

INSPECTION REPORT

RIPLEY JUNIOR SCHOOL

Ripley, Derbyshire

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112611

Headteacher: Mr Denis Hanbury

Lead inspector: Mrs Barbara E Doughty

Dates of inspection: 12th – 14th July 2004

Inspection number: 257323

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	389
School address:	Poplar Avenue Ripley Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE5 3PN
Telephone number:	01773 742281
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Julie Critchlow
Date of previous inspection:	29 th June to 2 nd July 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a large junior school with 389 pupils on roll. There is an even mix of boys and girls. The pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are broadly average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, 14 per cent, is similar to most other schools but there is an above average percentage with statements of specific need, mostly moderate learning or emotional and behavioural difficulties. Few pupils join the school at times other than the start of Year 3. Most of the pupils are from white English-speaking families; none have English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to Year 3 is as expected for pupils aged seven. The school achieved the Eco-school's Bronze Award in 2004 and is working towards the Healthy Schools Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9981	Mr Saleem Hussain	Lay inspector	
11901	Mrs Pat Lowe	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology
32596	Mrs Gillian Phillips	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History
18703	Mrs Christine Canniff	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Music Physical education Religious education Special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION SUBJECTS	18
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school that gives **good** value for money. Pupils achieve well to reach above average standards by the time they leave. Good, imaginative teaching makes learning effective. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy school, and this is reflected in their very good attendance. Leadership is very good and well developed throughout the school and together with effective management ensures improvement; weaknesses are successfully identified, pursued and tackled.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is good; pupils do well to reach above average standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, and art and design; standards in design and technology are well above those expected nationally.
- Teaching is good overall; it is very good in Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy school and want to come. They are enthusiastic and engrossed in activities and they behave very well.
- Learning opportunities are wide and varied; pupils find them exciting. The very good range of clubs, visitors who share their expertise and visits out of school, all enrich very well pupils' learning opportunities
- The head teacher, staff, and governors have a clear vision for the future development of the school; they tackle weaknesses head on in pursuit of improvement.
- Teaching does not promote speaking skills well enough or encourage pupils to use their well-developed computer skills as a tool for learning in other subjects.

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection. All of the key issues have been dealt with. There has been a firm upward trend in performance in mathematics and science; English standards have improved this year. ICT, religious education and design and technology are much improved. As well as raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the school has maintained a balance of other subjects, giving pupils a good all-round education.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	D	E	E
Mathematics	D	D	C	C
Science	B	B	A	A

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Achievement is **good**. The table gives results up to 2003, which shows that last year pupils did very well in science, well enough in mathematics, but underperformed in English compared to all schools nationally and to similar schools. However, test results have improved this year as improvements to teaching have taken effect and although there is no national comparative data yet available, the number of pupils reaching the expected level has increased in English and mathematics and, in particular, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level in English has risen significantly. The current Year 6 pupils are working at above expected levels in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils' speaking skills are not in line with their good standards in reading and writing. This is because pupils do not have enough opportunities to talk about their work, extend their answers to questions, or engage in discussions or debates about topical issues. Most pupils achieve well in ICT, religious education, and art and design, and their achievement in design and technology is very good,

but they do not apply their good computer skills as a learning tool in other subjects. Boys perform as well as the girls, bucking the national trend, and the gifted and talented pupils, those with special educational needs, and pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve well. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. Their attitudes to learning are very positive and they behave very well. Attendance is very good, reflecting pupils' enthusiasm for school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching is **good**; it is very good in Year 6, where pupils make very good progress. Teaching throughout the school is imaginative and because of this pupils enjoy learning. Teachers keep a check on what pupils have learnt and use the information to tailor work well to pupils' needs and to set challenging targets. Marking ensures pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to work with different groups, such as those who could reach the expected level with a 'push'. Relationships are very good and pupils work hard to please the teachers. The breadth of the curriculum is very good. Expertise from within and outside the school is used imaginatively to enrich the curriculum and promote pupils' personal development. Links across the subjects successfully consolidate and extend pupils' skills. Rigorous evaluation of the curriculum helps to bring about improvements. Well-resourced classrooms and teaching areas are organised to provide enriched and challenging experiences.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. There is a clear focus on raising standards. The leadership of the head teacher and senior staff is very good. Leaders regularly review the work of the school, are innovative and continually strive to improve all aspects of the school's work. They successfully share their vision with other staff, who know what they are working towards. All staff are committed to ensuring that all pupils benefit fully from school activities. Management is good. The school is organised effectively and procedures are in place so that it runs smoothly. There are very good systems for analysing assessment information so the school has a very clear idea how well pupils are doing and of the achievement of different groups. All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and are given good guidance, support and training. Governance is good. The governing body influences the work of the school by supporting and challenging what the school does. It takes an active part in strategic planning and has a clear focus on improving what the school does.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with this school. They are particularly pleased with the good teaching, and the way staff expect their children to work hard and become independent. The concerns of a small minority about incidences of bullying, homework arrangements, and how they are kept informed about how well their children are doing, are not substantiated by the inspection team. Pupils are extremely happy coming to this school; they enjoy very good relationships with their teachers and enjoy the work.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Give pupils more opportunity to develop their speaking skills so they are able to answer questions more fully, talk about their work in more detail, and enter into more in-depth discussions.
- Encourage pupils to use their good computer skills in the classrooms as a tool to support everyday learning across all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Achievement is good; it is very good in Year 6. Pupils do well to reach above average standards in English, mathematics, science, ICT, religious education, and art and design. The standards they achieve in design and technology are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, and science; a significant number attain the higher level in the national tests.
- Standards in art and design are above those expected nationally and are well above in design and technology.
- All pupils achieve well, particularly the most able because they are suitably challenged.
- The underachievement in English has been eradicated. However, whilst most pupils achieve well and standards are above average in reading and writing, their speaking skills are satisfactory and could be better.

Commentary

1. Taking the three core subject together, over time, standards have broadly kept pace with the national upward trend and are similar to what they were at the time of the last inspection. In the 2003 national tests for eleven year olds, standards were well above average in science, average in mathematics but well below the national average in English. The weaknesses in English evidenced in the results below have been successfully dealt with and this year's test results, not yet published, show a firm rise in standards. This is because, after the implementation of a number of successful intervention programmes, the percentage of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected level rose significantly and there was a substantial increase in the percentage reaching the higher level, to bring achievement in English more in line with that in mathematics and science. It is a similar picture in Year 5, with many pupils working at a level higher than expected nationally for their age, indicating that these improvements are likely to be maintained next year.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.9 (26.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.0 (26.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.2 (29.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 112 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Achievement is good and current Year 6 pupils do well to reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science. For the past year, there has been a particular push on improving pupils' writing skills through the implementation of effective teaching strategies which are now well embedded in all classes. The infectious enthusiasm of the subject leader has fired teachers' interest in the subject and effective in-service training has raised the level of teaching expertise and driven up standards. Reading is valued as an aid to writing and teachers encourage pupils to look at how authors express their thoughts and use the different styles they come across to influence their own writing. As a result, pupils' writing now shows good imagination and the use of exciting language captures and holds the attention of the reader well. Stories are well structured and report writing is clear and precise. Poetry writing shows that

pupils can see the world from different perspectives, such as when Year 6 pupils wrote poems about how a dog was made. One pupil started his poem with, "For his coat, He took the stripes of the zebra, He took the shape of a long round cushion, And made his body. For his claws, He took the sharpness of long pins, He took the curve of a new moon, And made his claws....." This good quality writing is achieved because when they write, pupils are given time to organise their thoughts and think about the language they use. Teachers encourage them to find alternative words to express their thoughts and to organise their writing so it interests the reader.

3. However, whilst pupils' reading and writing skills support learning in other subjects well, speaking does so satisfactorily. This is because teachers are not as successful at developing pupils' speaking skills as they are at developing their reading and writing skills. Consequently, standards in speaking are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils' speech does not reflect the bright and imaginative use of words seen in their writing. This is because teachers do not give pupils time to talk at length, think carefully about what they are saying, or develop answers further. Consequently, although pupils are confident speakers, they do not vary their expression or vocabulary when they speak, as well as they do when they write.
4. Achievement in science is good because of the emphasis on learning through investigation, which makes pupils' knowledge and understanding clear and therefore long-lasting. Pupils in Year 6 write clear scientific explanations of their experiments and findings. They identify a range of contexts in which changes take place and understand the importance of classification. They plan and organise investigations well and reach valid conclusions. Similarly in mathematics, pupils work out how best to solve problems, such as how to work out how much more they need to put to their savings to buy a bicycle. Their competence in mathematics is good and enables them to make progress in other subjects, such as geography, history, and design and technology.
5. Pupils have good computer skills. They find their way around websites and programs efficiently and quickly locate where they want to be and what they want to find out. The work they do in the computer suite often continues work started in the classroom and their competence in ICT supports learning well. However, pupils do not use the classroom computers well enough as an independent resource to help with learning in other subjects.
6. Standards in religious education and art and design are good. Pupils' knowledge of other religions is good and their art and design skills and techniques are developed well. Pupils achieve very well in design and technology; the provision for this subject has much improved since the last inspection. In particular, pupils' evaluation skills are good and some of them are very self-critical, understanding the need for improvement and how to bring it about.
7. All pupils learn as well as each other. Those from different backgrounds and of different capabilities are taught well. The most and least able pupils achieve well because the work is tailored to their needs. Boys do as well as the girls in all subjects, which is atypical of what happens nationally. This is because teaching is successful at finding ways to interest the boys in work, such as through appropriate reading material and asking them to solve everyday problems in mathematics and science and to write about things that interest them in literacy lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good overall. Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning, reflected in their very good attendance and punctuality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is high because of the school's very good procedures to monitor and promote it.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well in lessons.
- They form very good relationships with the teachers as well as with their class and schoolmates.
- Moral development is very good because there are so many chances for pupils to consider important issues.
- Social development is very good because there are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility.

Commentary

8. The school promotes attendance very well by rewarding good or improving attendance with attractive certificates. This, together with the fact that pupils like school, results in attendance rates that are well above the national average, higher than they were at the time of the last inspection.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.9	School data	0.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

9. Imaginative presentation of work in lessons is a distinct feature of teaching at this school, which stimulates and motivates pupils very well. Pupils show very high levels of interest and enthusiasm in their work. They concentrate very well and take pride in their achievements. Their behaviour is very good in the classrooms, assemblies and dining hall and around the school grounds. All pupils are aware of the school rules and the staff's very high expectations regarding conduct at all times. A celebration assembly is held each week and this promotes good behaviour very well. Special mentions and rewards are given for kindness and good deeds. Some parents say that there is a little bullying. The inspection team investigated this very carefully. No incidents were seen during the inspection. Discussions with pupils suggest that there is hardly any bullying but when it occurs, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. The school promotes good relationships, including racial harmony, very well. Consequently, pupils play and work together very well. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson using computers, all pupils worked very effectively in pairs as they discussed how they would approach the questions. There was one fixed-term exclusion last year; all of the correct procedures were followed.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	382	1	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

10. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Opportunities in assembly and in subjects such as science, English and history allow pupils to marvel at the world around them and consider and reflect on human achievement and failing. Pupils of all ages have a very good sense of right and wrong. There are many opportunities for them to consider school and world issues in a moral context. For instance, in English lessons the Year 6 pupils recently researched, debated and wrote about whether it is right to carry out tests on animals in order to benefit humans. In personal, social and health education lessons pupils consider topics such as crime, behaviour, citizenship, human and children's rights. Throughout the school, they accept responsibility very well and know that they have an important role to play in the community. Members of the school council and eco committee have very mature attitudes towards the school and its environment. Older pupils often help younger ones, for instance by acting as buddies in the playground. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about their own culture and those of others through, for example, visits to museums and places of worship such as churches and temples.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Effective teaching and exciting and varied learning opportunities enthuse pupils well and because of this pupils like school and enjoy coming. The school has established effective relationships with parents and uses the local community very well to enhance pupils' learning opportunities further. There is a wide range of learning opportunities that pupils find exciting and a good balance of subjects that gives pupils a good all-round education.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good; it is very good in Year 6 where pupils learn very well. Assessment procedures are good. They are well embedded and very successfully identify what pupils already know, understand and can do and inform what they need to be taught next.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is effective in raising attainment because it is imaginative and holds pupils' attention well.
- Teaching is very good in Year 6, where pupils make the most rapid progress.
- All pupils learn well in an atmosphere of high expectation; work is tailored to their needs and challenges them well.
- Pupils are clear about what they are doing and how to do it because of very effective guidance from teachers; marking helps them to improve their work.
- Support assistants are deployed well to work with target groups and, in particular, the least able.
- Very good relationships mean pupils work hard to please the teachers and support staff.
- Teachers do not give pupils sufficient time or opportunity to talk about their work, answer questions fully, or explore and debate issues through discussion and this limits the development of their speaking skills.
- Teaching does too little to encourage pupils to use their good computer skills as a tool for learning in the classrooms.

Commentary

11. Similar to at the time of the last inspection, teaching is good overall. Much that was seen in Year 6 was very good. Effective support from teachers and support assistants for pupils as they worked meant that most pupils made good and sometimes very good progress in nearly all of the lessons seen. Pupils were clear about what they were doing and because teachers had shared with them what they were to learn by the end of the lesson, they could see purpose and benefit in working hard. Whilst some very good teaching was seen in all year groups, it was consistently very good in Year 6.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	18 (55%)	12 (36%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

12. The success of the teaching throughout the school, and the reason why it is consistently good, lies in the imaginative way in which learning is presented to pupils, making it relevant to them and, most importantly, fun. Teachers think of innovative ways to present lessons so that they fire pupils' imagination and make them want to do the work. For example, when Year 5 pupils used a flour and cocoa powder mix in science to recreate the moon's surface they worked excitedly and gained a clear understanding of what the moon's surface looked like. When in a poetry lesson, Year 6 pupils described an object on a photograph to their classmates, they enjoyed working together to give the object human qualities so that others could guess what it was.
13. Expectations are high and work challenges pupils of all abilities because it is tailored to meet their needs. Teachers' assessments of how well pupils have done in previous lessons help them to plan the next lesson. Their probing questions at the start of lessons double-check on pupils' previous learning, and then their further questions and explanations, and the work they give pupils to do, take pupils' learning a stage further. Personal targets give pupils a good idea of what they need to work on improving next and, along with the teachers' useful comments in pupils' workbooks, give them something to strive for. This, along with the very good relationships that are well established in all classes, means that pupils work hard to please the staff. Teachers treat pupils as young adults, showing them trust, respect and courtesy at all times. In turn the pupils respect the teachers and learning is something that they all work at together.
14. The work of the support assistants is good. They are deployed effectively to work mostly with the least able pupils and in particular with those with special educational needs. They work very closely with teachers and so they know what pupils are to learn next and how to make the learning effective.
15. There are a couple of important weaknesses in teaching throughout the school. Teachers do much of the talking and give pupils little time to respond at length to their questions. They miss opportunities to ask pupils to put something a different way, or to use different words to say more precisely what they mean. This limits pupils' development in speaking. Also, whilst computers in the suite are used well to support work in other subjects, those in the classrooms are under-used as a resource for learning. Pupils generally only use them when directed and do not see them as a useful tool to be used as and when appropriate.
16. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen. It was due to poor organisation of library time, which resulted in little teaching taking place and some pupils spending over half an hour queuing to scan library books in and out.

The curriculum

The school provides a very good curriculum, based on excellence and enjoyment. It is broad, balanced and enriched very well and is made relevant to pupils' abilities and needs, including those with special educational needs. Accommodation is very good and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The planning and organisation of the curriculum are very effective; learning opportunities are exciting and make pupils' learning enjoyable.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The very good range and quality of extra-curricular activities enhance pupils' learning very well.
- The provision for personal development is very good.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to use their computer skills as a tool to support learning in the classroom.

Commentary

17. The school meets statutory requirements for the teaching of all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The quality and range of opportunities have improved since the last inspection; those provided now are very good. In striving to maintain and raise standards further in English, mathematics and science, the school has not neglected other areas of the curriculum. Without losing their distinctive character, subjects are interlinked in order to promote efficient use of time by using skills learnt in one subject to support work in another and make learning more coherent. Expertise within and outside the school is used imaginatively to enrich the curriculum and promote personal development. Regular reviews of the curriculum, modifications of accommodation and innovative practices, such as the introduction of the 'big writing day' in English, help the school to move forward.
18. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship including sex and relationship education and the awareness of the dangers of drug abuse. The school council gives pupils valuable opportunities to take responsibility and to experience democracy in action. The strong, positive ethos of the school promotes self-esteem and respect for others. Staff work together with a common purpose to create a harmonious community in which all pupils have very good access to the opportunities that it provides and can achieve their full potential. Individual differences are positively acknowledged and reflected well in the curriculum. Pupils participate in a range of valuable learning experiences in the community and take part in many enrichment activities that support learning in lessons. The school regularly holds events to raise money for charity. Pupils are encouraged to think of others and to understand their role and place as citizens in society.
19. Preparation for pupils' transfer from two infant schools, and from one year group to another is very good. The transfer of pupils in Year 6 to local secondary schools is accomplished very efficiently. The very effective programme of visits and bridging activities enables pupils to transfer seamlessly and happily.
20. Provision for the enhancement of the curriculum is very good. The school achieved the Eco-schools Award in 2004 and is working towards the Health Promoting Schools' Quality Assurance Mark. The very wide range of visits to places of educational interest, residential visits and the contribution of experts from outside agencies, linked to pupils' learning needs, greatly enhance the breadth and quality of their experiences. The curriculum is greatly enriched through opportunities for pupils to participate in sport, the arts and other activities outside the school day.
21. Accommodation, including the large hall, gymnasium, music room and extensive grounds, is very good. It is maintained well and impacts positively on standards. Good resources are used imaginatively to support teaching and learning. There is a very good computer suite, with a further one planned. This facility, together with the training of staff, has contributed to improved standards in ICT. However, the school recognises the need to increase computer facilities in each classroom, in order for pupils to be able to use them independently as a resource for learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides pupils with good support and guidance and involves them very well in aspects of the school's development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are introduced to school life very well.
- They feel cared for because of the school's very good arrangements to ensure health and safety.

- Pupils are given good advice, support and guidance in their academic and personal development.
- They form very good, trusting relationships with adults because of the school's very strong family ethos.

Commentary

22. New pupils to the school are gradually and sensitively inducted. They are given very good chances to experience the learning routines at pre-school integration sessions. Year 6 pupils act as buddies to new pupils and this too helps them settle in very well. Arrangements for child protection and for those in public care are very good. The designated officer for child protection is well trained. The school is looking to train more staff, extensively, as soon as the local authority can accommodate this. General health and safety risk assessments are undertaken as required. There are effective systems in place to safeguard pupils' use of the Internet. Arrangements for first aid and fire procedures are very good. Older pupils can take part in safe cycling training and also attend the Amber Valley Safety Road-show where they receive basic training about dealing with first aid emergencies.
23. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' academic and personal development. School records are very detailed and staff use the information well to provide good advice, support and guidance. The support and guidance to pupils with special educational needs are good. In individual cases, the school works closely with specialist support agencies such as the educational psychologist and a specialist teacher from the hearing impaired service that is based at the school. This illustrates the school's inclusive approach and commitment to making sure all pupils do as well as they possibly can.
24. Discussions with pupils indicate that the school has a very strong family ethos, underpinned by very good, trusting relationships between pupils and staff. This gives pupils the confidence to raise any concerns or worries they may have.
25. There are many opportunities for pupils to make their views known to staff and become involved in the school. The school council and eco committee provide excellent chances for pupils to develop citizenship skills. For instance, the council manages a sizeable budget and members gain valuable experience in planning and decision making. It is pleasing to see how many positive changes the council and committee have been involved in.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Much improved since the last inspection, the school has a good partnership with parents and very good links with other schools and the wider community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have good opportunities to express their views and make suggestions for change.
- They are well informed about events in the school and how well their children are doing.
- Parents' involvement in their children's learning at school and at home is good.
- Very good links with the community help to enrich the curriculum and support learning very well.
- Very good links with the infant and secondary schools prepare pupils very well for this school and for secondary school.

Commentary

26. The head teacher and staff are very approachable and they are always willing and pleased to discuss parental concerns. A questionnaire is sent to parents periodically and this helps to identify issues and enables parents to influence the school. For instance, following parents'

suggestions, the school issued leaflets about extra-curricular activities and forthcoming topic work and reviewed and modified its behaviour management procedures.

27. Parents are well informed about the school through a well-presented prospectus and attractive newsletters. Good information is also given on how parents, including those of pupils with special educational needs, can help to support their children's learning at home. For instance, much written information was provided following a numeracy workshop for parents recently. Although some parents are disappointed with information about their children's progress, the inspection team judges it to be good. Pupils' annual reports provide a helpful pen picture of how well pupils are doing together, with things they need to work on.
28. The Action for Ripley Junior School group supports the school well by organising many social and fund-raising events. The group recently made a significant contribution towards the new adventure playground. Many parent helpers also give their time generously to the school. Parents support well their children's learning at home, by helping as much as they can with homework. Although a few parents are concerned about the school's homework policy, the inspection team found it to support learning positively.
29. Members of local churches regularly lead assemblies and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. The school has very close ties with a large Derby engineering company. For instance, the company sponsored a competition to design cranes recently and this resulted in much very good learning. An environmental improvement agency has held several workshops for pupils, carried out tree planting and led other projects in school. This has helped pupils to develop a sense of responsibility for their environment. Visitors such as an officer from the guide dogs for the blind service and an author/illustrator regularly give talks for pupils. School trips to places such as Tansley Village and the National Space Centre also enrich learning significantly. The school puts much back into the community. For instance, it is very successful in fundraising for charities and good causes.
30. The school has very good links with local secondary schools and this eases transition very much. For instance, locally agreed transition projects in numeracy, literacy and science are very well established. Pupils can also take advantage of a 'summer school' that operates in the area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the head teacher and senior staff is very good. Management is good and the head teacher is supported well by senior staff. Governance is good; the governing body fulfils its duties well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good leadership of the head teacher and senior staff has created a strong sense of purpose in the school and a clear vision of ways in which standards can be improved.
- The head teacher and staff have set up very good procedures for collecting information of pupils' progress, and use it very effectively to raise standards.
- The head teacher and senior staff work hard to ensure that all pupils benefit fully from all school activities.
- Governors know the school well and take an active role in making sure that it improves.

Commentary

31. The head teacher, deputy head teacher and other senior staff provide strong leadership. They are fully supported by the governors and other staff and there is a strong sense of teamwork. Above average standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection staff but the head teacher and staff have made sure that this has not been at the expense of developing pupils' knowledge and understanding in other subjects or their personal development. This is

because all staff are committed to providing a very broad and innovative curriculum and teachers give pupils lots of very good opportunities for learning inside and outside the classroom. They use many exciting approaches in their teaching that fire pupils' enthusiasm for their work. As a result, pupils achieve well, work very hard and enjoy all aspects of school life.

32. Senior managers give subject leaders clear guidance and support in carrying out their roles effectively. All staff check the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects by working alongside colleagues and examining pupils' work and teachers' planning. As a result, they have a clear understanding of where improvements are needed and how they can be achieved. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Subject leaders for English, mathematics and science regularly check pupils' progress and analyse test scores in great detail to provide a very clear view of exactly where standards need to be improved. They pinpoint areas for improvement in a whole year group and for groups of pupils so that a focus can be placed on these to ensure that weaknesses do not recur. The head teacher and deputy head teacher regularly review this information to ensure targets are met or exceeded.
33. Staff are committed to making sure all pupils benefit from all the school has to offer. They provide a rich and exciting curriculum so that the great majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are more able, achieve well. They also put a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development and provide very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities and become actively involved in school life. As a result, pupils work very well together and are very keen to learn.
34. Governors are committed to playing a key role in the leadership and management of the school. Since the previous inspection they have become more actively involved in the implementation and review of the school action plan, and the work of the school. As a result, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and influence the work of the school by supporting and challenging the policies.
35. Financial management is sound. The deficit carry-forward was directly attributable to unforeseen staffing costs, and governors successfully reduced this last year. The school and local authority have now put together a plan so that the school will achieve a small under-spend at the end of this financial year.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	891528
Total expenditure	870457
Expenditure per pupil	2226

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	- 28220
Balance carried forward to the next	- 7149

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good, imaginative teaching makes learning fun and ensures good achievement; work is tailored to pupils' needs and because of this, pupils are enthused about what they do.
- Standards are above average in reading and writing, but pupils' speaking skills are not developed as well as they could be and although standards are satisfactory, they could be higher.
- Very good subject leadership and management have brought about some good improvements and standards are rising; the number of pupils reaching the higher level in the national tests has increased substantially this year.
- Pupils work hard and present their work neatly, but not all teachers are good at providing examples of good handwriting.
- ICT is used satisfactorily to support work in English, but pupils do not use the classroom computers well enough as a tool for learning.
- There is a lack of consistency in how library times are organised and they are not always as effective as they should be.

Commentary

36. The standards pupils achieve have risen over the last year to better than those expected nationally and similar to those attained at the time of the last inspection. This is because recent training has raised teachers' awareness of what they can do to improve pupils' writing skills, in particular through reading. From talking about the different styles famous authors adopt and how they organise words and phrases to say what they mean, pupils learn to put things in different ways and to write for different purposes, such as poetry, letters and stories. For example, in one lesson, Year 6 pupils understood the subtleties of the text they were reading together. They talked about how the author used particular phrases to give the reader the impression of what was happening without actually saying it. Their poetry shows sensitivity and very good imagination because pupils understand, from reading the work of other poets, how it is important for them to look at the world from different perspectives.
37. Consequently, pupils' use of language in stories and poems is very good and some of their work is particularly moving. For example, a Year 6 pupil wrote a story in the style of Nicholas Fisk, "Before it came, Earth was happy... Before it came, Earth was peaceful... But when it came there was only CHAOS! We were told to evacuate, to be able to evade it but not all of us believed, and so they stayed with the chaos, never seen again." Equally as good were the letters of Year 4 pupils trying to persuade a town council to or not to allow a theme park to be built close to their town. They were very convincing and their case, whether for or against, was well argued.
38. Boys and girls and pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well because imaginative teaching interests them, makes them want to learn, and entuses them to work hard. For example, a teacher started a Year 4 lesson giving each group a large sheet of paper, each with a photograph on of them working together. Pupils had to insert speech or thought bubbles to show what they were thinking or saying. Pupils were excited and all of them joined in, trying to recall the incident. They then turned this into good, written explanations of what was going on in the photograph. For example, one pupil wrote, "Wa hoo, this is GREAT! shouted Jonathan excitedly. Jonathan be quiet, murmured Sarah (somehow with a grin)". Those pupils with

special educational needs are supported well. Their work is adapted to meet their needs and well-deployed support assistants make sure these pupils can do it.

39. This good quality written work is achieved because pupils are given time to think about what they are going to write and are encouraged to put things in different ways. This is not the case, however, when they are talking. Most of the talking in lessons is done by the staff. Whilst pupils listen attentively, and learn a lot from the comments of the adults, they do not often enough get the chance to verbalise their thoughts. Teachers accept short answers from pupils, going on, often, to elaborate further themselves rather than let the pupils do so.
40. Good assessment procedures and pupils' personal learning targets mean that teachers and pupils are clear about what pupils already know and can do what they need to be taught next. Constant reminders to individual pupils from teachers, to think about what they are working on improving next, result in pupils building their skills well over time. Comments from teachers such as, "What are your targets?" and "Think about your full stops" featured in most lessons.
41. Innovations to the English curriculum, brought about by very effective subject leadership, mean that staff have found different and exciting ways to teach reading and writing. For example, the school's first 'big writing day' devoted time to raising pupils' awareness of different ways of writing; pupils recall the day with great excitement and are waiting in anticipation for the next one! This has led to good improvements to the teaching and learning in reading and writing and an increase in the number of pupils reaching the higher level in the national tests. However, whilst pupils generally present their work neatly and with pride, not all teachers' writing provides examples of good handwriting; some of their words are untidily crossed out and others are barely recognisable. This does not give a good enough impression to pupils about how to write so that others can read what they put.
42. Computers are used for word processing, but this is mostly done in the computer suite and pupils do not readily go to the classroom computers to help them with their writing, for example to check spellings or grammar. They do not, unless told, for example, illustrate their work using the computer, or decide for themselves that a particular piece of their writing, such as a formal letter, might be better presented on computer.
43. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen in English; it was a library session. Whilst teachers and pupils usually use their library time effectively, there is no agreed procedure and in the one session seen, some pupils spent over half an hour queuing to scan their books in and out and looking for a new one to read; the teacher merely supervised the activity and very little teaching or learning took place.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. Reading and writing are used well to support learning in other subjects and pupils' competence in them is good enough to impact positively on standards across the curriculum. For example, pupils write good accounts of wartime Britain in history, and label things accurately in design and technology; their writing in these subjects is of the same good quality as it is in English lessons. Their good reading skills enable pupils of all ages to research topics on the Internet and find information in books, locating it quickly and easily because they know how to use the contents and index pages. However, their speaking skills, although satisfactory, do not support other subjects as well as they could.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching; teachers regularly check pupils' progress and use this information very well to plan challenging work for pupils of different abilities.

- Teachers present work in exciting ways and take into account the different ways pupils learn. As a result, pupils enjoy their work, behave very well and work very hard.
- Effective subject leadership means that above average standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- Teachers do not use the computers in the classrooms often enough as tools to develop pupils' learning and do not give pupils enough opportunities to talk about their work.

Commentary

45. Above average standards have been maintained since the last inspection. This is because throughout the school pupils are taught mathematics in classes with pupils in their year group who have similar abilities. This enables teachers to tailor the work for the most and least able, including those with special educational needs, so that it is at just the right level. Consequently, all pupils achieve well. Teachers regularly check what pupils can do and what they find difficult. They use the information very well to identify groups and individual pupils who need help in specific areas, and successfully implement strategies to support these pupils. At the end of each year the subject leader completes a thorough analysis of pupils' responses to test questions. She uses this information to adapt the subject plans in order to ensure that the weaknesses are dealt with and do not recur the following year. As a result, pupils develop good mathematical skills and use them successfully in the many exciting problem-solving activities teachers give them.
46. Teachers use many exciting and innovative approaches in their teaching, which fire pupils' enthusiasm for their work. Pupils behave very well and work very hard because they like their teachers and the work they give them. Teaching is most successful when pupils are actively involved in their learning. For example, in a very effective lesson in Year 4, pupils achieved very well because they learnt about the equivalence of fractions by playing a variety of games. Other pupils used a well-chosen computer program, which added to their enjoyment and success in the lesson. All the pupils said they found the games fun and helped them to learn. At the end of a lesson in Year 6 the teacher used the overhead projector to project shapes onto the whiteboard. Pupils then rotated and translated the shapes. This visual approach supported pupils' learning very effectively and as a result they achieved very well.
47. Pupils achieve well because teachers have a very good knowledge of their subject, explain work very clearly and constantly challenge pupils with well-focused questions. However, teachers sometimes miss opportunities for developing pupils' skills by asking them to talk about what they can do and explaining their strategies. Although each class uses mathematical programs on the computers in the suite once every three weeks, pupils do not use the classroom computers regularly as tools to support their learning. The co-ordinator has correctly identified this as a priority for next year.
48. Leadership and management of mathematics are good. The subject leader has a good understanding of teaching and learning through her detailed analysis of data, her examination of pupils' work, and her regular work in the classrooms. She keeps a close check on how well pupils do each year and sets challenging targets for them. As a result, she knows the strengths in mathematics and has correctly identified areas for development, such as involving pupils further in assessing how well they are doing, in her well-focused action plan.

Mathematics across the curriculum

49. Pupils use their good mathematical skills to support work in other subjects well. For example, pupils in Year 3 used their knowledge of three-dimensional shapes when they designed containers in design and technology. Pupils' good understanding of measuring accurately made it easier for pupils in Year 4 to measure the flow of water in a stream in geography and to measure the temperature of the water. Year 5 pupils correctly constructed a line graph showing population changes from 1791 to 1931, and interpreted the data because they had learnt about line graphs in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in science to reach above average standards by the time they leave the school.
- Good teaching, the emphasis on investigative skills and a consistent approach to recording results have a positive impact on standards.
- Systematic planning of cross-curricular links provides very good opportunities to consolidate and extend pupils' skills.
- Effective leadership and management are bringing about good improvements.
- Missed opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills in science hamper learning at times.

Commentary

50. Standards are above national expectations in Year 6, on the basis of both past performance and evidence seen during the inspection. There is no significance difference between the attainment of boys and girls and all pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and those from different ethnic backgrounds. There are challenging tasks for average and higher attaining pupils and extension activities for those who complete the given work. The success of the way in which teaching and support are tailored to respond to individual needs is working well, with this year almost half of the Year 6 pupils reaching the higher levels in national tests. Improvement since the last inspection six years ago has been good.
51. Teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. It is very good in Year 6. Strengths common to all teaching are teachers' good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for science, and their ability to encourage and engage pupils. They use a range of very effective teaching methods to ensure that all pupils are fully included in learning opportunities. Their insistence on high standards of behaviour establishes a very positive climate for learning. Strengths of learning are pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships and their enthusiasm and motivation. They apply themselves well to their work and work well both independently and in groups. Assessment is very thorough and constructive and is used well to plan work for pupils with different learning needs, so that they are consistently challenged. As a result, pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. They are increasingly being encouraged to assess their own progress and they have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve. There is a strong emphasis on scientific enquiry; pupils are encouraged to predict possible outcomes, carry out experiments, and present their findings based on their analysis of evidence.
52. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 demonstrated a good understanding of the life cycle of a plant. Pupils in Year 4 have a good knowledge of forces and learnt through an investigation whether altering the downward force increases the speed of an object. Year 5 pupils, as part of their study of the earth and space, carried out a successful investigation on what might affect the size of craters on the moon. Pupils in Year 6 are currently undertaking a 'bubbles' bridging project, which links with work they will do when they go to secondary school. Through carrying out an experiment, they learnt that fizz in a drink is caused by carbon dioxide, a colourless, odourless gas. They recognised the importance of repeating measures and were able to give reasoned explanations for any anomalies shown in the results.
53. The science curriculum is enriched through links with local industry, visits to science technology departments at local companies and the university, science weeks, and science theatre visits. Good opportunities are provided for the reinforcement of pupils' literacy skills through the recording of investigation results and the correct use of scientific terms. In discussion, pupils listen well. However, opportunities are often missed to develop pupils'

speaking skills more fully. Their mathematical skills are developed well through measuring and when recording results on tables, charts and graphs. Pupils use their computer skills well to enter and store information on a database.

54. Subject leadership and management are good. The subject leader has played a key role in subject improvement. She has clear and achievable plans for the future development of the subject, which are fully supported by all staff. The subject leader has created a very effective team and provides strong leadership of the curriculum and teaching. The results of her evaluation of what is going on in science, monitoring of performance data, and review of emerging trends are used very successfully to effect improvements and to set new development targets. The school has obtained a £1000 grant to set up a 'science and technology discovery centre' in the school grounds to assist learning through, for example, permanent ramps to help pupils' understanding of forces.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of ICT is good and because of this pupils do well to reach standards that are above national expectations for their age.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use the computers in the classrooms to support their learning in other subjects.

Commentary

55. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and standards are now higher than previously reported. This is because of improvements to teaching and curriculum planning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the curriculum has been planned with great care. Teachers' expectations are high and the well-designed lessons and tasks are interesting and relevant. These fire pupils' imagination and, as a result, pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn. Teachers draw on their secure subject knowledge to give clear explanations and demonstrations so that pupils are confident in using an increasing range of more demanding skills. For example, Year 6 pupils make good use of different forms of technology, including video clips, to create interesting multimedia presentations to promote their school as an activity centre. They give careful thought to the style of presentation and to its audience, demonstrating a good understanding of how these projects relate to everyday life. Teachers ask probing questions which clarify and extend pupils' understanding so that they improve their work and make good progress in lessons. They provide good opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively, making an effective contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils of all abilities achieve well, because teachers ensure that adult support is targeted where needed and, where appropriate, teachers modify tasks to match challenge to individual ability.
56. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good, reflecting the effectiveness of teaching. In conversation, pupils explain the tasks and projects with great enthusiasm. During lessons, pupils of all abilities work closely together, supporting one another very well. Behaviour is very good and pupils listen carefully to teachers and support staff, readily accepting their support and advice. This contributes to their good progress and reflects the very good relationships and teachers' success in motivating pupils by means of tasks that are relevant, well planned and interesting.
57. Very effective leadership and management have brought about, with the support of colleagues, good improvement in standards and achievement. The good range of activities stems from a

comprehensive plan drawn up by the ICT co-ordinator, who is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Teachers are confident in teaching each aspect of the scheme so that pupils make good progress. This is because of the good support and training that staff have received, which are increasing their confidence. The subject action plan focuses well on raising standards further and increasing resources so that pupils can make greater use of technology in their day-to-day learning. A new ICT club enhances the curriculum, giving pupils further opportunities to practise and improve their skills outside of curriculum time.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. This is satisfactory and although the pupils have good computer skills these could be put to better use in other subjects. The range of activities in ICT lessons in the computer suite provides effective opportunities for pupils to continue the work started in classrooms across a range of subjects. For example, good use was made of ICT to continue a science lesson in which pupils recorded data in a variety of ways using the computer data-logging equipment. Although pupils make use of ICT in some mathematics lessons, as well as for researching history topics and supporting learning in music, generally it is not used enough because pupils do not automatically consider using ICT in the classroom as another tool for learning.

HUMANITIES

59. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in geography or history because there was insufficient time to observe any complete lessons. However, from examining pupils' completed work and teachers' planning, and by talking to pupils and to the geography co-ordinator it is evident that in both subjects teachers have adapted national guidance very well to make the work relevant and exciting for the pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy their work, behave very well and work very hard. In both subjects teachers make good links to other subjects and pupils transfer the skills they have learnt in other lessons well. For example, the skills pupils had learnt in their writing lessons were evident in Year 4 pupils' newspaper reports of Boudicca's battle with the Romans, and in the formal letters pupils in Year 6 wrote complaining about the conditions in Victorian factories. However, teachers do not make sufficient use of the computers in the classrooms as a tool to support pupils' learning. Visits and visitors make history and geography come alive and make learning fun. For example, Year 6 pupils talked excitedly about their visit to Shugborough Hall and said that it helped them learn about the life of servants and about schools in Victorian times. All pupils go on a geography field trip each year, which helps them to develop the skills they have learnt in the classroom. For example, Year 4 pupils talked enthusiastically about their visit to Carsington Park where they measured the flow of the river and found out that the temperature of the water varied according to whether it was in the shade or the sun.
60. In **geography**, teachers place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' awareness and understanding of local and world-wide environmental issues. For example, pupils in a Year 4 lesson showed a good understanding of the disadvantages and benefits for local residents of the building of the theme park at Alton Towers. Work on environmental issues is successfully enhanced by the school's involvement in the eco-schools awards. Pupils have made improvements to the school grounds, following the completion of an audit and discussion with all pupils. They have made a vegetable plot, which they maintain, and use a compost bin for items such as apple cores. Pupils and staff have planned further improvements as the school works towards their Eco-schools Silver Award. The knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader has successfully promoted geography throughout the school. She supports her colleagues very well and has a good overview of the teaching and learning in the school through her examination of pupils' work, and by working with other teachers and accompanying some classes on their field trips. As a result, she has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the subject.
61. In **history**, pupils develop a good understanding of how primary and secondary sources give them evidence about the past because teachers make the work exciting and pupils see the

point in what they are doing. For example, in a Year 3 lesson pupils' interest was immediately captured when they discussed how archaeologists, such as Indiana Jones and members of the television programme 'Time Team', made deductions from the evidence they found. By the time the teacher produced a very heavy bag, which she had found in her loft, pupils were agog. They eagerly waited for the items to be produced so that they could use their skills of deduction to suggest who had left them and why they had left them.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve good standards of knowledge and understanding.
- Teaching is good and pupils are encouraged to learn about the beliefs and traditions of major world faiths.
- Subject leadership is very good.

Commentary

62. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and by the time they are in Year 6 standards exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is because the revised, well-informed, and detailed planning supports teaching well. As result, teaching is good and standards have improved and are now higher than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils acquire a good range of knowledge of stories, customs and traditions of the Christianity and the other major world religions. This enables them to reflect upon similarities and differences and to recognise how religion is reflected in, and brings meaning to, people's lives.
63. Teachers draw on a secure subject knowledge to give clear explanations. Significant features of teaching are the good planning and use of visits to places of worship, visitors and the opportunities for reflection that are built into lessons. These enrich pupils' learning and personal development, so that pupils not only learn about religions, but also learn from them by exploring and discussing their effects on human experiences and values. Pupils link learning in religious education effectively with everyday life so that they understand the traditions and rituals associated with the different celebrations and faiths. Teachers' probing questions help pupils to discover the meaning behind religions as well as facts. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good so that pupils respond well and discuss their thoughts and beliefs freely. Lessons help pupils to value and care for each other and they show respect for each other's thoughts. This balance of learning across the religions makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The awareness of the religions of other cultures is appropriately given an important emphasis and helps to prepare pupils for life in a multi-racial society. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills so that their learning is communicated in a variety of forms, including prayer, writing in the role of an observer of the Islamic pilgrimage, Hajj.
64. The very effective leadership has brought about good improvement in standards, achievement and the overall provision. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and sets a high standard in the quality of her own teaching. The subject guidelines for religious education have been rewritten and clearly set out how pupils will be able to achieve the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus; staff are confident and enthusiastic in their implementation of these revised plans, which in turn, has led to pupils' good achievement. There is a well-informed action plan in place outlining the next stages of development for the religious education curriculum.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65. In **art and design**, only two lessons were sampled and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision overall or the teaching. However, from what was seen, pupils achieve well to reach above average standards. Very good leadership by the enthusiastic subject leader is instrumental in this good attainment and achievement. Pupils have very good attitudes to work and have strengths in the way in which they evaluate their work, revise their ideas, substitute different materials and consider how to improve their work. Pupils develop their literacy skills well through written evaluations. They listen well in discussion, but teaching does not always utilise opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills. Mathematical skills are developed well through, for example, symmetry and perspective. The curriculum is broad and imaginative and is enriched through participation in, for example, well-dressing, visits to a Tudor house, and sketching scenes of the local area. There is a flourishing art club. In a lesson in Year 3, pupils considered the work of the artist Andy Goldsworthy. They discussed the textual and visual elements of his work and worked together in groups to create contemporary works of art from natural objects, such as sand, pebbles, slate, textiles, and string. A group of pupils used their computer skills to research 'The eye of the storm' by the same artist. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils made preparations for their leavers' show entitled, 'What a performance!'. They had already thought about what costumes to wear and had examined a variety of masks, including those from the Congo and Mexico, and discussed materials and processes involved in making them. In making their own masks, they were encouraged to think of heroes and villains in literacy and adapt their masks to portray a character. They successfully combined visual and tactile qualities of materials and considered their design and purpose, and shared with others their ideas, methods and approaches. A group of pupils worked on the scenery, considering carefully the materials and techniques to produce a woodland background.
66. In **design and technology**, only one lesson was observed and two lessons were sampled. It is not possible therefore to make judgements on the quality of teaching or the provision overall. However, it is clear that design and technology has a very high profile in the school. The use of visual images provides a stimulus for pupils' creativity. Leadership and management are very good; the experienced subject leader has a very clear vision for future developments. Her knowledgeable and innovative leadership of the curriculum and teaching is very good and her evaluation and monitoring of pupils' performance, and the taking of effective action, contribute to the very good standards achieved. She has developed very good links with the local library, supermarket and industry. From the work seen around the school, achievement is very good and pupils reach standards that are well above those expected nationally. Most pupils demonstrate very good skills in investigating, selecting, cutting and joining materials and in designing, making and evaluating products. For example, pupils in Year 4 evaluated pop-up books that they had made in groups, considering their original designs; they looked at the work of the other groups and offered them positive feedback and suggestions for improvement. Pupils had previously visited the local library to learn about pop-up books, studied levers in science, and used a range of tools, materials and techniques to investigate paper engineering. They had also taken apart and evaluated existing products, and had carried out a variety of practical tasks to develop their own skills when working with card or paper. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils evaluated the models that they had made containing a cam. They used technical vocabulary when explaining that the cam changes rotary motion into linear motion and demonstrated that differently-shaped cams can produce different movements. Displays demonstrate how pupils in Year 3 used skills they had learnt in literacy and mathematics when they made sandwiches and recorded their favourite fillings on a pictogram. Musical instruments made by pupils in Year 5 are of a very high quality. A crane, designed and made for the local Primary School's Competition 2004 by a group of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6, won a well-deserved award.
67. No lessons were seen in **music**, so reliable judgements on provision, standards and achievements cannot be made. Teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to develop their skills across the expected range of musical activities, including exploring the musical elements and composing their own pieces using ICT. Instrumental tuition has been introduced since the last inspection and pupils have the opportunity to learn a string, woodwind or brass instrument.

These lessons, provided by the local authority music service, are proving very popular. Pupils enjoy opportunities to practise and extend their skills by joining the choir and recorder club. Pupils regularly take part in musical performances in school and the choir has sung at the local care home

68. No lessons were seen in **physical education** and so reliable judgements on provision, standards and achievements cannot be made. The school plans appropriately for the development of pupils' physical education skills and the curriculum covers all key areas, including good opportunities for pupils to learn to swim. The good range of after-school sporting activities made available to pupils and specialist coaching enables pupils to develop their skills further. There are many opportunities for them to take part in competitive sports against other schools. The school has very good accommodation for physical education with a gymnasium, large hall and spacious playing field. The Year 6 residential visit provides very good opportunities for pupils to take part in a wider range of outdoor activities. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

69. Whilst few lessons were seen in personal, social and health education and citizenship, it is clear from the work pupils have done, their responses to inspectors' questions, and the comments they made about this aspect of their learning, that the provision is very good. It is embedded in the school's work and is planned across all subjects and in all classes. This is partly due to the commitment and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator, who promotes this aspect of the curriculum very well.
70. Detailed guidelines for teaching personal, social and health education and citizenship support teaching well, so that by the time the pupils leave the school they are mature and confident youngsters with a good idea about what is in store for them as they move towards adolescence. This is because their learning about sex education, relationships, and the dangers of drug abuse, prepares them well for the future.
71. Pupils have a good understanding of justice and fair play, for example through their work on women's rights in history and from their visit to the Galleries of Justice in Nottingham. Year 6 pupils talked about how, in literacy, reading the poem 'I believe... we can live without war' changed their views. They show a mature understanding of how to live with others and how in particular to deal with pressure from classmates and incidences of bullying. Year 6 pupils, for example, talked openly about how they intend to resist the pressure from others to take up smoking or "try drugs". They explained how if anyone picks on them, they walk away and tell someone else.
72. Pupils describe their school as, "A little city, but in a school We have a council looking after us and making it better for us". Through their work on the school council, pupils form a very good picture of democracy and the voting system in particular. They explained how the country is run like this, "...but on a grander scale". They explore racism and study different cultures and religious beliefs.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the head teacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).