and all the staff have worked very hard to provide the new school with policies and schemes of work. These have now been approved by the governors. The school use the latest nationally recommended planning frameworks to promote coverage of the National Curriculum requirements. Teachers use these frameworks well to create their long-term curricular plans. This helps to ensure full coverage and works well except in science, where opportunities are sometimes missed to provide pupils with the necessary skills to conduct experiments on a regular basis, and in the underdeveloped use of computers to support teaching and learning. A two-year programme of study in many subjects effectively accommodates the mixed-age classes. Medium-term planning is now generally good. Detailed and thorough short-term lesson plans are devised by the teaching staff and these are shared with classroom assistants.
25. The school had many priorities to address but the monitoring of teaching and learning, especially in mathematics and literacy, was given immediate attention and this has resulted in good improvements in a very short time. The school's strategies to teach pupils basic literacy skills are effective and provide opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in other subjects as, for example, their writing in religious education lessons. All elements of the literacy hour are included regularly in the English lessons and the development of literacy skills is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement in other subjects.
26. The strategy for teaching numeracy has been implemented effectively and is having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Confident teaching and good support from the teaching assistants are helping pupils to achieve well in some classes. However, too few opportunities are planned by teachers to give pupils occasion to practise their numeracy skills in other subjects, such as accurate measuring in design and technology.
27. A central feature of the new school's work is its determination to value all pupils and to include them in all aspects of its work. Most teachers successfully match the work to each pupil's particular stage of development and this is having a positive effect on raising standards.
28. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. It includes a breakfast club, sports clubs - including special training in football and netball with competitions in local leagues - a school choir, a gardening club and discos which help develop pupils' social skills. The school is good at ensuring that, with due regard to age, all pupils have equal opportunities to participate.
29. The personal, social and health education programme is good. It includes appropriate attention to sex education and drugs misuse. The school has organised a healthy eating week and is taking part in an experiment to discover if the regular intake of water by pupils leads to better powers of concentration. The planned provision for pupils' personal development is good. The very good management of pupils by individual teachers in most classes and the opportunities they are given to work collaboratively, helps pupils develop socially. In literacy lessons, pupils are often given two minutes to discuss a task with their partner before providing the answer. This helps to develop social skills and personal development.
30. The school enriches the curriculum through visits to places of interest such as a science museum, the local church, the local shops and the theatre. Vicars from local churches visit the school and take part in assemblies. There are good links with the local secondary school. The transfer of records and attainment data is effective and good opportunities are provided for pupils to visit the school at the end of the summer term. The headteacher and all staff have made a very good start in laying down the foundations of a well-balanced curriculum in the new school in a relatively short time.

31. The school maintains a satisfactory range of links with the community to enrich the curriculum, including links with the community police through Drugs Awareness Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.). A range of visitors also contribute to school's activities. During Arts Week, artists and poets visit the school. Staff from the local Sports Development Department act as coaches for the school's football and netball teams. A range of students from the local college help the pupils in different ways. For example, these students and the pupils from the school intend to design a mural for the school's playground. The school will participate in the Bassetlaw Arts Project, entailing a community arts trail.
32. Overall, the provision for the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship. Assemblies are held regularly and are carefully planned to provide opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. Pupils enter the hall quietly to music played softly in the background. Teachers and assistants provide interesting displays throughout the school.

Pupils in the gardening club are working hard to improve this amenity. The school is beginning to make use of its pleasant grounds as a source of interest in science and for pupils to observe the wonders of nature.

33. The provision for pupils' social and moral development is good. It provides a good framework in which pupils can grow. The school has good systems for rewarding good behaviour and achievement. The class rules are discussed with pupils. Teachers make every effort to recognise positive aspects of pupils' work and behaviour so that pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. Relationships in the school are good and all adults provide pupils with good examples on which to model their own social and moral behaviour. Pupils are expected to work co-operatively, share ideas and support each other as needed. Older pupils are given many opportunities to contribute to the smooth running of the school by undertaking responsibilities - for example, organising the hall ready for assemblies and helping younger pupils at lunchtime. There are plans to introduce a school council to broaden the involvement of pupils in the running of the school. Their first task will be to help design improvements to the playground and help spend a substantial grant the school has been awarded for this purpose. The school is trying to foster a sense of community and is making all pupils feel valued. In a group discussion pupils in Year 6 were keen to stress the happiness they had in school life and their hopes for the future as they look forward to the exciting developments in their new school.
34. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Stories, music, art and literature from other countries and cultures are used throughout the school to promote a deeper understanding of different cultures and beliefs. Teachers lead good discussions on the multi-cultural nature of our society. These help to prepare pupils satisfactorily for living and working alongside people from different cultural backgrounds. Religious education lessons help pupils to celebrate the wide diversity of the major world faiths as well as their own. A creative arts week is planned for the month after the inspection.
35. In its 'Statement of Values', the school makes an unequivocal declaration of its fundamental mission of 'Putting Children First'. The school's procedures and practice relating to educational inclusion are good. All pupils, irrespective of their special educational needs or other requirements are fully integrated in the school community. They receive positive support from both the staff and their peers. Pupils are generally patient and show understanding, if and when disruptions in lessons occur.
36. In this new school, the provision for ensuring equality of opportunity and educational and social inclusion is very robust. There is a high degree of awareness amongst all staff in the school about how to encourage these aspects of school life whenever possible. This area of the school's work is well sustained by the support staff. They ensure that all pupils with special educational needs are always fully involved in the given tasks and derive as much benefit as possible. Although the school has not started to maintain a separate register for more able, or gifted and talented pupils, the staff are aware of the need to develop this area of provision and appreciate the fact that

arrangements for these pupils needs to be more explicit in lesson plans and homework. Teachers, in general, show their awareness of the need to include all pupils in learning activities and integrate successfully many pupils with special educational needs or with severe behavioural problems. All pupils derive benefit from this, as the focus of the whole class is to gain new knowledge, acquire new skills, and enhance understanding.

37. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils are given the same opportunities as other pupils to take part in every aspect of school life. They have equal access to all areas of the curriculum. Their specific needs are clearly identified and programmes of support are drawn up and individual education plans developed. Individual educational plans are written by class teachers in consultation with the special educational needs co-ordinator. These individual educational plans show clear and appropriate short-term targets and are monitored at regular intervals. The special educational needs co-ordinator carries out the review of individual education plans as and when necessary.

38. The school has organised family learning events in conjunction with the Worksop Education Authority. The school has established positive links with local parent and toddler group, which meets in the school one afternoon a week. This gives confidence and support to both parents and children before they join the school's nursery.

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

39. Since the amalgamation of the infants' and junior schools in September 2001, and the appointment of the current acting headteacher in September 2002, the newly established school has become a well-organised community. This is augmented by the school's positive ethos, which is summed up in its mission statement 'Putting Children First', and the provision of a safe, secure and purposeful environment for all its pupils. It is a caring school, making good provision for help and guidance for all the pupils. It meets the educational needs of its pupils well, making a positive contribution to pupils' academic progress and achievement as well as successfully providing for pupils' welfare and well-being.
40. The school endeavours to fulfil its stated aims to promote pupils' academic development, working together in a spirit of mutual trust and respect. These positive and unambiguous intentions are well defined in the published aims of the school. The school takes good care of its pupils. Staff know the pupils and their families well and show a good understanding of their emotional and social needs in school, at home and within the local community.
41. The school has good arrangements for introducing the children to the nursery and Reception classes. They are comforted and well cared for when they are distressed or feel ill. The outdoor play area is a safe environment. Although records of achievement have recently been introduced, the staff have not yet developed a consistent approach to on-going assessment to guide activities and planning. Such arrangements are more effective in the Reception class than in the nursery; as a result the children who are nearly five in the nursery and who spend only one term in the Reception class, experience a less systematically targeted approach than those who will have spent a year or even two terms in the Reception class. The teaching in the Reception class is more accurately tailored to the children's learning needs.
42. Injuries are recorded accurately. The school has an adequate number of trained first-aid staff. Fire drills are held each term. Comprehensive procedures for health and safety and child protection are in place. Risk assessments are carried out at regular intervals. There is a high standard of supervision at breaktimes and in the dining hall. All staff are aware of the arrangements for child protection, including the name of the person responsible, and the school maintains good links with the support agencies. The whole site is kept clean and tidy but no soap is provided by the wash basins and in some lavatories there is no means of drying hands.
43. The school has good procedures for promoting and monitoring discipline and good behaviour. This has a positive impact on pupils' achievements and personal development. The behaviour policy provides suitable guidance on how to deal with unacceptable or poor behaviour. Although it is implemented consistently by teachers it is not always effective. Mid-day supervisors record any incidents of misbehaviour during lunch break and report back to teachers in every class. The headteacher is good at counselling pupils who misbehave. He is patient but effective in dealing with the small number of pupils who are sometimes disruptive in the playground or in classrooms. He has put effective systems in place to monitor behaviour across the whole school and that of individual pupils.
44. Teachers adhere to guidelines and procedures for marking registers and attendance is recorded correctly and efficiently. One of the main shortcomings of the school is the unsatisfactory level of attendance by the pupils. Measures to raise the rate of attendance and to improve punctuality in arriving at the school each morning include the provision of a breakfast club that supports pupils in getting to school on time.

45. There are good arrangements for helping pupils to settle well in school. Pre-school visits are organised by the school for prospective pupils. Procedures to help children to feel comfortable on entering the nursery are good. Pupils in Year 6 have opportunities to attend the 'Taster Days' organised by the secondary schools in the nearby town.
46. The school has worked very hard to introduce assessment procedures since the acting headteacher was appointed. He has received good support in this area from the deputy headteacher. The school now makes very good use of information from national and other tests to monitor progress in English and mathematics for all pupils, and to identify pupils or groups of pupils who are not achieving as well as they should. This information is used well to adjust the curriculum and teaching in order to improve the pupils' achievement - for example, through additional teaching in literacy. The results of national tests in science have been carefully analysed. As a result the school is now giving more attention to developing the pupils' ability to carry out experiments and investigations. The school is currently working towards a tracking system which will give class teachers, support staff, the assessment co-ordinator, subject co-ordinators and the headteacher the means to know at precisely what National Curriculum levels pupils are working, and to use the information to set targets for individual pupils and for the school as a whole. The school has made a good start regarding assessment of pupils' progress and attainment in the core subjects of the National Curriculum. The school has no systematic procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the non-core subjects. However, it is moving rapidly to a position where it will be able to use assessment more consistently across the curriculum to identify any gaps in pupils' learning and to plan for improvement.

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

47. The school enjoys good relationships with most parents and, in general, the parental view of the school is good. The headteacher and the teaching staff are keen to establish positive links with parents, by gaining their trust and confidence, so that the whole school community works together in the best interest of the pupils. The school listens to parents, invites their views, considers the issues they raise and responds swiftly to their concerns. The headteacher and staff are keen to collaborate and work closely with all parents.
48. As far as possible the school establishes close relationships with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are always invited to meetings to discuss their children's progress and an increasing number now accept the invitation.
49. Parents speak positively about the provision for their children in the Foundation Stage. During the inspection, parents were welcomed into the classes and the exchange of information between school and home is satisfactory. The positive links with parents of children in the nursery help most children to settle into the daily routine with enjoyment and confidence. Parents of children in the Reception class are given good opportunities to be involved in their children's learning through the guidance given on helping their children to read at home. However, there is no provision in the nursery for parents to be actively involved in their children's learning; for example, there are no books, toys or games which children can take home to promote their learning. Although some parents spend time assisting in the nursery on a voluntary basis, they are not used as profitably as they could be because of the lack of in-built opportunities for assessment.
50. Parents from each year group recognise and appreciate the headteacher's open access policy. The school is determined to build on this approach and tries very hard to involve parents in their children's education. Several parents help regularly in class. Parents support the school's aims and values for their children and almost all have signed the home-school agreement. Most parents appreciate the fact that they can easily approach the school to talk with individual teachers or the headteacher. Any issues or concerns raised by parents are dealt with promptly and with care and sensitivity.
51. The school offers regular and effective communication with parents in Reception to Year 6. Each pupil has, for example, a home-school contact / reading book, enabling parents to communicate regularly with the class teacher. The school encourages parents to support the homework tasks

given to their children. This has a positive effect on attainment of those pupils who are well supported in their learning at home. However, parental contribution to children's learning, especially at home, is not satisfactory because a substantial proportion of parents are reluctant to support their children's education wholeheartedly and have very little contact with the

school. Parents do not receive any curriculum guide from the school at present. However, the school is developing a good range of quality information for parents. Information is detailed and easy to read.

52. At the end of the academic year, parents receive a written report about their children's progress. The quality of annual reports on pupils to their parents is satisfactory overall. Reports provide appropriate information about pupils' attitudes to learning and personal development, as well as about their academic achievements. However, reports do not inform parents in sufficient detail about the pupils' strengths and weaknesses, nor do they give explicit information about the knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils have developed in each subject. Further, the reports do not include any targets for future learning to inform parents about what pupils need to do to improve the standards they attain. Parents have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress in detail at an annual meeting with teachers. During the course of the academic year formal and informal consultations are also available to parents, enabling them to discuss their children's work with class teachers.
53. The school prospectus gives parents a pen-portrait of the school, including its aims, curriculum on offer, provisions for special educational needs, and health and care arrangements. It emphasises the importance of working in partnership with parents. Such collaboration is achieved through a tripartite agreement, involving home, school and pupil culminating in a home-school-pupil agreement. The last governors' annual report did not include any financial statement. The headteacher is aware of the fact that a few relevant details - for example, information about school holidays and complaints procedures - are not mentioned in either of these two publications.
54. A small minority of parents do not fully support the school in its efforts to make sure that pupils submit homework on time, attend continuously and regularly, and are punctual in arriving in the morning at the start of each school day. Although there is no formal association involving parents and teachers, a group of dedicated parents organise fund raising events. Various social events organised by parents help to develop positive relationships amongst parents as well as with parents and teachers. It is evident that the school's links with parents are being strengthened overall and that the contribution parents make to their children's learning is improving. Most parents view the school favourably and are pleased to see that standards are rising.

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

55. The school faced many difficulties in its first year and staff morale was low. Before the amalgamation, and for the first year afterwards, the school suffered from a period of inertia. The acting headteacher, appointed at the beginning of this school year, has been successful in making substantial improvements and the school is now moving forward rapidly. His very good leadership has already had a profound effect on the quality of education provided for the pupils and the school is now in a good position to make further improvements. As soon as he was appointed he gathered all staff together to agree the school's aims and a mission statement that encapsulated all that the school stood for and would strive to maintain. The staff agreed that the phrase, 'Putting Children First', was to be at the heart of the new school's ethos and that this principle would influence its direction and affect all decisions relating to the school. This has proved to be a good guiding principle and is referred to often. Parents, governors and pupils have all recognised the great changes that have taken place since September 2002. It is now a more productive, more purposeful and happier place in which to work.
56. The results of the national tests in 2002 for pupils in Year 2 and for pupils in Year 6 were poor. It became clear to all associated with the school that standards had to be improved as a matter of

urgency. In September 2002, a year after the school had been established, work began under the direction of the new headteacher. After appropriate consultation, priorities were identified and good improvement plans were devised. These were underpinned by detailed action plans designed to improve standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. A good set of policies was introduced to guide the work of the school. The plans themselves emit a sense of urgency. The initial 'Four-Term Operational Plan', included a challenging time-scale for the completion of tasks. It involved the establishment of a senior management team and the development of the role of subject co-ordinators in leading their subjects and that of governors in promoting improvements. This is summarised in a long-term strategic plan that has as one of its prime targets the raising of the standards that pupils attain in national tests by 20 per cent over two years. Responsibilities for carrying out the actions described in the plans have been clearly defined and a strong sense of teamwork was created as staff worked hard together to raise standards. Responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating the school's success in achieving its goals have also been delegated appropriately. The acting headteacher made a strong contribution to the shared sense of purpose and the joint commitment to improvement that quickly developed. He also initiated a rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in order to improve the quality of educational provision. The result of these initiatives can already be seen in the good quality of teaching and the rapidly improving standards.

57. Many areas for further development remain. The school improvement plans are inter-dependent but are not organised in a coherent, accessible format. The role of the governing body in assisting with school development planning is still underdeveloped. Governors are willing to accept greater responsibility but as yet there has been insufficient time to organise appropriate training for all of them. Subject co-ordinators have a clear understanding of their roles and their accountability for standards in their areas of responsibility and all have an allocation of money with which to develop their subjects. However, except for the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, their roles are at an early stage of development and several are not at all sure how to go about improving standards in their subjects. The role of the deputy headteacher is clearly defined in terms of her responsibility for developing assessment systems and a good start has been made on instituting electronic systems to plot pupils' attainment and progress and to set appropriate targets. There is scope for further improvements in the effectiveness of the deputy headteacher, in terms of her contribution to improving standards across the school. Because of the absence of the co-ordinator of provision for pupils with special educational needs, the headteacher has taken over the leadership of this provision. There are two governors who take a special interest in the development and provision of special educational needs. They visit the school often and know the pupils well. Performance management procedures are at an early stage and have not yet had an impact on improving standards.
58. One major threat to the school's success in raising standards is the poor state of its finances. After the amalgamation of the two schools that were closed to create this new school, it emerged that a substantial unexpected overspend, accrued by the former infant school, would have to be settled by the new school. This swept away the underspend accrued by the junior school and left little with which to equip and launch the new school in line with the standards now expected in most modern schools. Furthermore, soon after the amalgamation the new school's budget was decimated by the need to spend a substantial amount of money on refurbishing the lavatories that had been condemned as being unhygienic and sub-standard. The school has done much to sort out the situation. The school officer manager has managed to recoup some of the former infant school overspend because some money was lost due to claims being overlooked. The headteacher has himself led working parties to paint areas of the school. Despite their best efforts areas of the school still look shabby, with cracked plaster, poor paintwork and battered furniture. The school did manage to accrue an underspend at the end of the last financial year but this was used to maintain staffing levels and it is anticipated that little will be left over at the end of this financial year. Accommodation is adequate but several classrooms are small and cramped and few have running water or sinks. Due mainly to the nature of the building the school is obliged to spend more than most schools on energy costs, cleaning and buildings maintenance. It spends less than most schools on equipment and learning resources. There are good outdoor facilities but these are subject to vandalism. During the inspection, for example, benches were destroyed by vandals and there was evidence of the campus being used for illicit purposes. The outside area

is not well developed as a learning resource. However, there are plans for its development and a substantial grant has been secured to fund this. There are likely to be fewer pupils on roll next year and this will diminish the school's income and put further strains on the budget.

59. The administrative team is ably led by the office manager and all office routines run smoothly and efficiently. The office manager makes an exceptionally strong contribution to the efficient running of the school and provides good information for governors to help them in their decision making. All school accounts are maintained meticulously and audited regularly.
60. The school has an adequate number of teachers and classroom support assistants. The staff are experienced and keep up to date with new developments through a satisfactory programme of in-service training. It is not easy to recruit staff and when a temporary teacher was required for the autumn term to teach a Year 5/6 class, it proved extremely difficult to fill the post.
61. The management of provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but there are areas for improvement. Although the Reception and nursery classes are adjacent, they do not operate as a sufficiently unified Foundation Stage. Although there are sufficient adults in the Foundation Stage, the arrangements for the organisation of teaching time does not give sufficient continuity for children in the nursery. Day-to-day assessments are not rigorously planned and therefore do not guide the teachers sufficiently well. This is especially important in the nursery where two part-time teachers share the teaching load; one teacher teachers for a week and then the other takes over for the next week.
62. The governing body is well led by a very experienced chair but many governors are new and are still developing an understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Most have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governing body is well aware of the principles of best value. Several governors understand how to use reports to compare the school's performance with that of other schools and they ask challenging questions about the school's results. The governing body insists on obtaining three quotations for any major work in the school and considers them carefully – as, for example, the quotations they requested before agreeing expenditure on refurbishing the lavatories. There is scope for further consultation with parents on their views about school improvement issues. Resources are generally adequate to support teaching and learning and, with the exception of computers in the classroom, are used well. Time is not well managed and teaching time is not organised efficiently to make the most of time to promote pupils' learning. Taking into account pupils' satisfactory achievement and the good quality of teaching and the improving standards, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

63. In order to improve standards further the headteacher, staff and governing body should:
  - (1) Increase the rate of improvement in the standards that pupils attain in writing by,
    - ensuring that writing skills are clearly identified and are taught systematically from the nursery through to Year 6;
    - raising teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' writing;
    - ensuring that all teachers have a clear understanding of the standards that each year group is expected to attain;
    - monitoring and evaluating pupils' attainment and progress in writing to identify any weaknesses and further areas for development;
    - involving pupils in developing a clear understanding of the standards they are expected to attain;
    - providing a full range of materials in each classroom designed to help pupils to develop their writing skills;
    - setting achievable short-term targets for pupils.  
(paragraphs 2,4,82,90,91,92,126,128)



- (2) Promote greater use of computers in classrooms by,
- identifying where computers can be used effectively to support the achievement of learning objectives in lessons,
  - identifying appropriate programs to support cross-curricular teaching and learning and specify these in lesson plans. (paragraphs 21,96,102, 111,118,121,133)
- (3) Improve systems for recording children's day-to-day development in the nursery and use the data to plan the next steps in learning. (paragraphs 15,41,49,61,71,81)
- (4) Review timetables and, in Years 3 to 6, the length of the school day in order to maximise the time available for teaching and learning. (paragraphs 18,22)
- (5) Encourage parents to become more closely involved with their children's learning and in the daily life of the school. (paragraphs 51,54)
- (6) Encourage parents to send their children to school punctually and regularly. (paragraphs 11,54)

**Other less significant areas for development:**

- Ensure that the caretaker maintains high standards of hygiene and organises a continuous supply of paper towels and soap in all lavatories. (paragraphs 42)
- Take steps to improve the behaviour of a small number of the older boys. (paragraphs 8, 106)
- Develop systems to assess pupils' attainment and progress in the non-core subjects of the National Curriculum.\* (paragraphs 46, 112,118,121,128,134,144)

\* These areas have already been identified by the school and feature in its improvement planning.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	19	37	14	1	0	0
Percentage	1	26	51	19	1	0	0

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

### 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)	22.5	238
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8	83

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

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

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	14	9	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	15	6	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (n/a)	26 (n/a)	70 (n/a)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	15	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (n/a)	65 (n/a)	70 (n/a)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

\*According to guidance, as the number of girls in the group that took the tests was less than ten, the test results are not recorded separately by gender.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	20	27	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	13	15
	Girls	17	15	18
	Total	31	28	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (n/a)	60 (n/a)	70 (n/a)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	13
	Girls	15	17	14
	Total	27	31	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (n/a)	66 (n/a)	57 (n/a)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

## Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

## Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
236	17	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, 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)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	27.5

### Education support staff: YR – Y1

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46

## Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	445,557
Total expenditure	427,135
Expenditure per pupil	2,625
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,863
Balance carried forward to next year	33,285

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	N/a
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	N/a

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

248

Number of questionnaires returned

18

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	39	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	44	0	6	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	22	50	17	0	11
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	50	11	6	11
The teaching is good.	50	44	0	6	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	50	0	6	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	89	11	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	33	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	17	61	11	6	6
The school is well led and managed.	33	67	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	61	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	56	0	17	11

### **Other issues raised by parents**

A minority of parents believe that teaching pupils in mixed-age classes is not conducive to effective learning. Parents who are actively involved in the school are concerned that many parents do not offer sufficient support for their children's learning. Parents regretted that there were no opportunities for their children to learn how to play musical instruments.

## **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**

*A revised curriculum that follows national guidance has been introduced for children in nursery and Reception classes. National guidance recommends six areas of learning and these are:*

- *personal, social and emotional development;*
- *communication, language and literacy;*
- *mathematical development;*
- *knowledge and understanding of the world;*
- *physical development; and*
- *creative development.*

*The curriculum details 'stepping stones' in each area of learning that lead to 'early learning goals' for each area.*

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

64. Teaching is good and pupils achieve well so that, by the end of the Reception year, most children attain average standards in this area of learning. Adults are caring and generally effective role models and provide good opportunities for children to relate to others. Most children in the nursery come to school happily and are confident when leaving parents and carers. Nearly all children settle to their activities and most routines are clear and well-established. On arrival in the classroom, many parents share the activity where children find their name cards and practise copying their names. This activity contributes towards children settling in comfortably for the session. Although the arrangement of the teacher and nursery nurse each taking responsibility for half the class is successful in giving the children more opportunities for speaking, it detracts from a whole-class togetherness at the beginning of the session. During the inspection, there were some occasions when a parent wanted to discuss a matter with an adult but there was no-one available and the groups had to be rearranged.
65. Teachers provide many opportunities to encourage children to talk about their activities. Consequently, they learn how to listen and respond to each other sensitively. This is more successfully handled in the Reception class than the nursery. On several occasions in the nursery, the teacher or another adult spoke for too long, resulting in insufficient time for children to respond and develop their language.
66. Most of the planned activities provide good opportunities for children to work either in groups or individually. As a result they concentrate for increasing lengths of time. Resources are well organised and encourage children to make choices. The good provision for children with special educational needs contributes to their successful involvement in all activities.
67. Children are given an increasingly wide range of responsibilities as they progress through the Foundation Stage. For example, they take turns in giving out the milk and tidying their activity areas. Although some children need more adult support than others, the majority develop a greater level of independence. The systems for taking responsibility and tidying are taught more consistently in the Reception class than in the nursery. Throughout the Foundation Stage relationships are good and children develop a greater understanding of the standards of behaviour required.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

68. Teaching is good and staff work hard and, in most cases successfully, to provide good opportunities for children to improve their communication and language skills. Children achieve



well but standards are below average and most are unlikely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. They ensure that the children learn to listen carefully and follow instructions. Staff teach the vocabulary associated with each activity and adults use correct terminology such as 'Move the mouse towards the correct letter and click on ...' and 'When water freezes, it becomes ice' in order to teach accurate sentence structure. They teach children to say sounds clearly and audibly. Even so, a significant number of children in the nursery have problems articulating all the sounds made by the letters of the alphabet and many find difficulty in projecting their voices in group activities. The good emphasis on language development continues in the Reception class where children have an increased range of opportunities to encourage them to speak.

69. Overall, teachers and other adults ensure that children have good opportunities to enjoy sharing books and to develop early reading and writing skills. Children have access to a satisfactory range of books in each classroom. During the inspection, children in the nursery shared the book 'A Snowy Day', and recognised many words and sounds. The majority knew that books are read from left to right, recognised the title, the author and the work of the illustrator. At present, however, children do not take books or toys home although the older, more able children have books at home and can retell many stories. In the Reception class, the constant reinforcement of reading, for both pleasure and for a purpose, is one of the many teaching strengths. Children in this class begin to follow the National Literacy Strategy and this contributes successfully to their good progress.
70. Children's achieve well in writing. In the nursery the informal writing corner is used well as children practise their secretarial skills by answering the telephone, searching the Yellow Pages and placing orders. In the Reception class children enjoy writing stories related to the class reading books. They have a wide range of writing opportunities which help them to improve letter formation and develop personal writing.

### **Mathematical Development**

71. The quality of teaching is mostly good and most children achieve well. Although children experience a rich variety of mathematical activities, standards are below average and most are unlikely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. In both classes number activities are interesting and relevant. In the Reception class the teacher takes every opportunity to develop children's knowledge of the sequence of numbers and, as a result, they count and recognise numbers to 10 and the more able children use numbers above 10. They successfully match numerals to the appropriate number of objects but most are still at the stage where they have to touch each object, one by one, in order to count accurately. Children in the nursery recognise a range of regular shapes such as triangles, circles and squares. In the Reception class their understanding of geometrical shapes develops well. In one very good lesson in the hall they used their bodies as fixed points around which they arranged long loops of elastic to form regular shapes. One boy advised that only four children should remain within the loop to make a square. They found it very challenging to make a circle and it was difficult to make the opposite sides of a rectangle of equal length. Children demonstrated their good understanding by explaining that, whilst only four people were needed to form a square everyone in the class was needed to form a circle. This activity was a good way of teaching the properties of two-dimensional shapes. Throughout the Foundation Stage children have many opportunities to use number and measurement skills in a wide range of activities. They compare height, weight and length and are beginning to understand time. Children's advances in learning are not always analysed systematically and therefore teaching does not always build successfully on what has already been learned.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

72. Teaching is good and children achieve well. By the end of the Reception year, the majority of children are well placed to attain average standards. A good number of visitors to the school, as well as a wide range of visits outside the classroom, contribute well to children's learning. Resources are used well and activities are carefully planned, as for example, when the children

explored the properties of different materials and examined relative textures and strengths. They understood that water and sand took on the shape of their containers while dough and clay could be rolled and formed into different shapes.

73. When children first join the nursery the majority have relatively limited experiences of the world around them. During the inspection the staff in the nursery used the snow and icy conditions well to improve the children's knowledge and awareness of contrasting weather conditions. They made sure that children learned and used the correct vocabulary associated with weather. A particular strength in the Reception class is the teaching and the quality of learning in information and communication technology. Children use computers confidently and have already attained the early learning goals in this strand of the area of learning. They also have a wide range of opportunities for using other equipment, such as tape recorders and headphones, to listen to favourite stories and rhymes. They handle the equipment carefully and understand how to stop and rewind the tape.
74. Children learn about different occupations of adults, the different cultures, religions and festivals of some of the people in Britain and the wide range of people who help them. They recognise foods which form part of a healthy diet and know the importance of warming up before and cooling down after physical activities. During the inspection, children in the nursery learned the names of the root vegetables used for making soup, identified them and cut them into small pieces. Curricular planning for the year shows that children will have covered all aspects of this area of the curriculum by the time they transfer to Year 1.

### **Physical Development**

75. Teaching is good and pupils achieve well. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the Reception year. In the nursery, children take part in a wide range of activities and develop good co-ordination and direction when aiming balls at different numbers, jumping over obstacles and running. In a movement lesson, children in the Reception class showed very good control as they balanced carefully and showed high levels of independence and good awareness of pace and direction. In the nursery, children enjoyed dancing and contrasted the cold sharp movements of 'Jack Frost' with the slower, more gentle movements of ice melting.
76. Although children in the nursery have immediate access to the secure outdoor area which is very attractively equipped, this space is not used spontaneously enough as an extension of the classroom. Children in the Reception class have access to this area at specific times each week and the school plans to give them an additional outdoor area.
77. Children make good progress in their knowledge and skills in using construction materials. In most cases, they used the equipment carefully and creatively. However, in the nursery, there were occasions when children were given construction equipment without sufficient guidance on how to use it either productively or creatively. This area of learning is well planned in the Reception class. In lessons and when moving about school children showed good control and awareness of safety.

### **Creative Development**

78. Teaching is good and children achieve well but many have limited speech and a narrow range of vocabulary and this restricts their attainment in the creative use of language in role play. Standards are below average and most children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Children in the nursery play imaginatively with the wide range of equipment in the creativity areas. However, those who do not communicate easily benefit most when there is adult support. Carefully planned activities ensure an effective balance between independent learning, where children are able to make choices, and direction, when adults teach basic skills. Children in the nursery enjoy playing independently in the home corner. One took on the role of cook and his assistant had to identify and pass the range of equipment needed for a complex recipe.

79. Children mixed paints to produce varying shades of blue as part of a winter display. They held paintbrushes with the correct grip and knew that the addition of white would make a paler shade of the primary colour. Children use a wide range of materials to make fabric pictures while adults pay particular attention to encouraging careful stitching. Children are encouraged to develop observational skills as they transfer their knowledge of winter scenes and changes in the landscape colours to artwork.
80. Their creative development is also enhanced through story time and imaginative play. They use a wide range of percussion instruments and know many songs and nursery and counting rhymes, which they sing with accurate pitch, good rhythm and great enthusiasm.
81. The teaching is good in all areas of learning because lessons are well planned and well prepared. The nursery nurse and the part-time class teachers work well as a team. There is scope, however, to refine assessment procedures. Children make significant advances in their learning but these are not always noted or recorded systematically. As a result planning does not always match children's particular stage of development in each area of learning and tasks are not always well matched to children's specific learning needs.

## **ENGLISH**

82. The national test results for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2002 show that pupils' performance was well below average. Since the appointment of the acting headteacher, a more rigorous and analytical approach has been adopted and standards have greatly improved in a relatively short time. Most pupils in Year 2 are well placed to attain average standards in speaking and listening and reading by the end of the school year. Although standards in writing are also improving, the rate of improvement is not as rapid as in the other strands of the subject. This is because the early stages of writing were not taught systematically in the past and the gaps in pupils' prior learning in this area of the curriculum are more pronounced than in the other areas. Although becoming steadily closer to national averages, by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6, standards in writing are likely to be below average. Standards in reading, although still slightly below average, are likely to be much closer to the national average by the end of Year 6 and in speaking and listening most pupils are likely to attain average standards. Across the school writing is the main area of weakness. The school is well aware of this and has taken steps to improve the standards of pupils' written work.
83. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in most strands of the subject although achievement in writing is erratic. Pupils learn effectively because of the good teaching that is beginning to promote steadily rising standards. There is a new-found enthusiasm for learning in the school and this is helping to promote improved standards. Teachers give pupils good guidance and encouragement that challenge them to do better. Pupils with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils are fully involved in all activities and achieve well. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
84. Clear identification of pupils' needs by rigorous analysis of test and task results, together with careful tracking of pupils' attainments, have enabled teachers to target specific groups and individuals and focus help where it is needed most. The teaching assistants play a significant role in helping the pupils to achieve, including those who learn slowly and those who find difficulties in concentration and application. Help is given to those pupils who are identified as having specific areas of weakness. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils' confidence, self-esteem and interest in lessons are maintained and give praise and help at appropriate times. Where achievement falls below what is expected, teachers explain where and how pupils can improve.
85. Speaking skills are developed well through effective teaching and the carefully planned opportunities teachers create to enable the pupils to improve. The many children enter the nursery with speaking and listening skills that are poorly developed and, as a direct result of the teachers' skilful encouragement in Years 1 and 2, pupils soon develop the confidence to respond

with ideas and suggestions during lessons. Listening is difficult for some pupils when they wish to speak themselves, but teachers take time to ensure that they listen actively and therefore respond appropriately. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils confidently discussed the differences between the traditional tale and the modern version of 'Red Riding Hood', identifying the roles and actions of the main characters. Pupils in Year 6 spoke with enthusiasm about the characteristics and appearance of Henry VIII and explained how many of his actions were based on personal preferences and interests.

86. Pupils' achievement in reading in Years 1 and 2 is good and most are likely to attain average standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils are enthusiastic about the books they read. They take two books home each afternoon and most read at home with their parents. They read books from a structured reading scheme, which helps them to develop skills progressively, as well as a good range of appropriate fiction and non-fiction material. Teachers support pupils' learning well in group reading sessions, where the stories are discussed and an interest in books is promoted. There is also a strong emphasis on helping pupils to develop strategies to read unfamiliar words. Pupils have, for example, a good understanding of the sounds that letters make. They use this knowledge to 'sound out' difficult words. One boy in Year 1, for example, used this knowledge to 'sound out' the word 'disturbed'. They are also encouraged to develop an understanding of the story by studying the illustrations. When confronted with unfamiliar words pupils are also urged to consider the meaning of sentences and to predict the most likely meaning of the words that they encounter. The skill of predicting is encouraged through pupils' knowledge of poetry and words that rhyme. Enthusiasm is also developed through reading favourite stories to the class. The range of reading ability is wide. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 read complex stories with ease whilst lower attaining pupils happily page through books, telling the story from the pictures but not actually reading the words.
87. Although early reading skills are taught well there is scope for further development. The books that pupils have read are recorded in their reading diaries but there is little evidence that common errors in pupils' reading are recorded and used to teach the particular skills that are required. Pupils' progress in reading is recorded by administering regular tests but day-to-day progress is not recorded systematically. As a result, opportunities to fill in any gaps in pupils' knowledge of letter sounds or particular words are missed. One boy in Year 1, for example, kept stumbling on the word 'out' but there was no record of this so that a short-term target could be set for learning the word. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' knowledge of the sounds that letters make is strong but they are less secure in their immediate recognition of common everyday words. This is partly because classrooms do not all have a good range of frequently changed posters, signs and labels. Teachers teach the high frequency words that are most commonly encountered in early reading, but this skill is not as well developed as pupils' knowledge of phonics.
88. Pupils' achievement in reading in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory but, by the end of Year 6, they are likely to attain standards that are still slightly below average. This is because in each year group there is a higher proportion of lower attaining pupils than is found in most schools; in most year groups in Years 3 to 6 around a half of pupils are on the register of special educational needs. Also, there are fewer higher-attaining pupils than in most schools. In most classes an enthusiasm for reading has been developed. Higher-attaining pupils enjoy reading J K Rowling's 'Harry Potter' series and many of the older pupils expressed particular interest in R L Stine's 'Goosebumps' series. In Year 6 several pupils had read Philip Pullman's 'His Dark Materials' trilogy. There are inconsistencies in the records that teachers keep on pupils' progress in reading; in some classes records are more thorough and detailed than in others. Tests are administered regularly to assess the stage of pupils' development in reading and these are used to identify pupils who need extra support. However, that several pupils in Year 6 are not receiving enough help with their reading. They had few strategies for reading unfamiliar words, which indicated gaps in their prior learning. Several of the poor readers expressed a dislike for reading. However, a good number of pupils said that they enjoyed reading and visited the village lending library to borrow books.
89. By the end of Year 6, pupils know how to use the school library for research. They understand the classification system and confidently refer to the guidance schedule when searching for a particular piece of information. Resources are adequate and most of the reading books are of satisfactory quality.
90. Pupils attain standards in writing that are below average. The most able pupils in Year 2 write for a wide variety of purposes. They use capital letters, full stops and speech marks correctly and write their ideas in logical sequences to convey clear meaning and atmosphere. However, most pupils experience great difficulty in writing independently and produce very few sentences. Most use full stops and capital letters accurately. Although the words and phrases used convey meaning, pupils often get mixed up and cannot sustain a clear description of a series of events.

- The majority of words learned in spelling activities are spelt correctly. Lower attaining pupils struggle to write two or more sentences independently. They understand when to use capital letters and full stops and spell familiar words accurately.
91. The more able pupils in Year 6 apply their knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling to a wide variety of writing activities from poetry to giving instructions. They succeed in writing stories with a logical sequence of events and use adjectives and descriptions well to add atmosphere. They use paragraphs accurately and understand the difference between direct and indirect speech. Most pupils write shorter pieces and do not put events in order or write in paragraphs. Many need help with spelling. Pupils who attain below average standards, including those with special educational needs, frequently need adult support and the use of a framework to support their writing. The standards these pupils attain are well below the national average.
  92. Standards in writing are consistently below average for the majority of pupils throughout the school. The headteacher, the subject co-ordinator and teachers have identified this as a priority and provide a well-planned range of opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their writing. The teachers are effective in the consistent and supportive way they teach the skills of planning, drafting and redrafting. They give pupils a clear framework for writing and for developing their ideas. This technique is used consistently and progressively throughout the school and enables pupils to write within a very clear setting. For example, in a Year 1 / 2 lesson the teacher effectively linked the writing activities to the story with which they had become very familiar in order that pupils had a secure basis for writing. This is steadily and thoroughly developed in each year group.
  93. Throughout the school handwriting is generally taught well. Consequently pupils are improving their presentation and accuracy. The most able pupils in Year 2 form letters correctly, the majority using capital letters and full stops. They are beginning to consider their audience as they write. Teachers encourage them to use descriptions and appropriate joining words. The lower attaining pupils' use capital letters and full stops, but use shorter sentences with less description.
  94. The school has successfully adopted the National Literacy Strategy and it is used consistently across all year groups. Teachers have high expectations that standards will improve. In lessons activities are well matched to the pupils' needs. Relationships between the pupils and teachers are strong, resulting in confident pupils who generally try hard. However, there is a small but significant group of pupils who are not yet well motivated in writing despite teachers' encouragement. They are mainly in Years 5 and 6 and have not had the benefit over sufficient years of the new enthusiastic yet rigorous regime. Teachers ensure that pupils understand what they have to achieve and how successful they have been. Learning objectives are shared with pupils and, in some cases, class teachers involve the pupils in assessing how well they have achieved and what they need to do next.
  95. Where possible, teachers use literacy skills in support of other subjects. However, insufficient time is allocated to developing reading and writing skills in other subjects and therefore pupils do not have as many opportunities to develop their literacy skills as they should. Marking of written work is generally good but it does not always show pupils what they need to do to improve. Tests and examinations of work help the teachers to plot the progress that pupils are making and to ensure that those pupils who need additional support or more challenging work receive it so that they are able to make the best possible progress.
  96. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator and she is determined to improve standards but it is an uphill struggle. Gaps in pupils prior learning will take time to repair. Good assessment systems are in place to identify specific weaknesses and to set targets. Resources are adequate and for the most part are used well. However, computers are not used consistently to help pupils with drafting and redrafting their work.

## **MATHEMATICS**

97. In the national tests for pupils in Year 2 and for those in Year 6 in 2002, the school's performance was well below average when compared with the performance of schools that have pupils from similar social backgrounds. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory but the standards that most pupils are likely to attain by the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6 are still below average. However, inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving and getting steadily closer to national averages. This is because of the good teaching throughout the school but the good quality of teaching has not been sustained consistently or over a long enough period to have had its full impact on pupils' achievement and the standards they attain. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
98. In addition to the good teaching, there are a number of reasons for the improvement in standards. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and has concentrated on raising standards. The recommended three-part strategy of daily mathematics lessons is well used. The mental starter at the beginning of lessons sets a good pace before the main part of the lesson is introduced. Towards the end of each lesson there is an effective review session where the teachers find out how much pupils have learnt and understood. Teaching and learning vary from satisfactory to very good in Years 1 and 2, but is mainly satisfactory, and in Years 3 to 6 vary from good to very good but is mainly good. Teachers are becoming more competent and confident. In the good lessons the teachers set a good pace. They know their pupils well and set questions both orally and in writing to suit their needs. Another reason for the improving standards is that an extra teacher is employed so that the two classes in Year 2 are split into three classes for numeracy lessons. This helps the pupils to learn effectively in smaller classes. Similarly, at the top of the school, the three classes with pupils in Years 5 and 6 are subdivided. Here pupils who need to work at a slower pace and in smaller groups have tuition with other teachers. This also enables the average and higher-attaining pupils to work at their own pace in smaller classes. As a result, although standards are still below national averages, they are improving. The school anticipates that pupils will meet the reasonably challenging targets for 2003. Where lessons are less effective, the pace is rather slow because of insufficient challenge for all pupils.
99. Pupils in Year 1 add and subtract single-digit numbers; the higher-attaining pupils are able to find ways of making 5 pence, 10 pence and 20 pence. Pupils in Year 2 complete addition sums to thirty, subtract accurately and recognise simple two and three-dimensional shapes. In one very good lesson, the higher-attaining pupils were able to solve word problems involving time by adding on or taking away one hour. The average pupils were given similar though simpler questions whilst the lower attaining pupils were able to tell the time, on the hour and half-past the hour, on an analogue clock.
100. Pupils in Year 3 find basic fractions of whole numbers and of shapes whilst higher-attaining pupils in Year 4 turn improper fractions into mixed numbers and are able to solve word problems using fractions. In a good lesson with one class of pupils in Years 3 and 4, the lower attaining pupils made good progress in solving real-life problems that involved one calculation whilst the higher-attaining pupils had to consider how to solve problems that needed four calculations to reach the solution. In another very good lesson with a different class of the same year groups, the pupils understood the basic four points of the compass and the higher-attaining pupils solved problems involving eight points.
101. In good lessons in all the three classes for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teachers had established a good rapport with pupils and tried to include all of them in the lessons through good questioning strategies. More straightforward questions were posed for lower attaining pupils so that all could experience success. Work on relating fractions to division was well matched to the pupils' prior attainment, thus enabling them to make good progress. In another very good lesson with the same age group, the lower attaining pupils worked out the perimeter of a rectangle given the length of two sides. The higher-attaining pupils were given more complex problems such as calculating the cost of fencing a rectangular field at £6.25 per metre.
102. Across the school there was little evidence of computers being used to support teaching and learning. Pupils' learning is occasionally supported in other subjects, such as design and

technology and geography where pupils use their numeracy skills when measuring, recording data and using co-ordinates in map-work, but such opportunities are infrequent.

103. Pupils are enthusiastic and most have a good attitude to the subject and behave well. There is a very small minority of older pupils who show challenging behaviour but whom the teachers manage well.



104. The co-ordinator has only been in position since September 2002 and is very keen. She has ensured that all staff have been on courses and has been able to monitor lessons with the headteacher. Short-term assessments takes place on a day-to-day basis. In the medium term, there are assessments at each half term and at the end of each topic which are all recorded. In addition to the National Curriculum tests at Years 2 and 6, internal national tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 also take place. In December each year, all pupils from Years 1 to 6 also participate in other internal national tests. All these tests will be recorded on discs which will enable them to be passed easily from one teacher to the next. Systems are now in place for the school to continue to improve standards and meet the targets which have been set.

## **SCIENCE**

105. In the national tests for pupils in Year 2 and for those in Year 6 in 2002, the school's performance was well below the national averages. Inspection evidence indicates that, although the school has concentrated mainly on improving standards in English and mathematics, attention has also been given to improving attainment in science and pupils are now achieving satisfactorily. Although still below average, pupils' attainment is moving steadily closer to national averages.
106. This new school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance and consequently behaviour is good overall, although in many classes there one or two pupils who attempt to disrupt the learning of others. These pupils are very well managed by their teachers, but one Year 5/6 class has a higher proportion of pupils with behavioural difficulties than the other two and here pupils' learning is interrupted more often than in the other classes.
107. Pupils' learning is now good in most lessons. The majority work with enthusiasm and interest and concentrate well. Pupils are encouraged to predict the outcome of an activity or experiment and they understand how to devise a 'fair test'. One Year 5/6 class made a list of rules which they thought would help to maintain food hygiene after devising an experiment to help them realise that micro-organisms grow and reproduce on food. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 helped their teacher to carry out an experiment which showed them that some materials change when heated. Using a toaster with a variable temperature and time control the teacher was able to demonstrate how these two variables affected the outcome. During experiments, teachers constantly emphasised the use of scientific language. A pupil in Year 2 commented that this was 'an irreversible process', demonstrating a good grasp of scientific vocabulary. This also showed that pupils were listening and understanding the teacher's observations. This focus on investigations and experimentation is promoting effective learning and is also adding immensely to the pupils' interest in and enjoyment of the subject
108. The quality of teaching is now good throughout the school. Teachers know their pupils well and are able to capture and sustain their interest for prolonged periods of time. In an introductory lesson in a Year 5/6 class on the study of plants, the teaching was very good. The teacher kept the interest of pupils by the skilful use of a video which stimulated them to discuss links with their own experience and knowledge of plants and made an important contribution to their developing skills of speaking and listening. It also helped them to appreciate their own school garden, and four pupils set to work later in their own time to tidy it in readiness for spring. In another Year 5/6 class, where the teaching was excellent, the pupils learned that decay could be beneficial. The teacher had provided a whole variety of resources to illustrate how compost can be made and she showed its benefits on the growth of plants. During the showing of a video to illustrate the process, the teacher challenged the pupils to make short notes on their white boards which helped them to write a more detailed account of the process later. This also provided a good opportunity for pupils to practise their writing skills, which are often poorly developed and thus restrict pupils' ability to record their experiments fully. A Year 3/4 teacher taught very confidently as the class investigated the importance of a varied and adequate diet for their health. Parents reported that several pupils in this class had found it difficult at the beginning of the school year to sustain interest in anything and their behaviour was often poor, but because of the teacher's very good rapport with them and his constant encouragement and praise, the whole class is now

working together well. Teachers always make their pupils aware of health and safety issues when using and handling tools and materials.

109. The co-ordinator was absent for the whole of last term. However, there is a policy and a scheme of work and the school is aware of the need to continue to focus on investigations and to allow the pupils 'hands on' experience in scientific discovery. Resources are satisfactory. Assessment is being developed satisfactorily in line with the school's new system. The use of computers is included in some science lessons but is still underdeveloped. The school is now well set to continue the considerable improvement which has occurred since September 2002.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

110. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and by the end of Year 2 pupils are likely to attain average standards. Particularly good teaching was seen in Year 1 where pupils were trained to use powder paint effectively. They used a palette that was restricted to primary colours and white. They understood how to wash their brushes thoroughly before picking up an appropriate quantity of paint and knew how to use the piece of sponge rubber in their palettes to dry off their brushes. Many were beginning to mix paint confidently to achieve the colours they required and often referred to a large colour mixing chart for assistance. Lower attaining pupils were not so confident but were prompted well by the teacher: 'You've got blue – now what might you add to make green?' 'White?' 'Well give it a try to see what happens.' This good early start to developing painting skills systematically is not maintained throughout the school and, by the end of Year 6, the standards that most pupils attain are below average. This is partly because the accommodation is inadequate to facilitate activities such as painting. There is no art studio in the school and, surprisingly, very few of the classrooms in this new school have running water or sinks and access to water is difficult. This is a disincentive to organising activities that involve working with paint, plaster or clay.
111. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory and by the end of Year 6 standards are below average. This is partly because of the lack of water in classrooms and partly because other areas of the curriculum have been identified as in more urgent need of development. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have produced some carefully drawn and coloured portraits of the Queen as part of the school's celebration of the Golden Jubilee. They have also studied the patterns created by William Morris and have been inspired by Australian Aboriginal art forms, such as Terry Johnstone's 'Turtles Breeding' and 'Dolphins at Sunrise'. As part of a project on movement pupils in Years 5 and 6 have studied Pieter Breughel's 'Children's Games' and have created a mural in the same vein entitled 'Playground Games'. Good links are made with other subjects, such as history, where pupils use their skills well to illustrate their work. Although there are examples of good work, the range and quality of work produced are limited. The range of media used is largely restricted to pencil crayons, felt-tipped pens and a variety of fabrics. There was very little evidence of paint being used and computers are not used much to support teaching and learning.
112. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. It was not possible to see enough teaching in Years 3 to 6 to make judgements about its quality. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. In one Year 5/6 class sketch books are used well to develop an understanding of how to draw and paint portraits. Here the quality of work produced reflected the teacher's high expectations of pupils' performance. In other classes sketch books are either not used or they are of poor quality and the work in them indicates lower expectations of pupils' performance. There are as yet no systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and no records are kept of pupils' developing skills, knowledge and understanding.
113. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a few months but has already devised good plans designed to improve standards. Resources in classrooms are adequate but the lack of a water supply is unsatisfactory.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

114. It was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2 and there was insufficient work available to form judgements about either the quality of teaching or the standards that pupils attain. The teaching in the lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 was good but there is little evidence of work of quality being produced and this indicates that over the long-term teaching has been satisfactory at best. The very limited amount of work available indicates that standards are below average. Planning documents indicate that the statutory programmes of study are taught but the subject has a tenuous hold on the school's curriculum and there is scope for a great deal of development.
115. In a good lesson in a Year 5/6 class, pupils were taught how to refine their skills of evaluating products. The teacher had collected samples of six different types of bread and the pupils had to evaluate the bread against set criteria, such as appearance, texture, flavour and cost. Each of the pupils had to record their findings on a grid and, at the end of the tasting session, each group had to collate their findings. This was a very good way of demonstrating the benefits of a methodical approach to evaluations rather than relying on ill-considered spur of the moment judgements. The teacher emphasised how similar systems could be devised to test and evaluate any products that the pupils themselves might make and that the evaluation would be especially worthwhile if it informed further modifications and improvements to make products more suitable for their intended function.
116. In another good lesson in another class for pupils in Years 5 and 6, pupils explored cereal boxes. Here there was a good variety of activities to stimulate and sustain interest. A short video clip about a personal stereo was used to illustrate the essential features of advertising. The teacher's good questioning strategies helped pupils to realise what a great deal of information is included on the boxes. They understood clearly that the cereal boxes they were to design had to include the name of a product that would appeal to the sector of the market that the company was targeting. Pupils devised appropriate names such as 'Groovos', 'Teens' and 'Jungle Snaps'. They fully understood the need for colour and impact in their designs. They worked with great concentration and enjoyment. Their interest was captured because they understood the relevance of this activity to everyday working life and that the tasks that they were engaged in were similar to those performed by marketing companies in the real world of work.
117. A strong feature of the good teaching in the lessons seen was the good relationships between teachers and pupils that generated in pupils a willingness to work hard and do their best. Lesson planning and preparation were good. Explanations were clear and pupils were left in no doubt about what was expected of them. Pupils thoroughly enjoy this subject but discussions with pupils indicate that they have produced very little work in the past. The sequence of design, make, evaluate and improve has not been fully established. This indicates that teaching over time has not been any better than satisfactory.
118. The subject co-ordinator is very new to the post and has not as yet been able to make a major impact on the standards that pupils attain. Resources are adequate but there was little evidence of computers being used to support teaching and learning. There are as yet no systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and no records are kept of pupils' developing skills, knowledge and understanding.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

119. The subject is taught in blocks of time and alternates with the teaching of history. As a result there was very little teaching timetabled for the week of the inspection and little earlier work had been retained that could be used to make judgements about the standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 2 or about the quality of teaching across the school. Planning documents indicate that the statutory programmes of study are taught. It was possible to observe one lesson in Year 5/6 class. This lesson, together with discussions with staff and pupils and analysis of the amount of pupils' work available, indicate that achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and that, by the end of Year 6, pupils are likely to attain average standards.

120. An analysis of work produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6 indicates that they attained average standards in a project on water. This was confirmed in a discussion with pupils who were able to explain the water cycle very clearly and to describe the course of a river from a mountain pool to its mouth. In a lesson that was also connected with water, pupils gave accurate map co-ordinates of specific locations. They used atlases well. In a further discussion pupils were able to point out the continents and oceans on a world map but their knowledge of Ordnance Survey maps was less secure. In the lesson observed, pupils had good attitudes and worked well together. There was a good link between teaching and learning in that pupils were able to find place names and give the co-ordinates.
121. The co-ordinator took up the post in September 2002. The school has adopted a nationally recommended planning framework and planning is organised on a two-year cycle. This promotes adequate coverage of the statutory programmes of study. Assessment procedures are yet to be developed. Resources are adequate and are generally used well but computers are underused.

## **HISTORY**

122. The standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6 are below average. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls across the school. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able pupils, achieve satisfactorily. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. Although few lessons were observed during the inspection, additional evidence was provided through scrutiny of pupils' completed work, teachers' planning files, displays throughout the school and through discussions with pupils and teachers.
123. By the end of Year 2, pupils have covered a satisfactory range of historical topics. They understand the concept of time, 'now', 'then' and 'a long time ago'. They know some of the ways in which characteristics of events, people and lifestyles can differ over time. Pupils also show an increasing ability to identify similarities and differences between modern homes, transport and holidays with those of previous generations. They have too few opportunities to handle objects from the past in order to ask questions and make deductions. Their sense of chronology is not well developed.
124. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of many of the historical periods they study. They are beginning to understand chronology - for example, they know when some key events in history took place. However, their ability to describe characteristic features of past societies and to identify changes within and across different periods is very limited.
125. During this term pupils in Year 6 have studied the Tudor period and know about some aspects of the lifestyle of Henry VIII, his interests, his wives, and the reason for the dissolution of the monasteries. They know that Elizabeth I was his daughter and also a powerful queen. Pupils plotted the voyage of Sir Frances Drake and considered the social and moral implications of explorers bringing treasure back to their own country in order to please the monarch. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 compared the events that have occurred in Britain since 1930 with those of today. Of particular interest to them were the different styles of music from big bands and jazz to rock 'n' roll and jukeboxes. They know some of the events of the Second World War and, as a result, are beginning to understand the dangers of racism and its impact on different groups of people.
126. Pupils enjoy the imaginative elements of history and respond well to visual images and to information given by the teachers during discussions. However, few pupils have sufficient opportunities, or the literacy skills, to research information independently. Although they speak with interest, they do not have enough opportunities for writing.
127. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Evidence from discussions with pupils and lesson observations shows that teachers successfully use the richness and social aspects of history to

bring it alive. Analysis of pupils' work indicates that there is too much emphasis on factual information and too few opportunities for independent research.

128. The subject co-ordinator has made a satisfactory impact on the teaching and learning in the school, although the subject is not an identified priority because of the need to improve standards in literacy and numeracy. There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise reading and writing in lessons. Pupils benefit from a wide range of visits and use computers, albeit in a limited way, to support learning. There is a policy and a planning framework that promote the progressive coverage of topics so that pupils develop skills, knowledge and understanding systematically. Assessment systems have yet to be developed. The co-ordinator is well aware of the aspects that need to be addressed in order for standards to improve.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

129. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 most attain average standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
130. Pupils in Year 1 log on and off and are confident in using the mouse. They drag words and shapes to make matching pairs. Pupils in Year 2 used word processing skills successfully to make get-well cards that included the importation of artwork. Pupils printed their work and others stored their finished product to add to it later. Pupils enjoyed using dictaphones to record their discussions and were thrilled to listen to their own voices. Pupils also use tape recorders and headphones independently. These activities help to encourage speaking and listening skills and make an important contribution to the pupils' improving literacy skills.
131. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 become yet more confident in their use of computers. A Year 3/4 class enjoyed reorganising a sequence of instructions to help make a jam sandwich. This involved cutting and pasting a series of instructions that appeared on the screen in the wrong order. A Year 5/6 class prepared a spreadsheet before using it to answer a series of demanding questions. Another group of Year 5/6 pupils used the Internet independently to find information about the Tudors for use in their history topic.
132. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to the subject are positive. Pupils of all ages collaborate well and are very helpful to each other. Whilst working in pairs and small groups, they share ideas and show confidence and independence. They take good care of software and hardware and can be trusted to work independently. Behaviour in the computer suite is good. Pupils listen and watch carefully while teachers demonstrate on the largest available screen the skills they are to learn.
133. The quality of teaching in the computer room is good and in half the lessons observed it was very good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology and their skill in handling equipment are good. This helps them to lead pupils to develop a good range of skills. Teachers plan lessons carefully and, as pupils become more confident and skilful in using computers they are beginning to make more use of them to support and enhance other areas of the curriculum though this is an area that needs much more development. Computers in classrooms are rarely used to support teaching and learning. The governing body is well aware of the importance of computers in pupils' education and are dedicated to providing the best possible opportunities for all pupils by further improving resources as soon as finances allow. In fact much-needed new computers are already on order for use in classrooms to replace the outdated models there, which are not used very often at the moment.
134. Under the enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership and management of the subject by the deputy headteacher, all members of staff are working very hard and their commitment to high achievement is beginning to improve standards. There is a system of assessment in place but this will soon become part of a new whole-school approach to assessment supported by computer

technology which is expected to be ready and in use early next term. The school anticipates that the new system will bring great benefit and make it much easier for teachers to keep track of the attainment and progress of every pupil in all subjects throughout their time at the school.

135. A completely new layout of the computer room has been planned. This is designed to provide much more space and make it possible for teachers to teach new skills to the whole class at the same time. The school also plans to provide a computerised, interactive board to further improve teaching equipment. The plans are designed to bring facilities in line with the quality found in most modern schools.

## **MUSIC**

136. It was only possible to observe two lessons in Years 1 and 2. Judgements, based on these lessons and on discussions with staff and pupils, indicate that achievement is satisfactory and that pupils attain standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 2. However, because of timetabling, it was not possible to observe any lessons in the rest of the school so no judgements can be made about pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 or about the standards pupils attain by the end of Year 6.
137. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The teachers' knowledge is sufficient to teach basic skills but insufficient to challenge and extend pupils' creative abilities. In one lesson, pupils were able, one at a time, to clap and repeat the rhythm given by the teacher but most were unable to keep a steady pulse, particularly when using the bells and maracas. In another lesson, a wider range of instruments was used, including tambourines, agogos and castanets. Pupils watched and listened to a demonstration of how the instruments were played, one at a time, and they then played together, satisfactorily, nursery rhymes such as 'Humpty Dumpty'.
138. Pupils in Year 6 described their musical experiences. They spend at least one lesson a week on singing with a peripatetic music teacher. Some sing in a school choir. A lunchtime activity was observed where the choir practised two hymns for assemblies, accompanied by taped music. The singing was satisfactory and the pupils obviously enjoyed it. The choir was conducted by the co-ordinator. Pupils have also experimented with simple pictorial notation and have made symbols for the sounds produced by various percussion instruments. In addition, they have studied briefly 'Mars' by Holst, Handel's 'Music for the Royal Fireworks' and Strauss' 'Blue Danube'. Pupils in Year 6 also compose their own music and some was recorded on tape. Here pupils in small groups had composed tunes using a computer and synthesiser.
139. The co-ordinator is new to the post and, although not qualified in music, is keen. He has not as yet had sufficient time to develop strategies to improve standards. The choir, which has up to fifty pupils, sings at festivals in the local church and to a group of senior citizens at Christmas. This provides good opportunities for pupils to practise performing skills.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

140. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6, pupils attain average standards. Pupils with special educational needs reach similar standards to their classmates.
141. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers do not ensure that all pupils are involved in activities. This was particularly evident in the second part of one lesson with pupils in Years 5 and 6 where in a game of stoolball, the teacher performed all the bowling, rather than letting the pupils bowl. In the good lessons, teachers motivated pupils well and great enthusiasm was generated. Teachers demonstrate clearly how tasks should be accomplished. In a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, a teacher gave a good demonstration of a dance routine which was linked to work on Hinduism and illustrated the importance of light. In a very good lesson for pupils in Reception and

Year 1 the enthusiasm of the teacher encouraged pupils to try challenging sequences of movement.

142. Many of the lessons concerned movement and dance. In the good lessons from Years 1 to 6, pupils understood the importance of warming up. This was illustrated well by a teacher who described how cold plasticine snaps whilst warm plasticine is more pliable. In one lesson with pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teacher asked the pupils to test their pulses before the warm up and again at the end of it to note the difference. In most lessons, there was also a cooling down session at the end. Pupils in Year 1 were very creative and inventive with shapes and sequences. Pupils in Year 2 made movement to the beat of a tambourine with mixed success as they had some difficulty in moving to the beat. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 responded to a well structured lesson by moving to a piece of music entitled 'Light'. The teacher also ensured that all pupils were included by asking pupils to demonstrate their creations. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 developed their own movements to music. The session was aptly entitled 'A Winter Sports Holiday'. Pupils were able to demonstrate their skills in bending, twisting, throwing and turning, both individually and in groups, as they mimed bob sleighing, skiing, skating and snowballing.
143. Because of poor weather conditions, no outdoor games sessions could be observed during the inspection. In addition to the lessons for physical education, there are clubs for netball and girls' and boys' football, when pupils from an independent school, Worksop College, help with the coaching. Retford Cricket Club also coach cricket in the summer term and a parent, who is a qualified rugby coach, helps with rugby also in the summer term. Swimming is part of the curriculum and all pupils from Years 3 to 6 use the swimming baths for a six-week session. Most pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school.
144. The co-ordinator was new to the post in September 2002 and is currently on a training course to develop his leadership of the subject. There is a good policy and a clear planning framework to guide teachers' planning. Assessment systems have not yet been developed. Resources are adequate but there has been very little investment.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

145. Although it was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection, analysis of work in pupils' books and discussions with teachers indicate that pupils' achievement is satisfactory and that most attain the expected standards described in the local agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported so that they make progress in their learning in line with their ability, either as a result of work which is adapted to suit their needs, or through additional help from their teacher or support assistant.
146. By the end of Year 2 pupils are likely to reach the expected standards in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. They are familiar with stories from the Bible. The Year 1/2 class know of the Old and New Testaments and were thrilled as they listened to the story of Jonah and the whale.
147. Pupils in Year 6 have gained a deeper knowledge and understanding of the major religions of the world, often through special celebrations such as Diwali. They learn about different places of worship - for example, a mosque, a temple and a synagogue - as well as visiting the local church, where they learned about the different uses of the many ecclesiastical artefacts. During the Christmas period Year 5/6 pupils made a study of the signs and symbols of Christmas.
148. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of the subject. They use precise, specific language in their discussions with pupils in order to increase their vocabulary in a structured way. Pupils are later questioned and encouraged to respond. They are well motivated and are able to work in small groups with the minimum of supervision. Pupils are managed well and have very good relationships with their teachers. In the few lessons observed the behaviour was good. Pupils respected each other's work. At the end of each lesson

there is a short period when all the class gather together to discuss their work and to reflect on their achievements.

149. The co-ordinator has reviewed the curriculum. A policy and scheme of work that complements the locally agreed syllabus have been prepared and agreed with the governing body. Assessment opportunities are now being identified but have not yet been fully implemented.
150. Lessons make a good contribution, together with acts of worship, to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and to their literacy skills. The emphasis that teachers place on the need to show care and concern for others supports the teaching of religious education and contributes well to pupils' personal development.