

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **ROTHERSTHORPE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Rothersthorpe, Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 122014

Headteacher: Mrs Erica Holt

Reporting inspector: Mrs Eira Gill  
17766

Dates of inspection: 20 – 23 June 2000

Inspection number: 188363

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Street Rothersthorpe Northampton
Postcode:	NN7 3HS
Telephone number:	01604 830995
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mark McDonnell
Date of previous inspection:	8 July 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Eira Gill	Registered inspector	English Religious education Design and technology Geography Music Children under five Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements  How well are pupils taught?  How well is the school led and managed?
Joanna Illingworth	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?  Behaviour and monitoring of personal development
Ann Coughlan	Team inspector	Mathematics  Science Information technology Art History Physical education  Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes & personal development  How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?  Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is much smaller than other primary schools having only 89 girls and boys on roll. Approximately half of the pupils live in Rothersthorpe and the remainder live in the surrounding area and the town of Northampton. The school has identified 14 pupils as having special educational needs. This is below the national average and represents an increase since the last inspection. One pupil has a statement. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Children under five are admitted in September and their attainment on entry is above average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The school is organised into three classes containing reception and Year 1 pupils (Class 1), Years 2, 3 and 4 (Class 2) and Years 4, 5 and 6 (Class 3). On four out of five days per week the Year 4 pupils are taught English and mathematics as a group.

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

This is a good school. The effective quality of leadership and management and the overall good teaching which the pupils receive result in the achievement of high standards particularly in English, mathematics, science and religious education by the time they leave school. The pupils have very good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is also very good. The school gives good value for money.

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

- The pupils reach above average standards in English and science compared with all schools in the end of key stage tests.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and often very good for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 and the older pupils in Key Stage 2.
- The good leadership of the headteacher and governors promotes a happy school in which high standards and good behaviour are valued.
- The pupils' behaviour, their attitudes to work and personal development are very good and greatly assist their learning.
- The school has very good links with the local community which has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

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

- Standards in the foundation subjects are at the expected levels and need to be raised to match the high achievement observed in most of the core subjects.
- Pupils are not attaining standards in information technology of which they are capable and the school makes insufficient use of IT to support learning in other subjects.
- The standard of teaching in Years 2, 3 and 4 needs to match the consistently good and often very good practice in the rest of the school.

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

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

The school was last inspected in July 1996, and, since then, it has made a good improvement and has a similar capacity to improve. The key issues for action identified by that inspection have, overall, been well addressed, for example, by ensuring that appropriate tasks are given to match pupils' needs. In addition a clear policy and procedures are in place for assessing pupils' performance, although the school is aware it is still early days and the system needs to be developed further. The school has ensured that the teaching and development of subjects are monitored regularly. The increased hours for the part-time teacher to enable Year 4 pupils to be taught as one group has resulted in good progress for those pupils.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	B	A	C
Mathematics	A*	A	E	E*
Science	A*	A	B	C

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

The information shows that compared with all schools, standards are consistently above average except in mathematics where they were well below average in 1999. However, the school's trends in results are below those found nationally. Compared with similar schools in 1999, standards are average in English and science but in mathematics, they were in the lowest five per cent nationally. However, because the year group was very small (12 pupils only) comparisons are unreliable. The school has set demanding targets for pupils' attainments by the time they are eleven years of age. The findings of the inspection are that standards are above average in English, mathematics and science which is different from the Key Stage 2 test results. This is because the team was observing a different group of pupils and the school has worked very hard to improve the weaknesses identified in an analysis of the mathematics test papers. Pupils are achieving above the expected standards in religious education by the age of eleven. In other subjects, pupils attain levels that are expected for their age but, in information technology, pupils are not achieving the standards of which they are capable. By the time children reach statutory school age, they are working at above average standards particularly in personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress particularly in English, mathematics and science.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; the pupils are enthusiastic, attentive and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; their behaviour in and around the school, especially in the dining hall, is exemplary. Pupils are very mature and courteous.
Personal development and relationships	Very good overall; the small number of pupils and mixed aged classes enable them to co-operate very well with each other regardless of age or gender. The older pupils take on a variety of jobs around the school.
Attendance	Very good; well above the national average with no unauthorised absence.

The pupils' very good attitudes, enthusiasm for and enjoyment of school activities, together with the very good relationships throughout the school are significant factors in promoting their learning. There is no sign of friction between different age groups and older pupils willingly look after younger ones, particularly when eating lunch.

The pupils' very good attendance and punctuality, with a prompt start to lessons, contribute to the above average attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.*

All of the teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory or better and 25 per cent was very good or better. However, there is variation between year groups. Teaching is good and, sometimes, very good for reception and Year 1 pupils, and good, very good and, sometimes, excellent for the older pupils in Key Stage 2. In Years 2, 3 and 4, teaching is satisfactory overall with a lack of pace and challenge in the initial teaching sessions, which results in pupils making slower, although still sound, progress. Teaching of English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, for Years 2 and 3 is satisfactory while for the youngest and oldest pupils in the school, teaching of basic skills is at least good and sometimes very good. Very good subject knowledge in science leads to high quality teaching for the older pupils in Key Stage 2, which has an impact on the pupils' very good rate of learning. Teachers manage pupils well and, as a result, they work hard in all lessons. Teaching is good for pupils with special educational needs.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good although the balance and focus of the foundation subjects need reviewing throughout the school and especially in Years 2, 3 and 4. Extra-curricular activities are good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; appropriate tasks are matched well to the pupils' needs which extends their knowledge and understanding.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, with very good provision for pupils' social and moral development, which has a very positive result in good learning habits and very good behaviour.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good levels of care and understanding for its pupils. It provides a safe and friendly environment. There are very good formal arrangements for pupils' welfare. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good and pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually. Very effective procedures are in place for promoting good behaviour.

Effective links with parents help to raise standards. The parents' contribution to their children's learning at home and at school is good ensuring very good attendance, which has a strong impact on the school's work.

The extra-curricular activities are well attended with more than 25 per cent of the pupils on roll enjoying the dance club before school during the inspection week. There is good provision for cultural development but the school gives insufficient attention to multi-cultural awareness.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good; the headteacher carries considerable responsibility and gives a very clear lead. She is a very good role model.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are effective in fulfilling their statutory duties and in their management of the budget. They are involved in all aspects of school life.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good; the headteacher has analysed the test papers for 1999 and identified weaknesses which have been addressed by a change in teaching methods in mathematics and organisation of booster classes.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school uses its resources very well to support priorities in the school development plan and to raise standards.

The level of staffing is good and learning resources are satisfactory overall. Accommodation is good although there is no outdoor play area for the physical development of the under-fives. The school applies the principles of best value well.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Their children's behaviour is very good.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard.</li> <li>• The ethos of the school and, in particular, the way the older pupils help the younger ones.</li> <li>• Their children are safe and secure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• They would like more homework.</li> </ul>

The findings of the inspection support the positive view of the parents. The range of extra-curricular activities is good and clubs are well attended, particularly the dance club organised by an assistant before school one morning a week. Inspectors agree that homework is inconsistent. The school is aware of this and has developed a draft policy.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The levels of pupils' attainments in the national tests, taken at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, show that standards are well above the national average in reading and above average in writing. In mathematics the level of attainment in comparison with other schools was very high. When this data is compared with similar schools, standards are broadly in line with the national average in reading, well above for writing and above for mathematics. Test results over the last three years show consistently high standards. In the 1999 end of key stage assessments by teachers in science, standards were very high.
2. The levels of pupils' attainment in the national tests, taken at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, show that they are well above the national average in English, well below average in mathematics and above average in science. In comparison with similar schools, the results are broadly in line in English and science, and very low for mathematics. The results in mathematics have dropped sharply from the previous year, continuing a downward trend from above average to well below average in comparison with all schools. However, in a small school with very few pupils in each cohort, each pupil has a disproportionate effect on the overall figure. It is not appropriate to compare the results of this very small cohort of 12 pupils with national figures. The school has been very energetic in taking steps to improve this situation by organising booster classes to increase mental mathematical skills, which was the aspect of mathematics in which the pupils were least successful. The school is expecting to attain higher results this year and inspection findings support this view.
3. The findings of the inspection are that the pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average throughout the school. The reason there is a difference between the results of the mathematics tests and the inspection findings is that the team was observing a different year group and the school has worked hard to improve attainment. There are also differences between the national test results and inspection findings in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and English at Key Stage 2. This is because the year groups are so small that comparisons using the data are unreliable. The school uses end of Key Stage 1 data and ongoing assessments to set appropriate targets by the end of Key Stage 2.
4. Pupils enter the school with above average standards, particularly in language and literacy, mathematics and in their personal and social development. Children under five make good progress and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the age of five.
5. Pupils throughout the school with special educational needs make similar progress as a result of good support from teachers and assistants. This is further enhanced by the good quality individual tuition the learning support assistants provide. There is evidence that pupils move down a stage or come off the special needs register over time. This is an improvement from the last inspection. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls in both key stages.
6. In Key Stage 1, pupils' achievements in English are good. They are able to answer questions clearly and listen well. They have knowledge of a growing vocabulary specific to subjects. Pupils use a range of strategies to help them to read unfamiliar words and a good understanding of what they have read. They know how to look for information in a non-fiction book. By the end of the key stage, pupils can write stories and letters that are usually correctly punctuated. The pupils have little direct teaching on how to join letters and do not transfer this skill to their written work.
7. In all aspects of English, the achievements of pupils by eleven years are good and, often, very good. Pupils use spoken language well to discuss their thoughts and opinions. They read fluently with very secure understanding. They can discuss with maturity different types

of fiction, the work of a number of authors and their own likes and dislikes. Their knowledge of how to use books to find information is good and has an impact on their learning in other subjects. Pupils can write in different styles competently, punctuation and spelling are usually correct and their handwriting is well formed. Generally, the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been successful and standards have risen as a result.

8. Pupils make a good start to their competence in number in reception and Year 1. By the end of Year 1 they are becoming confident in addition and subtraction and higher attaining pupils can order three digit numbers. Although the pupils have plenty of practice in number skills in Year 2, evidence shows that, when they are asked to put their skills into practice by solving problems, there is a lack of understanding which leads to errors, which is a result of over-reliance on the use of commercial workbooks. By the end of Key Stage 2, because of very good quality direct teaching, pupils can solve problems using their skills and understanding, for example, by ordering a mixture of decimals, fractions and percentages. Pupils have made good progress this year and pupils in Key Stage 2 use mathematical skills successfully when measuring in science and handling data in geography. Most of the teachers have implemented the National Numeracy Strategy well.
9. A good feature in science lessons is the emphasis placed on investigational and experimental work which is exemplified by the work which was carried out by the younger pupils in the school grounds. They are beginning to predict the sorts of animals and plants they are likely to find and produce good quality diagrams as a result of their findings. Excellent teaching ensures that the older pupils in Key Stage 2 achieve high levels of attainment in carrying out and understanding a fair test to clarify muddy water. Their approach to this challenge was very mature showing a high degree of co-operation and planning. In Years 2 and 3, although teaching is satisfactory, the style of questioning does not always move the pupils forward in their learning and some pupils do not complete their task because the first part of the lesson is too long.
10. Standards in information technology in both key stages are in line with those expected. The pupils show good progress in word processing and older pupils show effective skills. Although pupils have had experience of most aspects of information technology, there has been too little opportunity to use computers. As a result, they have not developed the standards in the various strands of the subject of which they are capable. Since the last inspection, pupils' expected standards in religious education have improved by the age of eleven. Their achievement is good owing to the good quality teaching they receive as well as the maturity and respect the pupils show when dealing with sensitive issues. Pupils attain expected standards for their age in all other subjects. No clear overall judgements were made on standards in design and technology and physical education.
11. In reception and Years 1, 4, 5 and 6, pupils make good progress and achieve well in English, mathematics and science. In Years 2 and 3, pupils make sound progress in those subjects. In all other subjects progress is satisfactory for pupils throughout the school, except for religious education where progress is good for the older pupils in Key Stage 2.

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

12. The school has maintained the pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development reported at the time of the last inspection. These remain a strength of the school and have a significant impact on the achievements of pupils. The vast majority of pupils respond very positively to their lessons. They show interest in the tasks they are given and try hard to succeed. They are enthusiastic learners and often show high levels of individual perseverance, as seen in an art lesson in the middle class, where all completed repeating patterns. They are patient, listen attentively and settle to work with concentration. The pupils enjoy being actively involved in their own learning as shown in their response in mental mathematics sessions and their willing contribution to discussions. They also show an enthusiastic response to extra-curricular opportunities. For example, more than one quarter of the pupils attend the dance club held before school once a week.

13. Most pupils with special educational needs have a positive attitude to learning. When working in the classroom with the support of a classroom assistant or when given individual tuition, they persevere with their tasks.
14. The school is a very orderly place. It provides a secure and welcoming environment in which teachers can teach and pupils learn without disruption or distraction. The quality of behaviour in the classroom and around the school is very good, and as a result, there have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils are attentive in lessons, and if they stray off task, they quickly get back to work when asked to do so by their teacher. Pupils understand the school's expectations of them. They accept and generally abide by its code of conduct. They treat school property with respect. There are no examples of graffiti and pupils tidy away litter very carefully from the dining hall during lunch time. Pupils are very courteous to visitors and members of staff and are friendly and considerate of each other. Noisy and rough behaviour in the playground is rare. Pupils of all ages relate very well to one another and there is no sign of friction between different age groups. On the contrary, the way in which older pupils willingly look after younger pupils is a feature of life in the school.
15. The personal development of the pupils is good. Pupils show good initiative and responsibility when given the opportunity and this develops as they move through the school. For example, when the youngest pupils move around the school, a Year 1 pupil frequently partners a reception pupil. Year 6 pupils help put out and clear away equipment in the hall, prepare for assemblies and operate equipment such as the overhead projector. They also help at lunchtime when individuals sit at each table to help younger pupils. All pupils take responsibility for looking after learning materials in their classrooms.
16. There are very good relationships throughout the school between the pupils and the adults and among the pupils. In lessons, pupils co-operate very well. They share resources happily; they listen to each other and work well in pairs or groups. A good example of the latter was seen when the oldest pupils had to work out together how to obtain clear water from a muddy solution. Pupils demonstrate a good sense of fair play in their games lessons. Where teaching is of a high level and teachers have high expectations of their pupils, there is excellent rapport between teacher and pupils, which promotes learning.
17. The school's attendance rate is well above the national average for primary schools. The figure for the current year is 96.4 per cent. No pupils or groups of pupils have poor attendance records, and there are no cases of unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good, with registrations and lessons starting promptly and finishing on time. Overall, very good attendance makes a significant contribution to pupils' attainment and progress.
18. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. It has maintained high standards of behaviour and improved pupils' attendance and punctuality.

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

19. The overall good quality teaching noted at the last inspection has been maintained and there have also been some improvements. For instance, during the inspection week no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Across the school, the quality of teaching was judged as good or better in about 79 per cent of lessons, and very good and, sometimes, excellent, in 25 per cent of lessons. However, there is considerable variation between year groups. There is consistently good and, sometimes, very good teaching for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 and good, very good and sometimes excellent teaching for the older pupils in Key Stage 2. The teaching for the oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 and the youngest pupils in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall with 29 per cent of lessons judged to be good.
20. Teaching is good in English, mathematics and physical education for reception, Years 1, 4, 5 and 6 and satisfactory for Years 2 and 3. In science, teaching is good for reception and Year 1, satisfactory for Years 2 and 3 and excellent for Years 5 and 6. The teaching of art, information technology and music is good throughout the school. Teaching is good in geography and religious education for reception, Years 1, 4, 5 and 6.
21. Teachers provide appropriate tasks for pupils with special educational needs that are matched well to their particular need, particularly in literacy and numeracy sessions. The

good relationships that teachers and assistants build with pupils, and the gentle encouragement they give, enables the pupils to make the most of opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding. Good understanding and patient encouragement of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties reduces any disruption to a minimum.

22. The quality of teaching and learning for children under five and Year 1 is consistently good and ensures that the pupils enter Year 2 with a good mastery of basic skills. For example, practically all of the pupils will enter Year 2 in September with above average reading, writing and mathematical skills. The teacher shows a good understanding of the needs of young pupils and breaks down lessons into short, snappy sessions which maintain the pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Skilled questioning ensures that the pupils are working to the best of their ability, and the use of a puppet to aid the teaching of the sounds at the end of words is excellent. The pupils are very amused when the puppet gives the wrong answer in a funny voice! This method of teaching reading is very effective as the pupils are totally engaged with the teacher and cannot wait to give her the correct sound.
23. Teaching and learning for the oldest Key Stage 1 pupils and the youngest Key Stage 2 pupils is satisfactory overall. Knowledge and understanding of how to teach English and mathematics is not totally secure. For example, the method chosen in one lesson to help pupils write a story based on the style of a particular author was not successful because there was no firm focus on what makes a good opening to a part of a story. The opportunity to teach the pupils the characteristics of good writing was missed. This shows a lack of understanding of the teaching strategies recommended in the National Literacy Strategy. The planning for this lesson was not clear and did not clarify what the pupils were expected to learn from this opening session. The few lessons judged to be good for this group of pupils showed good preparation and organisation of resources.
24. The quality of the teaching for the oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 is never less than good and sometimes excellent. In these lessons, teachers consistently challenge the pupils and this has an impact on the high standards they achieve. The methods the teachers use are very effective, ranging from brisk basic skills lessons in English and mathematics to very imaginative methods of teaching science when pupils, working in groups, were given a fixed length of time to clarify muddy water. Their response was excellent: they worked with speed and, by the end of the lesson, had a good understanding of the principles of fair testing. In a successful religious education lesson, the teacher prepared excellent resources and used questioning skilfully. As a result, the pupils showed a good grasp of the meaning of the holy symbols of Sikhism.
25. The teachers' good management of pupils in all lessons is a strong feature of the school. They give praise and encouragement appropriately to ensure a pleasant and purposeful atmosphere that encourages good relationships. The pupils feel confident to contribute their ideas, for example, in the music lesson when they performed their vocal compositions competently. Teachers' expectations of the pupils' application to work and achievement are particularly noticeable for the older and higher attaining pupils. This is clear in the good quality oral work, combined with direct teaching, which help pupils think clearly and extend their understanding. Homework is not consistent and the letters sent home to parents about what their children will be learning during the term are confusing. They give different messages to parents who may have a child in each class.
26. Teachers make sound use of informal, day-to-day assessments of pupils to ensure that the work they are given is suitable for their levels of ability and prior attainment. Teachers make good use of resources to inspire pupils in their practical work in art, mathematics, science and religious education. They have a good awareness of safety issues and encourage safe practice in science.
27. In a few lessons in Years 2 and 3, pupils are unclear about their task or the pace slows during the main activity. Where this happens, for example, in the opening sessions of the literacy lessons, pupils' level of interest and motivation diminishes. However, the quality of learning is good overall because pupils are very well behaved and make a very good effort in lessons.

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

28. The school provides a good quality curriculum overall with a broad range of relevant opportunities for learning. The school has taken effective steps to meet the weaknesses identified in the last inspection and the curriculum largely meets the needs of all pupils. The youngest and oldest higher attaining pupils are now challenged appropriately in mathematics and science although this is not always so in Years 2 and 3. The school has implemented effectively the national strategies for numeracy and literacy although there is a lack of understanding of how to deliver the first sessions of the literacy hour in Years 2 and 3. The introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies has helped teachers recognise the importance of well-focused learning objectives in all subjects. As found in the last inspection, the school encourages independence and a mature approach from pupils by a wide variety of group activities. The school's curriculum prepares pupils well for their next phase of education.
29. The curricular opportunities for children under five cover well all the areas of learning for their development, with the exception of some aspects of physical development. This is owing to the lack of provision of an outdoor play area with appropriate play equipment and this limits their physical development.
30. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum meets statutory requirements for teaching the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, the organisation of much of the curriculum under broad topic headings means that the focus on a specific subject is sometimes lost and the school cannot always assure the progressive development of skills and knowledge. This is particularly so in art and design and technology but also in history, information technology and, on occasion, in science. The school recognises that further work is required, such as improving the consistency of medium term planning. It is in the process of adapting the national guidelines to suit its needs and ensure more systematic development of subjects.
31. There is relevant provision for personal, social and health education that includes suitable aspects of sex education and the dangers of drug misuse but the subject is only timetabled for the oldest pupils. It is delivered through drama in the middle years and by role-play and other activities for reception and Year 1 pupils. The school recognises the need to structure this provision more formally and plans to develop a policy to achieve this.
32. The good range of visits to places of geographical, historical and scientific interest and visitors to the school extend the curriculum effectively and contribute to pupils' enthusiasm for school. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities including sports, dancing and French that are well supported. Approximately one-quarter of the pupils attend the dancing club which is organised by one of the assistants before school. The value of the school's residential visit in enhancing the curriculum was demonstrated during the inspection by the high quality work it had stimulated in, for example, art, English and geography.
33. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The special needs assistants and the co-ordinator discuss progress towards the targets on pupils' individual education plans regularly. Most targets are useful, quite specific and facilitate the planning of suitable work and the measure of its success. The school provides good equality of access to both the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. The way the school operates on a day-to-day basis avoids obvious stereotypical behaviour by gender, as girls and boys work together as equals in all aspects of school life.
34. The school's overall provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for spiritual development is good. Religious education makes a significant contribution by helping pupils to reflect on their own and other people's lives. Pupils are encouraged to wonder at aspects of the natural world through work in science and art and understand the feelings of others through literature. In some of the daily assemblies the spiritual dimension lacks emphasis but the legal requirements for collective worship are met.

35. The school's very good provision for pupils' moral and social development is a strength and makes a very effective contribution to fulfilling its aims and providing a supportive community with a positive ethos for learning. All teachers have high expectations for good behaviour and any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with rapidly and effectively so that pupils develop a clear understanding of right and wrong. Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions and to take good care of resources, to respect property and the school environment. The adults set good examples to pupils to be consistently courteous and considerate. Well-planned and executed opportunities promote collaborative work from an early age. Pupils work with a partner or in small groups in a variety of activities such as mathematical games and science investigations. Pairs of pupils of different gender help each other on computers. Pupils learn to be responsible for themselves and for others and they relate well to staff and visitors. Most parents feel that the school achieves high standards of social behaviour and inspection evidence confirms this view.
36. The quality of provision for pupils' cultural development is good and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils learn about their traditional heritage through studies in the locality and visits further afield. They learn maypole and traditional dances. Pupils learn about different faiths and beliefs in religious education and different ways of life in their history and geography work. Teachers extend pupils' awareness of different cultures through literature, geography and history but the use of the work of significant artists and musicians could be developed further. A remaining weakness is the lack of attention currently paid to developing pupils' understanding of the multi-cultural nature of present day British society.
37. The school is an integral part of the local community and enjoys very good links. It has well established connections with the local church and the local vicar serves on the governing body. Teachers make effective use of the local area as a resource for learning and a venue for educational visits. Members of the local community with specialist knowledge are invited to the school to talk to pupils about their work. In recent times the visiting speakers have included the community police officer, fire-fighters from the local fire station and a governor who has a very good knowledge of the history of canal building. Pupils learn about community service through links with local senior citizens who are invited every year to the school's harvest festival and Christmas celebrations.
38. Links with partner organisations are good and contribute to pupils' progress. Rothersthorpe Primary is a member of the local cluster of schools and benefits from the cluster's joint approach to common problems such as holiday leave in term time. There is also close and effective liaison between the school and Rothersthorpe Nursery School for the preparation of children for full-time education. For example, there are good arrangements for the transfer of children's records. Older pupils and their parents also benefit from the partnership as the nursery school building is used for an after-school and homework club. Links with other feeder playgroups and nurseries are generally satisfactory, bearing in mind the large number of organisations involved. There is good co-operation between Rothersthorpe Primary School and Champion School over the induction programme for pupils in Year 6. Parents appreciate this and say that their children are very well supported during the transfer to secondary education. At subject level, there are satisfactory links in English, mathematics and modern foreign languages.

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

39. The school makes good provision for the support and welfare of pupils and this has been maintained since the last inspection. Overall, the standard of pastoral care is high, and has some significant strengths. The school's work in this area is valued by parents who say that their children like the school and make good progress. They also believe that pupils are encouraged to become more mature and responsible, and consequently learn to behave well.
40. The school has a caring ethos. It provides a safe and friendly environment in which effective teaching and learning can take place. Members of staff give good support to pupils which

promotes their welfare and progress. They know pupils well as individuals and have a good understanding of their strengths, weaknesses and pastoral needs. They can, therefore, give them appropriate help and guidance, for example, there is good assessment of drama activities by the headteacher.

41. There are very good formal arrangements for promoting pupils' welfare. The school's policy and procedures on child protection are based on the County Council's guidelines and members of staff are aware of their responsibilities and the need to be vigilant in this area.
42. Governors and staff are very conscious of health and safety issues. They have, therefore, put into place thorough procedures to minimise hazards and deal with practical problems. Risk assessments have been completed and the annual checks of equipment required by law have been carried out. There is good provision for first aid and effective arrangements for dealing with emergencies. The school maintains a "Critical Incidents" pack which contains much useful information for members of staff, such as contact names and telephone numbers and a list of pupils with medical problems.
43. The school has effectively addressed the weaknesses in its assessment of pupils' academic development and progress identified at the last inspection. The school has worked hard to develop appropriate and manageable systems. There is now a clear and helpful policy supplemented by the yearly timetable for action with clear identification of responsibilities. The assessment of English, mathematics and science is good. The information obtained is used soundly in the planning of future work. Teachers are bringing the agreed whole school procedures in other subjects into use, but as yet these are not having full impact in informing what pupils need to learn next.
44. The headteacher analyses carefully the results of school and national tests, both on a cohort and an individual basis. The staff then takes suitable action to rectify any weaknesses. For example, the weakness found in mental arithmetic was addressed through emphasis on this part of the lesson when the school implemented the numeracy hour. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support within the school from teachers, support staff and pupils. The supportive atmosphere enables these pupils to cope with any difficult situations that may arise. The school seeks appropriate specialist support from external agencies and uses this effectively, though constant change of some local authority personnel has presented difficulties. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is monitored carefully. Classroom assistants make useful notes of ongoing assessments and this is used appropriately to form targets for further improvement.
45. Procedures for promoting pupils' attendance are good. The school set high standards, which are clearly communicated to parents and pupils via the school prospectus and the home-school contract. Pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually, and not take to extended leave in term time. The school's routines are thorough and effective, these are reflected in its high attendance rate. Registrations comply with legal requirements. Class registers are well maintained and provide accurate records, which the school uses effectively to monitor pupils' attendance. Members of staff take prompt action on the rare occasions when there are problems with a pupil's attendance and punctuality.
46. The school makes very effective provision for promoting good behaviour and preventing bullying and aggression. This starts with its positive ethos and sense of being one large family. Older pupils are encouraged to look after younger ones, which fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility. Members of staff promote high standards of behaviour by acting as good adult role models. The school's formal procedures are thorough and well applied in practice. There are sound whole school policies on discipline and bullying, a sensible set of classroom rules and a good system of rewards. Pupils understand what is expected of them and know that their good work and behaviour will be appropriately rewarded. There are good arrangements for supervision of breaks and lunch times, and these restrict, very successfully, the scope for rough play and bullying. The school also uses personal and social education to develop positive attitudes and eliminate aggression. When instances of unacceptable behaviour occur, the school deals with them quickly and efficiently. Pupils whose conduct gives cause for concern are carefully monitored, and where

necessary, are given targets for improvement. The success of these arrangements is reflected in high standards of behaviour throughout the school and a zero rate of exclusion.

47. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. It has maintained the high standards of care for pupils' health, safety and personal welfare which existed at that time, and has improved arrangements for child protection and for promoting good attendance.

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

48. The school values its links with parents, and sees a strong home-school partnership as a significant element of enhancing pupils' standards of attainment. Parents, for their part, largely approve of what the school does for their children. One hundred per cent of those who took part in the inspection questionnaire said that behaviour was good. There are also high levels of satisfaction with the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make. On the other hand, significant numbers of parents said that they were unhappy with the amount of homework which their children are expected to do. There was also considerable dissatisfaction with the range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils. Some parents supported this view at their meeting with inspectors. However, it became apparent at the meeting that not all parents are not fully aware of what the school provides.
49. Overall, the quality of information for parents is satisfactory. Most families say that they know about forthcoming events, although some would like to have more than one newsletter per half-term. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are well presented and readable. However, although they give an adequate picture of the life of the school, they do not conform with the law on information for parents. For example, the prospectus omits the required section on the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs. The annual report of the governing body has minor omissions. The school makes good arrangements to inform parents of the curriculum. Class teachers send home letters containing details of topics of study for the term and, during consultation evenings, parents have opportunities to see and discuss what children are learning. The school aims to be open and accessible. It is, therefore, easy for parents to meet members of staff at the beginning and end of the school day. Those who attended the meeting with inspectors said how much they appreciated these opportunities for informal discussions with class teachers.
50. The quality of the school's formal reporting on pupils' progress is uneven. Arrangements for parents' consultation evenings are good, but there are weaknesses in the annual written reports. Some of the subject sections give very broad accounts of what pupils have learned and can do. National Curriculum levels are only reported at the end of key stages, and even then only for the core subjects. Reports include, "Areas for Improvement" in English and mathematics, but these are usually very general and do not provide children with precise targets. This supports the view of some parents, expressed in the questionnaire and meeting with inspectors, that the school could provide better and more helpful information on pupils' progress. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are kept well informed and involved in their child's education. Annual reviews for pupils who have a statement of special educational need are carried out appropriately and parents are involved.
51. Home-school links are effective and make a positive contribution to pupils' education. Parents have a good level of involvement in their children's learning. They have high aspirations and are keenly interested in their children's progress, as the very high level of attendance at consultation evenings shows. For the most part, families are satisfied with their part in the life of the school and their children's academic work. Many are actively involved, for example, by hearing pupils read at home, and much of the school's extra-curricular provision is organised by parents. There is a successful parent-teacher association. Pupils' families gives strong support to its fund-raising events, and thereby raise money for extra educational resources. On the other hand, parents make little direct input into lessons, with only two or three regularly acting as volunteer helpers in the classroom. There is also a feeling that, although the school generally encourages parental involvement, it could be more supportive. For instance, some parents say that teachers could give them more information and advice on how to help children who have problems with school work.

52. Since the time of the last inspection the school has made satisfactory progress in developing its partnership with parents. It has recently introduced a contract which encapsulates the entitlement and responsibilities of parents, pupils and staff. It has successfully maintained the good level of parental involvement which was evident four years ago. This continues to make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

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

53. The headteacher, supported by the governors, staff and parents provides very effective leadership which is an improvement since the last inspection. She is energetic and provides a very good role model for the staff. She has a clear vision for the school's development and is raising standards through a range of positive strategies. For example, the decision to increase the hours of the part-time teacher to raise standards in English and mathematics has had an impact on raising standards. This has been particularly significant in improving the pace of progress of the pupils in Year 4 which was a key issue in the last inspection. Her decision to employ a specialist music teacher for one afternoon a week has resulted in professional development for the teachers and has been successful in raising the profile of music within the school. Since the last inspection, the school has made good improvement and the key issues for action have, overall, been addressed successfully and the aims of the school are fully reflected in its work.
54. There is sound management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and accurate records are maintained well. Any pupil who is giving cause for concern is assessed and suitable action taken. The co-ordinator meets regularly with learning support assistants to discuss the progress of individuals. The funds allocated to the school for this area are used appropriately and the governor with responsibility for special educational needs ensures that the governing body supports and monitors the school's provision. In their annual report, the governors explain the school's provision, including how resources have been allocated and used. However, they do not report on the success of the school's provision. Any reference to special educational needs is omitted from the brochure.
55. There is good monitoring of teaching and curriculum by the headteacher and local inspector which is an improvement from the last inspection. This is well documented and teachers are given feedback. By teaching for four days out of five, the headteacher is well placed to monitor informally the progress of three year groups of pupils and, as the mathematics co-ordinator, has monitored numeracy in the other classes. There is a little time allocated for other co-ordinators to monitor the development of their subjects. Very little appraisal of the teachers has taken place but the governing body has been appraising the performance of the headteacher regularly.
56. Although there is a clear, costed school development plan with appropriate priorities identified, the success criteria do not focus on raising standards. The headteacher is aware of this and intends to rectify this omission. The school has set formal targets for the Years 2000 and 2001 in English and mathematics for Year 6 and also for Year 2. The results of the Baseline Assessment on the children admitted to school are used to inform planning but no targets are set for individual pupils on a day-to-day basis.
57. Governors involve themselves actively in all aspects of the school life and have a very positive and supportive relationship with the staff and pupils. Appropriate sub-committees are in place. Several governors visit the school frequently and become informed of curriculum development through information discussions with staff. Most governors live in the immediate area and have long-standing connections with the school. They are in close touch with parents and have a close knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governors fulfil their statutory requirements including those for collective worship.
58. The school's financial planning is good, although the governors do not have a financial policy statement which was identified as a weakness in the last audit report. Apart from this, the minor suggestions for improvement have been put into place. The large percentage of

surplus funds forecast for the end of the financial year are earmarked for increasing the part-time teacher's hours in order to raise attainment, to employ an additional assistant and for additional administrative hours. Specific grants are used for their designated purpose and the principles of best value are applied well. A good example of this was when the school sent home questionnaires to find out the views of parents regarding the home-school contract. The day-to-day running of the school is highly efficient due to the very good administrative officer. Daily routines operate very smoothly and there are effective communication systems.

59. Staffing, accommodation and resources are good overall. There is an appropriate match of teaching and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. The increased hours of the part-time teacher gives the Year 4 pupils the opportunity to be taught English and mathematics at an appropriate level for four out of five days. Accommodation is good due to the excellent arrangements with the village Parish Council who share expenses for the hall. There is no outdoor provision for the under-fives, however, which means the children cannot use wheeled toys and balancing equipment which they need to ensure the development of their large muscles. Resources are satisfactory overall and good for English and design and technology. More resources are needed for music.

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

60. To raise further the standards of work and the good quality of provision apparent in many aspects of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Raise attainment in information technology by:
    - providing sufficient time for pupils to develop their skills systematically in all aspects of the subject;
    - providing further training for teachers in order to increase their confidence and competence;\*\*
    - providing more computers.\*\*  
(paras 10, 79, 87, 106, 108)
  - (2) Raise attainment in foundation subjects to match the high standards in English, mathematics and science by:
    - reviewing the balance and focus of subjects across the curriculum and in the weekly timetable especially in Years 2, 3 and 4;

- establishing a system whereby co-ordinators can monitor standards in their subjects.

(paras 11, 30, 55, 64, 73, 87, 92, 96, 101, 105, 121)

(3) Raise the standard of teaching in Years 2, 3 and 4 to match the consistently good and often very good practice in the rest of the school.

(paras 8, 9, 11, 19, 23, 27, 28, 70, 73, 75, 78, 83, 104, 120)

In addition to the main items above, the following less important areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- implement the good procedures for assessment recently adopted and make more use of the information to plan future work to meet the needs of the pupils;  
(paras 43, 86, 93, 96, 98, 105, 108, 117, 121)
- consider how to provide outdoor play provision for the under-fives;\*\* (paras 29, 59, 62)
- ensure that reporting to parents meets statutory requirements; (paras 49, 50, 54, 109)
- identify planned opportunities for the development of numeracy in other subjects; (para 79)
- ensure that homework is consistent.\*\* (paras 25, 72, 79)

\*\* These issues have already been identified by the school as an area for development.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	21	54	21	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	89
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	8	5

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	4	4	5
	Total	12	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (88)	92 (88)	100 (94)
	National	82 (80)	83 (89)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	4	5	5
	Total	12	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	7	5

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	4	7
	Girls	4	2	4
	Total	11	6	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (88)	50 (88)	92 (94)
	National	70 (70)	69 (69)	78 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	4	7
	Girls	4	3	4
	Total	10	7	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (82)	58 (82)	92 (91)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

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

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

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.7
Average class size	29.6

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55

**Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

**Financial information**

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	168,760
Total expenditure	171,800
Expenditure per pupil	1931
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,000
Balance carried forward to next year	22,960

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	89
Number of questionnaires returned	49

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	51	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	52	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	49	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	49	27	4	2
The teaching is good.	35	59	6	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	51	14	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	33	10	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	47	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	35	45	16	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	47	35	12	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	51	6	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	39	24	6	4

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

## AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

61. At the time of the inspection, there were only two children under the age of five in the school, who were both working within the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. There is not enough evidence to report on teaching in each area of learning. The curriculum provided for children under the age of five is well thought out and integrated within the work of the reception and Year 1 pupils, who are grouped together in Class 1. The planning is particularly good and shows how each area of learning is linked with the appropriate subject of the curriculum. The teacher provides a secure environment through quiet, firm control in which the children feel confident and at ease. At the time of the inspection, children just reaching statutory school age were attaining above the expected levels in personal and social development, language and literacy and in mathematics and meeting the expected levels in other areas of learning.
62. The curriculum offered contains all the aspects recommended for children under five. The timetable for the week takes into account young children's needs, for example, the direct teaching time of literacy is shorter than in other year groups and the children can then choose from a variety of activities which are very well organised by the teacher. The teacher and her assistant concentrate on teaching small groups the basic skills of writing and reading. There is good liaison between the adults and it is clear that the assistant is able to show initiative and decide when it is appropriate for children to change their reading books ready to take home to share with their parents. This has an impact on the children's good progress in language and literacy. Although the indoor classroom environment for the children is good with good resources and well organised activities, there is no provision for the pupils to play outside with large toys which limits their physical development.
63. The school makes good use of the assessment of children as they enter the school to identify areas for development. This information is shared with the parents and ensures the children receive a programme of work suited to their needs.

## ENGLISH

64. Pupils attain above expected standards by the end of both key stages. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection. The averages of the school's 1999 end of Key Stage 1 test results show that, compared with all schools, standards are well above average in reading and above average in writing. Test results for the end of Key Stage 2 show that standards are well above the national average. Compared to similar schools, pupils' results at Key Stage 2 are broadly in line. Over the past three years standards have remained consistent with the national trend. The school has set formal targets for the national tests in the Year 2000 and is expecting 94 per cent of its pupils to achieve Level 2 and above in reading and writing in Year 2. In Year 6 the school is expecting 78 per cent of its pupils to achieve Level 4 and above. The achievement of the pupils in both key stages is good overall.
65. The findings of this inspection are that the pupils are on course to attain above average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although there is evidence that few pupils will attain the higher levels in writing. No significant differences were observed between the attainment of boys and girls. This judgement represents similar standards in English to the school's 1999 end of year test results except for a drop in writing in Year 2.
66. By the age of seven, pupils attain above average standards in speaking and listening. Pupils enter the key stage with a good range of vocabulary and many are confident speakers. The school builds well on this foundation and, by the end of Year 2, pupils are able to answer questions clearly and often in good detail. Pupils speak at length when they talk about their holidays or retell a story they have read. They enjoy using their voices expressively when they read their shared text together, such as "Mrs. Jolly's Jokebook". Standards in reading are above average and the pupils make good use of a wide range of strategies to read unfamiliar words and talk to visitors about their favourite books confidently. Through their work in literacy, pupils know how to look up information in non-fiction books. Pupils learn to write whole sentences that are usually punctuated with full stops and capital letters and the

higher attainers use speech marks very confidently. In Year 2 the pupils write good stories and are able to sustain the storyline but their attempts at writing non-fiction pieces and poetry are not at the same level. Pupils can spell familiar words accurately and attempt more difficult words using their knowledge of linking sounds to groups of letters. The pupils in this year group do not have enough direct teaching about how to join letters and most do not transfer that skill to their written work.

67. By the age of eleven the attainment of pupils in English is above average. Pupils speak confidently and with clarity about their recent residential visit and can talk about the deeper meaning of other religions thoughtfully. They listen most attentively and show great interest and respect for the opinions of others. Practically all pupils read fluently. They can discuss with maturity and sensitivity the books they have read, their favourite authors and their own likes and dislikes. Pupils are very confident and can instantly refer to the text to provide more detail about a character. They can discuss how their tastes in reading have changed and matured. One of the pupils has explored an author's website, which furthered his interest. Pupils can find information in non-fiction books with ease and confidence. It is very clear that most parents give substantial support, both by hearing their children read regularly and taking them to the library on regular visits. The pupils write with a developing sense of audience, for example, using dialogue and description to engage the interest of the reader. Higher attaining pupils can write in different styles competently, such as biographical writing, as well as characterisation pieces describing their friends. One piece of "time-slip" writing where the writer goes back in time shows well above average skills. Pupils' use of punctuation is good and their spelling and handwriting skills are above average.
68. Pupils with special education needs make good progress relative to their prior attainment with good, well-focused support in class which is an improvement from the last inspection. Standards in literacy for all the pupils are above average and the development of literacy skills across the curriculum is good. Pupils write extensively in history and geography and label and annotate charts in science. Older pupils write at length in their work in religious education. In information technology, they are able to use their word processing skills well to correct punctuation. The parents are of the opinion that their children make good progress in the school and inspection evidence supports this view.
69. In both key stages pupils show very good attitudes to their work. They are highly interested and motivated to do their best. Their levels of concentration are very good and, consequently, pupils complete good quantities of work. Pupils' behaviour is very good.
70. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning is good overall throughout the school. For the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 and the older pupils in Key Stage 2 teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good. The quality of teaching for Years 2 and 3 is satisfactory. When teaching is good and very good there are several strengths. These strengths were well illustrated in a Y6 lesson when the teacher immediately motivated the pupils to learn how to use punctuation marks using a quickfire game of visual aids while expecting the pupils to devise body symbols. Through a very effective use of questions, she ensured that all pupils understood the main learning points and that they all were able to contribute and take part. Very good subject knowledge enabled her to challenge the pupils in the second session of the literacy lesson in their understanding of metaphor and simile. The pace of the lesson was excellent and had a good impact on the pupils' rate of learning. By the end of the lesson, higher attaining pupils had made very good gains in their understanding of punctuation and metaphor. This was the result of very good teaching, a productive working atmosphere with good relationships and plenty of challenge and inspiration.
71. Teaching in Years 2 and 3 is satisfactory. Preparation and organisation of materials for the literacy hour is sound but knowledge and understanding of how to teach the literacy hour is not always secure. There is some uncertainty about how to use the first sessions of the literacy hour. For example, in a lesson on the poet's use of rhyming couplets, the teacher missed opportunities to extend the pupils' learning of that specific language and there was no challenge for average and higher attaining pupils during the direct teaching session. A lack of pace was evident but pupils made satisfactory progress in this lesson because pupils behave very well and work hard when given their task.

72. The curriculum in English is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced successfully, particularly for the oldest and youngest pupils. The school is using the strategy as a scheme of work and the format is well established. Most teachers are confident in managing its different components. Records relating to pupils' progress in reading are inconsistent. An example of very good practice is in Class 3, where the teacher gives the pupils targets of how many pages she expects the pupils to read. They keep their records in a 'Reading Journal' where they also write a critique of the book and give descriptions of the characters. The teacher makes comments in the journals regularly. Assessment procedures are good; identify pupils who need help and have been directly linked to the planning in the booster classes which were organised earlier in the year for the older pupils. Homework is inconsistent. The school is aware of this weakness and is in the process of reviewing the homework policy.
73. The co-ordinator for English is a very experienced teacher. She has developed a good understanding of her role and has had some time during the year to monitor the teaching of the subject. Resources are good overall with some very good resources for the teaching of literacy. There are several sets of commercial books available and, although some of the activities are appropriate to meet the learning objectives of a very few lessons, there is still too much use being made of worksheets, particularly in Years 2 and 3. It is clear that worksheets are used when they are not necessary and, in the work sample presented by the school, some of them were not completed by the pupils or marked by the teacher. The library spaces are well organised and resourced and offer a good range of reading materials for pupils of all abilities. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils write creatively about their friendships and discuss the behaviour of characters in books and relate it to their own lives. They work very well collaboratively and share resources amicably and, through their reading, experience a good range of traditional tales and stories, and stories from other cultures.

## **MATHEMATICS**

74. Although the results of the end of Key Stage 1 national assessments for 1999 are well above average in relation to all schools nationally and above average in comparison with similar schools there is a different picture in Key Stage 2. The results dropped dramatically from the previous year, continuing a downward trend, from above average to well below average in comparison with all schools and to the lowest five per cent of similar schools. The school had predicted this. There are a number of factors involved; the small number of pupils involved means each one has a disproportionately large effect on the overall figure and the year group had a higher number of pupils with special educational needs. Two pupils just failed to achieve a Level 4. Analysis by the school found a particular weakness in mental mathematics. The school has taken steps to improve this situation, for example with booster classes on fractions and multiplication tables. The school anticipates improved results this year. This prediction is confirmed by inspection findings that pupils by the end of both key stages are attaining above average standards. This judgement is different to the end of Key Stage 1 tests for 1999 when attainment was very high. This is because the pupils are different and also the data is unreliable when such small numbers of pupils are taking the tests. Progress made by most pupils, including those with special educational needs is good. Progress made by pupils in Years 2 and 3 is sound.
75. The teaching of mathematics is good overall but there is variation between year groups with good teaching for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 and the older pupils in Key Stage 2, whereas teaching is satisfactory for pupils in the Years 2 and 3. The effective introduction of the numeracy hour has improved the quality of teaching overall since the last inspection by increasing the interaction of teachers with the whole class and reducing the inappropriate use of commercial schemes and workbooks. However, there is still an over-reliance on workbooks for Year 2 pupils. The school has overcome the difficulty of managing three year groups in the classes for the middle years and for the older pupils by withdrawing Year 4 pupils from both classes for four out of five lessons each week and teaching them as a group. This is benefiting all pupils in these classes. Planning is good and addresses the needs of pupils within each year group. The teaching of the numeracy hour has been

monitored effectively by the headteacher, who co-ordinates the subject, as well as by a local inspector.

76. Teachers in all the classes manage pupils very well and their preparation and organisation of lessons is of high quality. Pupils respond well to this by making considerable intellectual effort. This is supported by their very good behaviour and good social skills, evident when they play mathematical games and work in small groups. All teachers give appropriate emphasis to mathematical vocabulary and encourage pupils to use this when discussing their work so that it becomes familiar. Teachers make good use of, for example, digit cards, to provide quick feedback about the performance of individuals and the class as a whole. Classroom assistants work effectively with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils to help them sustain concentration.
77. The good teaching of reception pupils introduces them to basic mathematical vocabulary and secures their knowledge and understanding of numbers to 10 and beyond. They learn to enjoy mathematics through games such as 'Jewel Robbers' where they begin to appreciate difference and learn to count. Pupils continue to achieve well in Year 1 developing confidence in addition and subtraction and their knowledge of number, with higher attainers confidently ordering three digit numbers. Pupils record accurately, with good formation of digits. They develop an appropriate knowledge of shapes and measures. Through practice of computation skills, pupils consolidate their knowledge of number in Year 2. However, evidence from the work scrutiny shows a lack of understanding of how to apply these skills to problems presented in an unfamiliar form. There is little evidence of investigative work for this year group.
78. The main difference between the satisfactory lessons in Years 2 and 3, and the good and sometimes very good lessons for the three older year groups in Key Stage 2 is in the pace and challenge of the work. Mental mathematics in the middle class, though adequate, is at a rather pedestrian pace. Not all the pupils are involved in giving oral answers during the introduction to the main part of the lesson and opportunities are missed to challenge pupils. In lessons for Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils, the interaction between the teacher and the pupils is very focused and generates more enthusiasm. The teacher takes care to involve all pupils and keep them on their toes. Good questioning enables the teacher to gauge pupils' progress in the lesson accurately so that she extends them constantly. The older pupils are given problem-solving challenges that help them to apply their skills and understanding. For example, ordering a mixture of decimals, fractions and percentages. The good pace of work in Years 4, 5 and 6 is clearly evident from sampling the work that shows a considerable quantity of a wide range of interesting mathematical work with good achievement across all the attainment targets. By the time they leave the school, most pupils are attaining above average standards and some demonstrate well above average attainment in some aspects of the subject.
79. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but comments are often limited to encouragement rather than to show how pupils can improve. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 regularly practise multiplication tables on computers but there is little evidence of consistent use of information technology across the school. Homework is a well-established feature but tends to be rather inconsistent. There is some evidence of the use of mathematics, for example, in geography where pupils draw line graphs and measuring in science but its use across the curriculum is not planned systematically. Through analysis of test results and termly assessments, the headteacher has a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and takes appropriate action to address the latter. She has supported staff by providing appropriate training and opportunities for observing lessons. These strategies have a clear focus on ensuring continued high standards in mathematics.

## SCIENCE

80. The results of teacher assessments in 1999 indicated that pupils were attaining very high standards at seven years. The end of key stage tests for the pupils who are eleven show that standards are above average. The results are average when compared with similar schools.

Evidence from the one lesson seen in each class and from sampling pupils' work show that the school is maintaining the above average standards reported at the last inspection.

81. Although there has not been a strong emphasis on the development of science in the last two years, teachers have received training on teaching investigative and experimental science and this has clearly had a positive impact. Teaching is good overall but varies between the classes. Across the school, teachers place a good emphasis on teaching appropriate scientific vocabulary. They balance the curriculum well across all the attainment targets and pupils acquire a broad knowledge and understanding of science as they move through the school. Teachers prepare well and organise practical work that motivates pupils and furthers their understanding. Pupils' achievement is most evident where there is a clear focus on the scientific knowledge the pupils are expected to learn.
82. The youngest pupils in the reception and Year 1 class are making a good start in the scientific study of living things. They have been observing snails closely and know the difference between living and non-living things. Good teaching promoted clear progress when finding and observing living things on the school field. Before going outside the teacher helped them to predict what sort of animals and plants they were likely to find and also the kinds that would not be there. The pupils showed from their answers that they are beginning to understand that the type of habitat influences what lives there. They responded enthusiastically to the outdoor work and their behaviour was exemplary. Working in small groups, all produced good quality diagrams of plants and minibeasts. They became very excited and interested when they found eggs under a log and deduced that they could be woodlice eggs as some of these creatures were hiding at one end.
83. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 2 and 3 where an appropriate range of materials was provided for pupils to identify and decide whether they were suitable for making particular household objects. The initial question and answer session was conducted at rather a slow pace as the pupils' prior knowledge was not secure and many of the questions were seeking a particular answer. Pupils were well behaved but owing to the length of the initial session some did not complete the subsequent activities. Scrutiny of work indicates sound progress and good quality recording with a high level of expectation for good presentation. However, investigative work is less well represented than in the other classes.
84. Excellent teaching promoted a high level of achievement in a lesson for the oldest pupils. They responded extremely well to a challenge to work in small groups to clarify muddy water in ten minutes, with a given range of materials. In discussion, pupils showed they understand well the principles of fair testing. Encouraged by their teacher they applied an extremely mature approach to the work, planning and co-operating very well and trying out different solutions. Through good questioning, the teacher helped pupils to generalise about particle and mesh size for filtering, as well as about the behaviour of different sized particles in suspension. The pupils showed generous appreciation for the group that was most successful.
85. Scrutiny of work for pupils in Years 5 and 6 shows high achievement with good progress in all areas of science. Pupils make high quality recordings of their observations and investigations including drawings, diagrams, and tables to display information. Written work in a range of forms contributes to their literacy skills. The work includes use of a variety of equipment for measuring and shows understanding of the role of prediction and hypotheses. Average and low attainers achieve well, attaining expected or better levels, though their work indicates less depth and breadth of understanding than the higher attainers. An improvement since the last inspection is that the higher attaining pupils are now well challenged and the high proportion attaining above expected levels in national tests confirms this.
86. Assessment has also improved but has not yet been in place long enough to fully inform teachers' planning and there is still some evidence of work at the same level for pupils of different prior attainment. The school is adapting national guidelines to help it secure the progressive development of knowledge and skills. Visits to a 'hands on' science exhibition and the Bradford Museum of Photography and Film during a recent residential week have broadened pupils' experience and knowledge.

## **ART**

87. Pupils are attaining the expected standards overall for their age at both key stages in both two and three-dimensional work. In displays around the school there are also examples of work of above expected standard. Inspection findings show standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is good in all classes but the school is aware that the lack of a suitable scheme of work is limiting the progress that pupils make and of which they are clearly capable. Also, the school is not making sufficient use of information technology to further pupils' understanding and creativity in this subject.
88. Standards in drawing are good. From an early age, pupils show a developing sense of line and shape as seen in drawings of Kenilworth Castle. There is evidence of good observational skills in the detail shown by pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 in drawings of their own houses. The oldest pupils show sensitivity and a developing sense of tone and perspective in drawings of plants. However, their skills are not fully exploited owing to the use of a fairly restricted range of drawing tools.
89. An improvement since the last inspection is that there is no longer an over-emphasis on picture making. Pupils respond well and clearly enjoy the varied challenges teachers give them. They show great care and take great pride in their work and build up a sound range of skills. For example, reception pupils knew exactly what colours they wanted to use and what shapes they intended to make when painting pictures of domestic animals. Year 1 pupils mixed paint very carefully to obtain the shades they wanted when painting their impression of the school field. The teacher helped them improve their brush strokes so they could obtain the effects they wished.
90. The good preparation and organisation of a lesson on different techniques of pattern making helped pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 to persist and obtain successful outcomes. They used press prints, stippling and pastels using templates based on geometrical shapes noted on the school building or flower and leaf shapes effectively.
91. The oldest pupils were enthralled by a very good demonstration by the teacher of building up layers of clay and joining to represent the landscape experienced during the recent residential visit. They showed by their answers to the teacher's questions that they have a good knowledge of basic techniques of working with clay. The teacher's clear instructions enabled the pupils to make very good use of time in the lesson and build up the basic shapes so that they could concentrate on texture during the next session.
92. Much of the work in art is linked to class topics. While this provides relevance for pupils it means that subject focus is sometimes lost and art is not celebrated or studied sufficiently for its own sake. Pupils acquire a limited understanding of the work of a small selection of well-known artists as well as knowledge about arts and crafts in other times and cultures.
93. Assessment procedures are in place but are not yet having any real impact on pupils' achievements. The reports to parents do not fulfil statutory requirements as art is not reported as a separate subject and there is insufficient space to provide useful comments on each pupil's attainment and progress.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

94. No lessons were observed during the inspection week but evidence was drawn from a scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with the teachers, displays and photograph albums. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards from what is a small evidence base, but the standards of pupils' work in Key Stage 2 are appropriate for their age in the "Making" element of design and technology. There is no evidence available to make a judgement on the "Design" element.

95. It is clear that the work on display in Key Stage 2, based on the story of Baisakhi linked to the work in religious education on Sikhism, required a considerable amount of collaboration between groups of pupils who were working on different aspects of the story. The resulting display of the story is very effective, colourful and eye-catching. A close examination of the three-dimensional pictures shows that the pupils are skilled at using fabric paints, stitching and using tools to saw dowel-rods. They also learned how to use pattern templates for the clothes of characters in the story.
96. The co-ordinator has several other subjects and aspects to manage. There is a policy but this was written in 1995 and is out of date. Although the school is making use of national guidance, units of work have yet to be developed as a secure planning tool. The time allocated to design and technology in the curriculum is not sufficient, both throughout the year and in weekly timetables, as it does not allow for adequate breadth and balance. Also, there is a need for the teachers to focus clearly on what constitutes the teaching and learning of design and technology rather than, in some cases, viewing the subject as three dimensional art work. No monitoring of the teaching of the subject takes place and assessment of pupils' skills needs to be put into place. The school has a wide range of materials that are well stored and accessible and there is a selection of suitable tools.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

97. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school in geography. This is in line with findings of the previous inspection. At both key stages, standards in geography are similar to those found in most other schools. Judgements are based on observation of two lessons in Class 1 and Class 3 and records of past work, photographs and planning for the subject. The display of geography around the school is good and the display of the recent residential visit to Yorkshire is particularly engaging, showing the pupils in a variety of geographical locations.
98. By Year 2, pupils are aware of the physical features of their own village and also of geographical locations in the world, such as India. From the work in their topic books it is clear that they know that the lives of children in a village in India are very different from their own. They can also make simple maps showing the homes of the people in a Indian village and the different amenities available, such as a Health Centre. The youngest pupils in reception and Year 1 can mark features on a large map of the village of Rothersthorpe showing the school, the church, their own houses and streets. They can make an attempt to describe what is in a village.
99. By Year 6, pupils have continued to make progress and, in the lesson observed, learn geographical skills and knowledge through a unit of work based on their recent residential visit to Yorkshire. Pupils are particularly motivated by this work and are meeting the end of key stage expectations. Pupils are very swift at allocating named cards of features of the landscape to either Yorkshire or Rothersthorpe. They are able to compare the features easily and can say why the places are so different. Very good use of the support assistant ensures that the pupils with special educational needs are making appropriate progress. Work in pupils' topic books in Key Stage 2 shows that they can draw maps of India and Africa and have a growing knowledge of how girls and boys live in Kenya. Geography is also taught during history lessons when pupils draw maps of the spread of the invasions of England.
100. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is good for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 and very good for the older pupils in Key Stage 2. Pupils are becoming familiar with geographical terms, maps and photographs and they understand some of the uses of land, such as for farming and roads. Teachers manage classes very well and provide a variety of experiences for pupils so that they are interested in the lessons and concentrate well. They use good and, sometimes, very good discussion and questioning techniques and pupils are able to join in enthusiastically with their own ideas and discussions. The teacher of the older pupils in Key Stage 2 has very good knowledge of the subject and insists on the pupils using correct geographical terminology. These pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively and are given a strict time-scale. As a result, their learning is increased by debate and exchange of ideas. Assessment is carried out on a day-to-day basis and also at the end of units of

work. There is good evidence in the recently implemented assessment files of teachers recording the progress of their pupils clearly. Pupils use literacy and numeracy skills in geography when they write passages, use maps and make graphs of rainfall in London compared to Kenya.

101. The co-ordinator is a very experienced teacher who has been on an extended geography course. The policy was written in 1995 and is out of date. The school uses the national guidance materials but has yet to bring the units of work together to form a whole school scheme of work and there is a lack of progression. Some planning, based on topics, is too general and does not highlight sufficiently how pupils will acquire important geographical skills. Pupils enjoy geography, especially their visits. These contribute well to their social and spiritual development, in that they offer opportunities to work as a group, and also to appreciate some elements of the natural world. Resources for geography are adequate but new atlases and globes are needed. The co-ordinator has no time allocated for her to monitor the development of the subject and is unaware of how pupils are making progress.

## **HISTORY**

102. No lessons were timetabled during the inspection so judgements are based on evidence from samples of pupils' work and displays in classrooms and around the school. These suggest that pupils acquire a good knowledge of the periods of history they study. As found at the last inspection pupils are attaining the expected standards for their age at both key stages.
103. By the age of seven, pupils make sound progress, show a developing awareness of chronology and are beginning to distinguish differences between life now and in the past following a visit to Kenilworth Castle. By the age of eleven, pupils know about a range of research methods. Learning is effective for this age group in that pupils can write and talk about their studies with considerable fluency. Pupils clearly enjoy their work in history, as the related creative work is often good. They employ imaginative and extended writing in history which also makes a significant contribution to their progress in literacy and they take pride in presenting their written work well.
104. There is evidence that teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about history and the range of topics covered is comprehensive. They stimulate pupils' historical knowledge and skills by visits to places of historical interest. The school supplements its own resources with exciting role-play activities such as when a 'Viking' brings in costumes and artefacts, or when they experience a typical Victorian day. However, there is also evidence of over-reliance on commercial worksheets, especially in Years 2, 3 and 4. The use of information technology is under-developed.
105. Since the last inspection a system for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress has been put in place but, as yet, is only in an early stage of development. It is not yet used to set objectives for different groups of pupils for a unit of work. As a result, pupils' historical skills are not systematically developed.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

106. Pupils across the school are attaining the expected levels for their age in many aspects of information technology. This represents a decline from the levels reported at the previous inspection when they were above expectations. The situation is more complex than this suggests. Pupils show the same level of skill in loading programs and following screen instructions and have learnt to use the mouse effectively. They learn to operate a wide range of equipment such as tape recorders and overhead projectors. They show good progress in word processing as they move through the school and the older pupils employ this effectively. Pupils have appropriate experience of control and modelling. However, the school has not managed to keep pace with the demands and changes in information technology since its last inspection. Also, the pupils are not given enough opportunity to

practise and develop skills on a regular basis so as to make consistent progress in the various strands of the subject. Nor is information technology exploited sufficiently across the curriculum. These weaknesses mean that pupils are not achieving the standards of which they are capable at both key stages.

107. The teaching of pupils in Years 2 and 3 and the older pupils seen during the inspection was good. Teachers gave a clear and helpful demonstration of entering data to compile a database. They explained and reinforced new vocabulary and supported pupils well as they took turns to enter data. Pupils showed interest, were attentive and willing to offer suggestions and help each other. Teachers emphasised the need for accuracy, particularly in spelling of 'field' names in order to ensure reliable analysis of data. Pupils show varied competence in using the keyboard. As a result of regular practice, some pupils with special educational needs have developed good keyboard skills that help them with writing.
108. The co-ordinator has good information technology skills and is aware of the stage of development of the subject. The school has recently drafted an appropriate policy and is following the nationally recommended guidelines but the assessment of pupils' skills is only in the very early stages. Although the school has bought some up-to-date systems, the limited number of these means that pupils do not have enough time to practise keyboard skills, for example. The school has been linked recently to the Internet and has an appropriate policy for its use by pupils. There is a variety of competence and confidence among staff about the use of information communications technology. The school is aware of this and there are plans in place to address this through training.
109. The reporting of pupils' attainments and progress in this subject to parents is very limited and does not even appear in some reports. It does not meet statutory requirements.

## **MUSIC**

110. Throughout the school, pupils' standards in music are in line with those found in most schools, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. In Year 2, pupils can perform simple patterns and can beat out rhythms accurately. They can identify a tempo change. They enjoy the rhythm games very much and keep their concentration, listening to the teacher's instructions. Pupils can sing simple verses with a sense of the melody and can improve their singing when encouraged to do so. By Year 6, pupils are learning technical names for tempo such as *accelerando* and can work in groups producing surprisingly good vocal compositions based on simple sentences, such as "I like biscuits but I like chocolate more." Their singing is less secure but their attitudes are very good and they try hard to respond to the teacher's encouragement.
111. The quality of teaching is good and is managed this term by a specialist teacher who visits for one afternoon a week. His knowledge of the subject is excellent and, as a result, has an impact on the pupils' learning as they quickly absorb the musical terminology, such as tempo for the youngest pupils and *accelerando* for the oldest. Lessons are planned well, with a good range of activities, so that pupils' concentration is maintained and they respond with enthusiasm to his instructions. Management and control of the pupils is very good and the pupils' response and behaviour while working on their compositions in small groups is excellent. They are very mature and confident when performing their compositions to the teacher and other pupils. These were greatly enjoyed by everyone present.
112. The co-ordinator for music has only recently taken on this responsibility. She is very keen for the pupils to enjoy music. The appointment of the specialist teacher for this term has been made to enhance the professional development of the teachers who are also involved in the lessons for their pupils. This is good management practice. The teachers take notes during the lessons but also join in to work with the pupils when they are composing in groups. The co-ordinator is very aware that there is no scheme of work and the policy for music needs re-writing in view of the new curriculum being implemented in September of this year. Resources for music are satisfactory but some need replacing and enhancing. Pupils regularly enter and leave assemblies to a variety of music. They sing modern hymns with good diction. Worship songs at assemblies are chosen carefully so that even the youngest

children can join in the clapping and other actions enthusiastically. A parent plays the piano for most assemblies and one of the learning assistants organises a very popular extra-curricular dance club before school. Pupils really enjoy learning how to rock and roll. More than a quarter of the pupils arrives early at school to attend this session, which shows how successful this activity is and what pleasure the pupils gain from it.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

113. Only lessons in games were observed during the inspection. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards in physical education but standards in games are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. Even the youngest pupils change clothing for physical activity quietly and sensibly. Pupils show appropriate levels of agility, co-ordination and balance for their age. Sound progress in skills of ball control, speed and direction is evident as pupils move through the school.
114. The quality of teaching is good overall and never less than satisfactory. Lessons are well structured and teachers increase the level of challenge as the lessons proceed. Teachers also encourage pupils to select the piece of apparatus with which they wish to work. These factors maintain the pupils' interest and they clearly enjoy their physical education sessions, responding well by listening attentively and following instructions. In a lesson for reception and Year 1 pupils, the teacher motivated the pupils by demonstration and working with them on the use and control of a variety of small apparatus. She drew their attention to the effect of exercise on their heart rate.
115. Pupils in the middle class moved from independent work to working with a partner within a clear framework of using only dribbling and body passes. The teacher emphasised the importance of control so that pupils used the equipment sensibly and discussed constructively gave clear instructions and objectives in a focus on underarm bowling skills for rounders. Good management and high expectations for behaviour encouraged co-operation and good use of time in small group practice and the games of rounders. Pupils have a good knowledge of the basic rules and a well-developed sense of fair play.
116. Teachers ensure that a good level of physical activity is maintained in lessons, following appropriate warm up activities. Although teachers and classroom assistants move around the pupils as they work, helping them to improve their skills, they make insufficient use of ensuring that pupils see good skills being demonstrated either by the teacher or by higher attaining pupils in order to consolidate learning.
117. A significant number of pupils attend extra-curricular sports and dance clubs and these activities have a positive effect on the standards achieved. However, as found at the last inspection, teachers do not yet maintain records of pupils' attainments that would help improve standards even further. The school arranges weekly swimming lessons for Key Stage 2 pupils for 18 weeks in each year and from discussion with the teachers it is clear that many attain standards above the expected level for their age. Pupils experience outdoor and adventurous activities during their biannual residential visit which makes a positive contribution to their personal and social development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

118. Standards of attainment meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in Key Stage 1 and exceed expectations by the age of eleven. This is an improvement from the last inspection when standards met expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and the older pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress. Two lessons were observed during the inspection and judgements have also been made based on an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers. The younger pupils in Key Stage 1 can remember some of the stories of Jesus and enjoy looking at good resources showing pictures of stained glass windows and the interiors of different types of churches. Some of the young pupils know the names of features in the church such as a font and the aisle and know that the vicar is an important person.

119. Pupils in Class 3 have covered a good range of the Agreed Syllabus during this academic year and by the age of eleven, are beginning to develop a good understanding of the significance of the symbols of Sikhism in the lives of people who follow that religion. Year 6 pupils can discuss the sacred meanings of the symbols, and how they are interlinked, with maturity. They have visited the Gurdwara and recall how the symbols are treated with great respect by the people who welcomed the pupils, such as keeping the holy book on a bed. Their writing during the lesson shows they have absorbed knowledge of another faith and also the deeper meaning and origin of this religion.
120. The quality of teaching in religious education is good in Class 3 and Class 1. No teaching was observed in Class 2 due to the timetabling of lessons and very little work was in the sample given to inspectors to enable a judgement to be made. The teachers of the oldest and youngest pupils in the school help pupils to gain knowledge of Christianity and other faiths. They encourage them to be reflective about their own lives, for example, by helping them to write about their responsibilities now and in the future. Teachers manage the pupils very well and ensure that there is an atmosphere of trust in which pupils are confident to explore their own understanding of the faiths they are studying.
121. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over responsibility for this subject. She has received some professional training and has been assessing the pupils' work at the end of each unit in her assessment file. There is no evidence that other teachers are assessing pupils' progress. As a result, teachers cannot ensure that pupils, who are in mixed age classes, systematically build upon their skills, knowledge and understanding in all the aspects identified in the locally Agreed Syllabus as they move through the school. There is good support from local church leaders and the school has established useful links with other places of worship, such as the Catholic Cathedral, Sikh temple and the Hindu Mandir. The co-ordinator is aware she must make a start on monitoring the planning, teaching and assessment in religious education but needs allocated time to do this. Resources are borrowed from the authority's library and are very useful. The contribution religious education makes to the spiritual and cultural aspect of the pupils' education is good. The vicar regularly leads school assemblies and pupils have good opportunities to think about spiritual and moral issues. The pupils visit the village church to study a place of worship as well as to celebrate other important religious events throughout the year.