

INSPECTION REPORT

Uplands Junior School
Leicester

LEA area : Leicester

Unique Reference Number : 120035

Headteacher : Mr R Holgate

Reporting inspector : Ms E de Lancey
22272

Dates of inspection : 22nd – 25th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707555

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Junior
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	7 to 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Melbourne Road Highfields Leicester LE2 0DR
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Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Dr A Dhariwal
Date of previous inspection :	29 April 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Ms E de Lancey, Registered Inspector	English Literacy	Attainment and progress Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mr T Smith, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community The efficiency of the school
Mr A Morgan, Team Inspector	Science Physical education	Teaching Leadership and management
Mrs C Cressey	Mathematics Numeracy Music English as an additional language	
Mrs F Clarke	Design and technology Art Special educational needs	The curriculum and assessment
Mr J Heap	Information technology History Geography Religious education	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

the school has very effectively raised and sustained high standards in English, mathematics, science and design and technology

- the quality of the leadership and management of the headteacher is outstanding,
- the roles undertaken by the school management team, curriculum leaders and governors are very effective
- the school provides an excellent climate for learning and a commitment to high standards
- the very good provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development promotes very good attitudes to work, consistently high standards of behaviour and respect for one another
- the high quality provision for music provides opportunities for pupils to excel
- the very effective support for pupils who speak English as an additional language enables them to participate fully in all curriculum areas and to make very good progress
- the provision and support for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- pupils, in particular the higher-attaining pupils make very good progress in English, mathematics and science
- the attractive library is a valuable resource for personal study, it encourages pupils to read for information and pleasure and promotes high levels of literacy for all pupils

In the context of the school's many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered in the action plan

- I. continue to develop the role of the curriculum co-ordinators in all subjects to further their monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum
- II. use the review of the assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science to inform the continued development of assessment in all subjects
- III. continue to develop links between information communication technology and literacy and information communication technology and numeracy

This is a very good school with many strengths and no significant weaknesses. It achieves a very high standard in most of its work. The measure of the school's success is its exceptional improvement since the last inspection.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school's leadership has responded very positively to the last inspection and has worked hard to improve standards, and the weaknesses in teaching identified in the report have all been successfully addressed. There has been a significant rise in standards in English, mathematics, science and design and technology; and in the quality of educational provision, particularly in teaching. Teachers have improved their own subject knowledge, raised their expectations of pupils and developed pupils' independent learning skills.

Assessment procedures are now good in English, mathematics and science and these are used effectively to track progress and to set future individual and group targets.

The staff and governors have addressed successfully all the key issues from the last inspection. The school is well placed to maintain these improvements and to continue to raise standards further across all curriculum areas.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	<i>Key</i>	
			<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
			<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
			<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
			<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
			<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>
English	A	A*		
Mathematics	B	A		
Science	A	A*		

The English and science results show a significant improvement on those of the previous years and recent results indicate that standards have been sustained. This confirms the improving trend of recent years. By the time the pupils reach the age of eleven, their attainment is well above the national average in English and science and very high when compared with that of pupils from similar schools. High standards in mathematics have been sustained and pupils' attainment is above the average and well above the average when compared to the performance of pupils in similar schools. These results in national tests in English, mathematics and science have improved more than the national average since the last inspection. Inspection evidence supports the noticeable improvement in standards and confirms that by the age of eleven most pupils will meet the expected level and a significant minority will exceed it.

By the time the pupils reach the age of eleven, their attainment in religious education is above the expectations indicated by the locally agreed syllabus, and the pupils make good progress. The pupils attain above national expectations in information technology and their progress is good. Throughout the school, all pupils make good progress in art, design and technology, history and physical education. Progress in music is very good. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about progress in geography.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English			Good
Mathematics			Good
Science			Good
Information technology			Good
Religious education			Good
Other subjects			Good

The quality of teaching across the school and in all years is good. The quality of teaching is excellent in 4 per cent of lessons, very good in 18 per cent, good in 53 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder of lessons observed. The best teaching is seen during the final years. The quality of teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. The very significant progress these pupils make throughout the school is the result of this high quality teaching. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. No unsatisfactory or poor teaching was seen during the inspection.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils' behaviour is very good, they behave well in lessons and move sensibly around the school.
Attendance	This is satisfactory, the school has worked hard with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.
Ethos*	Excellent. There is a strong commitment to raising standards. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they are interested in their work. The very good relationships that exist in the school provide an excellent climate for learning.
Leadership and management	The school benefits from the outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher, and the positive and decisive roles undertaken by the school management team, curriculum leaders and governors.
Curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. The development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is strongly emphasised and sufficient time is allocated to improve pupils' performance in these key skills in all subjects of the curriculum. The curriculum is strengthened by the high quality provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good and the majority of pupils make very good progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	This is a strength of the school and results in good levels of harmony, very good relationships and mutual respect between pupils.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	All staff, including additional teaching and support staff are used effectively; together they make a positive contribution to the standards achieved. The internal accommodation provides a good environment for learning. The very attractive, amply stocked and well managed library has a significant impact on standards in literacy. Resources are good. Outside accommodation is unsatisfactory.
Value for money	The pupils make very good progress, their attainment is at least above the national average, they have very good attitudes to work and the unit cost per pupil is low. The school provides very good value for money.

* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

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THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the school

- IV. Their children enjoy coming to school.
- V. The excellent standard of education that the school provides.
- VI. The good relationships between children and between children and adults.
- VII. The information that the school provides for parents.
- VIII. Their children are required to work hard in a relaxing atmosphere.
- IX. The additional help available to children who need it.
- X. The school's strong links with the community.
- XI. The positive contribution of homework.
- XII. The children's very good behaviour

What some parents are not happy about

The inspection supports the parents' positive views of the school.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

There are no key issues for action but in the context of the school's many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered in the action plan

- XIII. continue to develop the role of the curriculum co-ordinators in all subjects to further their monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum (*paragraph 82*)
- XIV. extend the very good assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science to all subjects (*paragraph 62*)
- XV. continue to develop links between information communications technology and literacy and information communications technology and numeracy (*paragraph 138*)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

- 1 Uplands Junior School is situated in the Highfields area of Leicester, about one mile from the city centre. The school was completely destroyed in 1992 as a result of an arson attack. It was re-built and re-opened three years later in August 1995. The building is a traditional two-storey design, with twelve classrooms; two classes are based in mobiles. There is also an outside toilet block. The school shares its site with a ten-class infant school and two nursery units housed in mobile units. Within the school, there are designated areas for information technology, design and technology and an attractive library.
- 2 The school grounds are cramped and the upper and lower school have separate playtimes. There is no games field and there is a shortage of green spaces. Vandalism is a serious concern.
- 3 The school caters for pupils between the ages of seven and eleven. There are 402 pupils on roll, (207 boys and 195 girls), which is about the same as last year. The school is larger than other schools of the same type. The average class size is 29, and on average there are 22 pupils to every teacher, which is well above the national average. The majority of pupils live in the immediate vicinity of the school.
- 4 The school's community is predominantly Muslim who speak mainly Gujerati and Kutchi; a few pupils speak Urdu or Bengali. Three hundred and seventy nine pupils come from homes where English is not the first language and this is a higher proportion than in most schools nationally.
- 5 The school stands in an area of social and economic disadvantage, where unemployment rates are high; work is difficult to find and often poorly paid. The area's mixed housing consists of rented accommodation and a minority of homes are owner occupied.
- 6 Children arrive at school with attainment levels which reflect the full range of abilities, but the attainment of the majority is below average. A significant proportion of the pupils are not yet fluent users of English. There are currently 110 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. This is equivalent to 27 per cent and is above the national average. There are eight pupils with statements of special educational needs and two pupils waiting for statements.
- 7 The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 25 per cent. This is a broadly average for a school of this type.
- 8 The school admits pupils at the beginning of the school year following their seventh birthday. Most of the pupils have attended the adjoining nursery and infant school, but the school also attracts pupils from the surrounding area.
- 9 The mission of Uplands Junior School is to provide the opportunity for all pupils to fulfil their potential in all areas of learning.

10 The school sets out its aims and values for pupils, as follows:

- XVI. To create a sense of enjoyment in school activities and a sense of pride in achievement.
- XVII. To implement and monitor the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Local Education Authority arrangements for Religious Education.
- XVIII. To value and use the experiences of children, honouring their ethnic, cultural and historical background.
- XIX. To foster the ability to work and learn both collaboratively and independently.
- XX. To assist in the acquisition of such knowledge, attitudes, skills and practical abilities as enhance life in an equal opportunity, multi-cultural society.
- XXI. To assist in fostering acceptable behaviour, cultivating a sense of self esteem and self-discipline.
- XXII. To encourage good practices relating to health, hygiene and safety, and to engender an interest in one's own physical well-being.
- XXIII. To assist the development of respect for religious and moral values and an understanding of differing ethnic groups, cultures and ways of life.
- XXIV. To foster a purposeful and trusting relationship with individual parents in support of their child's education.
- XXV. To develop a positive and mutually supportive relationship with the local community.
- XXVI. To foster an understanding and concern for environmental issues.

Key Issues from previous inspection report:

- XXVII. Raising levels of attainment in English, mathematics, science and design technology, by developing teaching methods and approaches which give pupils more opportunities to practise their skills and apply their knowledge.
- XXVIII. Planning for and assessing the progressive development of knowledge, understanding and skills from one year group to the next.

Priorities and Targets for 1999-2000 include:

Continuing to raise standards of achievement and pupils' progress
Setting challenging targets
Implementing the new Uplands Literacy Policy
Implementing the Numeracy Strategy
Access training and support for Information and Communications Technology
Implementing the Ofsted Action Plan arising from the Ofsted inspection of 1999..

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	39	45	84

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	31	32	34
	Girls	39	32	39
	Total	70	64	73
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	83	76	87
	National	65	58	69

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	27	30	34
	Girls	32	31	33
	Total	59	61	67
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	70	73	80
	National	65	65	72

¹

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.7
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.5
	National comparative data	0

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	2
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	22
Satisfactory or better	78
Less than satisfactory	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

· EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

· Attainment and progress

- 1 The school has successfully addressed the key issues identified in the last inspection report and raised standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science.
- 2 By the time they reach the age of eleven, almost all pupils are on course to meet the standards expected of eleven-year-olds and a significant minority are on course to reach the higher level in English, mathematics and science.
- 3 This reflects the results of the national tests in both 1998 and 1999. In 1998, compared with all schools, the percentage of pupils who attained the national standard for their age, (Level 4) was well above the national average in English and science, and above the national average in mathematics. When compared with the results of pupils in similar schools, pupils' performance was very high in English and science, and well above average in mathematics.
- 4 The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level, (Level 5) was also very high when compared to schools nationally in English and science. It was above the national average in mathematics. The results of the 1999 national tests indicate sustained high standards at both the expected and higher levels. Taking all three subjects together, the performance of pupils is well above the national average, and very high in comparison with pupils in similar schools.
- 5 Over the three years, from 1996 to 1998, standards of attainment have improved significantly. This is reflected in the year-on-year improvement in the results of the national tests. The percentage of pupils who attain the national standard, (Level 4) has risen steadily. The latest results show that this improvement has been sustained with a greater proportion reaching the higher level.
- 6 Inspection evidence indicates that the school is sustaining these improved standards. The school demonstrates its high expectations of its pupils through setting high targets for the pupils it expects to achieve level 4 or above in national tests. It also sets and monitors closely, both class and individual targets in all years. The school has introduced a number of tests to help establish the levels of attainment in each year group and it effectively monitors the results of these tests to track the progress of groups and individual pupils to set targets for future performance. The headteacher's careful monitoring and the setting of precise targets have been effective in strengthening the curriculum, particularly in English and mathematics, improving the performance of pupils in reading and writing, and raising teachers' expectations of all pupils.
- 7 There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls, of pupils of different backgrounds or ethnicity.
- 8 The staff have worked hard to improve standards of attainment. The raising of standards is a result of the staff's high expectations of their pupils, the school's effective adoption of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the provision of work to challenge pupils of all levels of attainment. The clear structure of the 'literacy hour' and the increased focus on non-fiction texts has made a positive contribution to pupils' attitudes and attainment.
- 9 The pupils' attainment on entry to the school, at the age of seven, is below average. Many pupils are not fluent users of English and need additional support to access the curriculum. The attainment of these pupils is measurably improved as they become fluent in English and this has an impact on their progress in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers, learning support assistants and bilingual assistants are well deployed and make an important contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. By the time the pupils leave the school all pupils have made very progress overall. Almost all pupils for whom English is an additional language are competent users of English and most pupils are fully fluent.

- 10 There is high quality support from teachers and learning support assistants for pupils with special educational needs. This enables these pupils to make very good progress against the targets set for them in their individual education plans. The well organised Uplands special reading programme contains strategies which combine a multi-sensory approach to pupils' learning and makes an important contribution to pupils' progress.
- 11 Pupils make most progress in English, mathematics and science. Progress within individual lessons is good. They build effectively upon their learning in Years 3 and 4 and their progress improves rapidly in years 5 and 6. By the time they leave the school, pupils have made very good progress in these subjects.
- 12 The pupils improve the knowledge, skills and understanding they have gained in Years 3 and 4, and as they move through the school they exchange ideas and express opinions with greater assurance. They develop their literacy skills as they read more challenging books with growing fluency and expression. They write increasingly detailed factual accounts, develop good handwriting styles, and improve their spelling and punctuation. The pupils consolidate their knowledge in all aspects of mathematics and develop their skills in practical situations to increase further their understanding of the use and application of mathematics in their lives. They extend their scientific knowledge and refine their skills in experimental and investigative work to improve their understanding.
- 13 Standards in information technology have improved since the last inspection. Pupils attain standards that are above the national expectations and their progress is good. They develop good skills especially in word processing, securing data and researching information. They use these skills effectively to support their learning in other subjects.
- 14 Pupils' attainment in religious education is higher than at the time of the last inspection. It is above the expectations in the Agreed Syllabus and they make good progress in developing their knowledge of the beliefs and practices of different faiths and deepen their understanding of why religion is important in some people's lives.
- 15 The school has strengthened the aspects of design and technology which were identified as unsatisfactory in the last inspection. The pupils are engaging in a wider range of activities, their planning and designing is better, and they develop a wider range of techniques; as a result, their progress is good.
- 16 In art, history and physical education, pupils of all abilities, including those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. The attractive displays of pupils' art work reflect the improved opportunities that have been given to them to develop their imaginative skills. Pupils talk eagerly about these examples of their work and explain how their ideas originated and how they developed their techniques. They acquire a good understanding of the main characteristics of the period they are studying in history and older pupils develop good skills of enquiry and investigation.
- 17 There has been a significant improvement in the progress pupils make in developing their skills in physical education. Throughout the school, pupils plan, perform, evaluate and improve their performance. Although the progress of pupils in year 4 was judged to be good in the two swimming lessons observed, there was insufficient evidence on which to judge pupils' progress and attainment by the age of eleven.
- 18 Because of timetabling arrangements it was not possible to make judgements about progress in geography.
- 19 Progress since the last inspection has been very good in music and this subject is a strength of the school. Pupils make excellent progress in their development of listening skills and in the identification of pitch, rhythm and musical notation. They have superb opportunities to participate in public performances and this enhances their personal development.

- 20 The school has given priority to the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and to developing schemes of work in all subjects. These initiatives have contributed to the raising of standards in English and mathematics and had a beneficial effect on the progress that the pupils make. The Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact in all subjects. Teachers emphasise the importance of specialist terms and this develops the pupils' use of English. Pupils make good progress and attain high standards in literacy and the development of their literacy skills is having a positive impact on the standards attained in other subjects. Pupils make good progress in developing numeracy skills and they apply them effectively across the curriculum. For example, they relate their knowledge of decimals to their use of the Dewey system in the library and apply their skills of information technology to locate the appropriate resources.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

- 21 The quality of pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour, relationships and personal development have improved since the last inspection and are now a significant strength of the school.
- 22 Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to work. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved. They are very well motivated, enjoy learning and are keen to respond to the challenges offered. They listen carefully to their teacher, or when others are speaking, answer questions sensibly, and confidently contribute to discussions. Pupils settle quickly to each new task given to them, and work with purpose, determination and very good levels of concentration. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well within the school and have positive attitudes and good relationships with their peers and adults.
- 23 Behaviour throughout the school is very good. This confirms parents' views. Pupils show high levels of self-discipline, clearly know what is expected of them and respond accordingly. They are very orderly and move around the building in a calm and sensible manner. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection; appropriate procedures are in place for the school to respond effectively should such incidents occur. Recent exclusions were dealt with appropriately. Pupils are proud of their school and show due respect for all its facilities.
- 24 The quality of relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff is also very good. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided. There is a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere within the school. Pupils are polite, very open in their dealings with others and always ready to be helpful. In lessons they work well together in pairs or groups, and share ideas and equipment sensibly. At playtime, and in the dining hall, they are friendly and sociable.
- 25 Pupils' personal development is good. They all feel part of the school community and are clearly aware of, and respect, each other's rights, feelings and beliefs. Pupils develop independence in their learning, and use opportunities to plan their own work productively. All pupils complete homework of varying kinds and take their reading books home on a regular basis. Their written work is neat and very well presented. They enjoy taking on responsibility, whenever it is offered, and perform their tasks well. For example, older pupils are librarians and act as hosts at special functions. Residential visits and links with the local community, such as through music and sport, also help to enhance pupils' personal values. Support for charity raises their awareness of the needs of others.

Attendance

- 26 Attendance is around the average for primary schools nationally. Unauthorised absence has improved and is now negligible. Lateness is not a problem. Pupils arrive on time and are settled in class promptly at the start of lessons. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

36 Teaching

- 27 The quality of teaching across the school and in all years is good. This consistent picture across the school ensures that pupils make good steady progress during these primary years, with examples of excellent and very good progress across the curriculum in some lessons and consistently good progress of pupils with special educational needs. The quality of teaching is excellent in four per cent of lessons, very good in 18 per cent, good in 48 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. The best teaching is seen during the final years. The quality of teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. The very significant progress these pupils make throughout the school is the result of this high quality teaching; this is a particular feature of the earlier years. No unsatisfactory or poor teaching was seen during the inspection.
- 28 Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. The weaknesses in teaching identified in the report have all been addressed. This accounts for the rise in good teaching and the absence of unsatisfactory and poor teaching. The staff responded effectively to all the teaching issues raised. Led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, they improved their own subject knowledge, raised their expectations of the pupils and developed the pupils' independent learning skills. The success of this response was seen in the high quality lessons taught during the inspection.
- 29 The quality of teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. The teachers draw effectively on the national guidance and use the suggested format to structure their lessons. Some teachers follow the procedures closely, others adapt them for the particular lesson they deliver. For example, one teacher gave additional time to group activities to provide further opportunities for pupils to consolidate their knowledge in number as earlier work had identified pupils' misconceptions. Teachers prepare the opening sessions well and provide clear introductions to new work. The brisk pace of these sessions is maintained during group activities, with appropriate work prepared for all pupils and directly related to the lesson focus. Teachers take an innovative approach to helping pupils to develop independent learning skills at these times; for example, during English lessons good use is made of the school's excellent library to help pupils develop independent learning skills under the guidance of the librarian. The teachers use the end-of-lesson, plenary session effectively to re-emphasise the lesson's purpose and show how it relates to other work, and to assess the pupils' learning.
- 30 Across the curriculum high quality teaching is characterised by well-structured lesson planning with learning objectives which are clearly defined and assessable. Teachers take time to carefully explain the lesson's purpose to the pupils and confirm what is expected of them. They make excellent use of praise and encouragement to bolster pupils' confidence in their own responses and maintain a brisk pace to lessons. Teachers have a firm understanding of the subject and its teaching which is demonstrated through their effective use of well-chosen resources to extend pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. They insist on the adoption of appropriate terms and precision in the use of words, and demonstrate their expectations in their challenging comments and probing questions; for example, by encouraging the use of 'piano forte', 'imperative' and 'factors'. The teachers' own enthusiasm captures and engages the pupils' interest and motivates them to move on in their learning. Through well-organised sessions at the end of lessons the teachers use the pupils' contribution effectively to consolidate their learning and that of others.
- 31 In the very few examples of less successful teaching, there is a lack of consistency in the teachers' approach to explaining the lesson's purpose to the pupils and informing them about the work that they have to do. Introductions are overlong and there is an imbalance between the teachers' contributions and those of the pupils. As a result the pace of lessons slows. The emphasis on the inculcation of knowledge gives pupils little time to test their understanding and develop skills of reflection, deduction and analysis.
- 32 Across the school the quality of teaching in music is very good; for example, in one lesson the teacher's informed selection of music, enlivened by personal reminiscences, helped pupils to reflect imaginatively and express clear preferences about the music. Throughout the school the quality of teaching in English, mathematics, science, information technology, religious education, history and physical education is good. There was insufficient evidence to judge teaching in art, design and technology, and geography.

- 33 The teachers and support staff relate very well to the pupils and sustain very good relationships with them; as a result the pupils' behaviour is very good. These are strengths of the school and enhance the quality of education for all the pupils. Classroom routines are well established and staff help pupils to develop a sense of responsibility by involving them in the collection and return of learning resources. All staff succeed in helping pupils feel secure and this is reflected in the very positive attitudes that the pupils have to their work and the confidence with which they pursue set tasks.
- 34 The staff co-operate very well and each year group organises useful planning meetings as a result of which good long-and medium-term plans are in place. Short-term plans for each lesson are satisfactory overall, they are the responsibility of the individual teachers. Many of the teachers write good detailed lesson plans which inform the more successful lessons. Throughout the lessons teachers assess the pupils' learning well and they make good use of the results of these assessments to inform their future planning and teaching. Teachers' classroom management is very good and they employ effective methods to maintain a brisk pace to their lessons, including lively question and answer sessions to recap earlier work and build engaging introductions to new activities.
- 35 The quality of teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good throughout the school. The specialist staff offer effective support, especially when pupils first join the school and in Years 3 and 4. Bilingual assistants encourage pupils to use their first language which successfully supports both their conceptual development and their acquisition of English. The staff have high expectations of their pupils. They set clear and appropriate targets for pupils and all of them are successful in moving to independent learning. Most pupils do so quickly because the staff's very effective grouping strategies provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop effective listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. When they have demonstrated their capacity for independence their teachers allocate them to appropriate groups whose learning objectives are suitably modified to meet the needs of all these pupils.
- 36 The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers' individual educational plans show their awareness of the pupils' needs. These plans describe the school's strategies for supporting pupils' progress towards stated targets. Teachers modify the activities they contain to match the pupils' full range of abilities. When the specialist teaching of pupils with special educational needs takes place in small withdrawal groups, the work is very well matched to the pupils' individual plans. This has a very positive impact on the progress which pupils make in these sessions. Overall this is organised appropriately to ensure pupils do not miss other lessons. Learning support assistants are used well to help pupils with special educational needs. The calm and sensitive manner with which teachers manage their pupils helps them to feel secure and this instils confidence in those with emotional and behavioural difficulties and assists them in settling to their tasks.
- 37 The school's marking policy offers staff a coherent approach in responding to pupils' work. It is appropriate and identifies the value of giving pupils guidance on how they can improve their work. It is developing a unified procedure within the school. Many very good examples of such marking were seen. They are used effectively to identify challenging targets for individual pupils. This very positive use of marking makes a significant contribution to accelerating pupils' progress and raising their standards of attainment.
- 38 The school's effective homework policy emphasises the importance of the home/school partnership in supporting pupils' learning. It identifies appropriate activities for pupils to study at home. Teachers set useful tasks in reading, spelling, writing and mathematics and they use homework successfully to promote independent learning by setting simple research projects. Teachers keep parents informed about their children's reading programme and their progress through it in a carefully maintained reading log. These procedures have a significant impact on raising standards. They are also useful measures to involve parents in their children's learning. At their pre-inspection meeting, parents confirmed their positive view of the school's homework programme.

The curriculum and assessment

48 Curriculum

- 39 All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. Provision for religious education is in accordance with the local authority's agreed syllabus. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, covers all aspects of pupils' development, complies with statutory requirements and meets the school's aims. It provides a good framework for successful teaching and learning; pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 40 An appropriate allocation of time has been given to all subjects. The staff place a considerable emphasis on English, mathematics and science. The extra time given to numeracy and literacy has been very effective in helping the school to increase attainment levels in these areas and has improved pupils' progress in other subjects. The staff have worked hard to implement the guidance in the frameworks for both literacy and numeracy to ensure pupils build effectively on their previous learning in English and mathematics. These initiatives have a positive impact on the quality of educational provision. Throughout the school the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is strongly emphasised and sufficient time is allocated to develop pupils' performance in these key skills.
- 51 The school provides a good programme for health and personal and social development. There is an appropriate sex education policy and due attention is given to substance abuse through a local drugs education programme.
- 52 Pupils are grouped according to attainment for English and mathematics and this, together with further differentiation within each group, results in work being carefully matched to challenge pupils of all levels of attainment.
- 53 Subjects are taught separately. Teachers are successful in identifying links between subjects and provide pupils with opportunities to apply their skills across the curriculum. There is a good balance between activities to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding and those which develop pupils' skills. Teachers make good use of information technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
- 54 The school has developed good policies in all subjects. Schemes of work are based on nationally recognised schemes of work such as the frameworks for literacy and numeracy, those published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) for design and technology, geography, history and information technology and those developed by the school. These give good guidance for teachers on what is to be taught to particular year groups and set expectations that are appropriate for the pupils. The school intends to review its schemes of work in art, music and physical education in response to the revised national curriculum and the guidance from the QCA.
- 55 Science is taught on a two-year cycle and this strategy is effective in allowing all aspects of science to be covered at greater depth as pupils move through the school.
- 56 Teachers work co-operatively, they plan their work effectively in year teams to ensure that the provision for pupils is consistent across all classes and that pupils build successfully on their previous learning. Teachers of pupils with English as an additional language and teachers of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the planning process and this ensures that all pupils have full access to the curriculum.
- 57 The curriculum for pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. Teaching pupils to be confident and fluent users of English is given the highest priority. The major focus is the development of pupils' communicative skills and acquisition of appropriate language to help them learn all subjects of the curriculum. This is reflected in the emphasis placed upon pupils' individual needs in literacy. There are good opportunities throughout the curriculum for pupils to develop specialist vocabulary and to use it in discussion and writing.

- 58 The provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational needs is very good. The school's aims and objectives for special needs are well known, supported by parents and set out in the school's policy statement. The school maintains an appropriate register of special educational needs, complies with the national code of practice and meets statutory obligations. The organisation of the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is well co-ordinated. The pupils are very well integrated within their classes and receive all their support there. Detailed individual education plans, which describe the school's strategies for supporting pupils' progress towards clearly stated targets, are drawn up for all pupils requiring them, and appropriate targets are set. Reviews for pupils on the register of special educational needs are carried out by staff and the co-ordinator for special educational needs; parents are invited to attend these reviews. Statements of special educational need are reviewed annually by an appropriate multi-disciplinary team and pupils are consulted at each review. This good provision, together with the co-operation and support of parents, has a positive impact on the pupils' good progress.
- 59 The aims of the school's equal opportunities policy are effectively implemented in all areas of the curriculum. This is particularly evident through the very good quality support received by pupils for whom English is an additional language. Girls and boys are encouraged to take part in all activities. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy equal access to the full curriculum.
- 60 62 The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities including sports and music groups. The school provides opportunities for pupils to participate in competitive team sports; and to perform in music festivals both locally and nationally. The curriculum is enriched further by visits to places of interest such as Belgrave Hall, Snibston Science Park and local museums and art galleries. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from a residential visit to a centre in Norfolk which extends the curriculum and promotes their access to more adventurous activities. The school provides some good opportunities to enhance the wider curriculum with visits to the school from theatre groups.
- 60 Assessment
- 61 The lack of consistency in the use of assessment procedures to help pupils make progress was a key issue in the last report. The school has successfully addressed this issue. There is a comprehensive policy, which provides good guidance to staff on the strategies and procedures to be adopted and there are good and very comprehensive assessment and recording procedures in English, mathematics and science.
- 62 The quality of teachers' assessments in English, mathematics and science is good. Learning objectives are clearly identified in their planning and assessments are used effectively to inform their planning for the next stage of pupils' learning. Formal assessments of pupils' attainments in other subjects are less secure and this has been identified as a priority during the coming year to coincide with the introduction of the Curriculum 2000.
- 63 Statutory national tests are administered at the end of the key stage. In addition, the school administers standardised tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Years 3, 4, and 5. Teachers use these tests, together with the results of tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 to record pupils' attainment, track their progress and to form the basis for future school, class and individual targets. The results are discussed with governors, staff and parents. Annual reports reflecting their children's strengths and weaknesses, and future targets are discussed with parents and provide a good basis for involving parents and children in the monitoring of individual progress.
- 64 Standardised reading and spelling tests are administered and the results of these tests are used to help in the identification of pupils with special educational needs. The information from these tests is used to monitor the progress and development of these pupils. Individual records are carefully kept and these procedures very effectively inform future programmes of work. Diagnostic tests are used effectively by specialist staff to identify pupils' specific learning needs.

- 65 The assessment procedures for pupils for whom English is an additional language are very good. The school follows the local authority's guidelines. Detailed records indicate pupils' performance and their progress in the acquisition of English. The results of these assessments help in the deployment of bilingual and support staff in order to improve pupils' fluency in English and raise their attainment across the curriculum.
- 66 Each pupil has an individual portfolio which contains records of carefully assessed work and provides valuable evidence of progression over time. Pupils' work is annotated and National Curriculum levels of attainment are indicated. There are some excellent examples of assessment; these identify the strengths and weaknesses of the work, what the pupil needs to do to improve and to move to the next level, and includes the pupils' own targets for the future.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- 67 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is a strength of the school and results in good levels of harmony, very good relationships and mutual respect between pupils. There has been an improvement in the provision for social and cultural development. Daily acts of collective worship are held in school and their quality is always good and, on occasion, excellent. Parents expressed strong support for the aims and values the school promotes.
- 68 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Teachers present acts of collective worship which are well prepared, offer opportunities for reflection and enable pupils to consider a wide range of themes. An excellent assembly introduced pupils to Moses and the inspirational way he led his people from Egypt. The teacher's involvement of all the pupils and the use of contemporary music and drama enhanced the effect. Staff provide pupils with many opportunities to become aware of the importance of reflecting on the meaning of joyful, tragic and painful events. For example, in Year 4, pupils study death and explore significant feelings such as shock, puzzlement and unfairness. Furthermore, consideration of these feelings help pupils develop sensitivity and increase their knowledge and understanding of when and how to express and control feelings. Staff develop pupils' spiritual awareness further through art, literature and celebration in various displays around the school. For example, work about 'creation' in Year 5 emphasises the need for man to evaluate, investigate and empathise with all creatures and the environment, thereby emphasising his duty to protect God's world and, therefore, himself. A particular strength is teachers' presentation of their work from Christian, Muslim and Hindu perspectives.
- 69 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school applies a positive disciplinary process and this is highly successful. Teachers encourage pupils to be highly considerate when judging the moral aspects of decisions and actions. For example, in Year 4, pupils look at 'cheating' and express appropriate judgements on what it is and what it is not. The school successfully encourages pupils to conduct themselves responsibly and to do the right thing. All staff provide good role models. Staff foster respect amongst the pupils for each other, the world in which they live and the variety of faiths and viewpoints represented in the school. For example, when teachers gather pupils together for discussion they encourage pupils to debate and express their concerns and feelings.
- 70 Provision for pupils' social development is good. The school offers an effective range of extra-curricular activities which help to foster pupils co-operation, team spirit and sense of fair play. For example; during a carrom tournament the pupils were commended for their sportsmanship. Teachers ensure that classrooms have monitors and that pupils are provided with school-wide responsibilities, such as helping with the setting up of computers and the library. The school puts great stress on helping pupils take full responsibility for upholding high standards of behaviour, tolerance and care towards all in the school. The staff underpin this through the provision of a curriculum which provides a rich insight into a variety of social settings and social problems. For example, in Year 6, pupils study social justice historically, in terms of the slave trade and its legacy in the civil rights movement in the United States of America in the 1960's. They are provided with interesting and illuminating profiles of important shapers of society such as William Wilberforce and Martin Luther King.

71 Provision for cultural development is very good. Teachers enhance pupils' knowledge of their local culture through studies in history, geography and religious education. For example, Year 6 pupils look at the growth of Highfield from Victorian times, through map work and in their examination of census records. Teachers make good use of educational visits and visitors to enrich pupils' understanding. The school values cultural diversity and promotes pupils' understanding of the opportunities it brings. Teachers' development of the curriculum provides a rich source for celebrating different cultures. For example, in religious education teachers introduce pupils to 'creation stories' from many countries. In art, teachers offer pupils a broad range of experiences, from Javanese shadow puppets in Year 3 and Mexican pottery in Year 4, to Panamanian molas in Year 6. In music, staff promote a rich variety of music; for example, Year 3 study Indian sitar music, and Year 6 pupils study the blues, rock and roll and reggae. Teachers are effective in securing a balanced experience for all pupils in their provision of activities drawn from local, national and international sources. This is further developed through the school's emphasis on harmony and cohesion during its 'anti-racism week'. For example, there are links with the work on equality in Year 6 and that of pupils in Year 3 who use world maps to show the many places from which their parents have come.

71 **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

72 Provision for pupils' support, guidance and general welfare remains effective, and continues to make a positive contribution to the quality of their education. Pupils are secure and happy in their work and play, and all adults work well together to provide a caring and supportive environment for them. New pupils in Year 3 and new arrivals are introduced into the school with understanding and given clear guidance about its routines and expectations. Pupils in Year 6 are prepared effectively for the next stage of their education. Almost all parents confirm that their children like coming to school and are well supported by staff.

73 Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are mostly informal, but effective. Praise and rewards are used appropriately to encourage effort and good behaviour and significant achievements are celebrated in a variety of ways. Systems for tracking pupils' academic progress and achievements as they move through the school are good in English, mathematics and science. The school effectively supports pupils with special educational needs through its well-established procedures for the identification, tracking and monitoring of progress and the teaching support it provides. The staff's support for pupils with special needs in Years 3 and 4 ensures that most pupils make very good progress and many successfully achieve their specific learning objectives, which enables the school to remove them from the register. The school maintains good links with outside agencies, particularly for new arrivals, for pupils who speak English as an additional language and for pupils who have special educational needs. This strong system of support has a beneficial effect on the pupils' progress.

74 The school has very good procedures for promoting high standards of behaviour and discipline that are implemented consistently by all members of staff. The school's code of conduct is displayed around the school in a variety of languages. As a result, parents and pupils understand what is expected of them. It ensures pupils' thoughtful and orderly conduct around school. Rewards and sanctions are appropriate and used fairly. Clear guidelines are in place to deal with bullying. Any reported incidents are taken seriously and dealt with effectively.

75 Registers are properly maintained and are monitored regularly. Good attendance is actively promoted and rewarded and effective arrangements are in place to investigate any unexplained absence. Levels of attendance are reported appropriately to parents.

76 Pupils' general welfare is well promoted. Local authority guidelines have been adopted for child protection and the head teacher has designated responsibility for liaising with the appropriate outside agencies. A suitable health and safety policy is in place and risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis. Standards of cleaning are high and the building is in good repair. Pupils are supervised carefully throughout the day, and lunchtime arrangements are well managed. As a result the school functions as a calm and orderly community. Arrangements for dealing with accidents and illness are effective, and emergency equipment is serviced regularly.

76 **Partnership with parents and the community**

- 77 A good partnership has been maintained with parents. They are actively encouraged to support their children's learning, and respond very well. Parents regard homework as an important part of school life and express a high level of satisfaction with the amount and balance of work set. The school continues to develop a range of educational initiatives to promote a greater understanding of the curriculum amongst parent. This year, for example, a video recording has been produced which explains how literacy is taught and can be supported at home. Copies will shortly be available for parents to borrow. A clear home-school agreement is in place and is already helping to improve attendance and reduce holidays taken during term time. A small number of parents provide regular and valuable help in class, particularly those involved with the Learning Support Assistants scheme. Others attend special assemblies or accompany educational visits.
- 78 Communications with parents remain good. Parents are happy with the information they receive about their children's progress and are kept fully informed about life in the school. Written annual reports are satisfactory. They provide adequate details about pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science and contain appropriate targets for improvement. Reporting in other subjects is less detailed. Parents find the school is approachable if they have immediate worries or concerns, and consider that any matters raised are handled well. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents meet requirements. The school gives parents of pupils with special educational needs good information about their children's progress. They are invited to annual reviews where their views are taken into account.
- 79 Links with the local community are good and have beneficial effects on pupils' learning. Planned visits to places of interest and visitors to school extend the work pupils do in class and help to broaden their experiences. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 increase their understanding of information technology and gain confidence through residential visits. Performances of the choir and participation in various sporting competitions also make significant contributions to pupils' personal and social development. Their awareness of the needs of others is raised through generous support for charity. At present there are no business links, although the school is actively trying to establish some. Good links have been maintained with the local community college and adjoining infant school, and regular opportunities for work experience are provided for local students. The school is involved in a new initiative, 'Mothers in RE' which helps develop an awareness of the beliefs and practices of others and trains parents to enable them to share this information with others in the community.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

- 80 The school benefits from the outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher, and the positive and decisive roles undertaken by the school management team, curriculum leaders and governors. They are well supported by the staff and together they give explicit direction and purpose to the school which is founded upon a commitment 'to provide the opportunity for every child to fulfil their potential in all areas of learning'. This is underpinned in all school documentation where emphasis is given to sustaining high expectations of pupils, increasing their progress and raising their standards of attainment. The measure of the school's success is its exceptional improvement since the last inspection. This includes the very significant rise in standards in English, mathematics, science and design and technology; and in the quality of educational provision, particularly in teaching. The staff and governors have addressed successfully all the key issues from the last inspection. The school is well placed to maintain these improvements and continue to raise standards further across the curriculum.

- 81 There are good levels of formal and informal consultation between the staff and the governors and all work purposefully to sustain the school's excellent ethos. The roles of the headteacher and the governing body in determining the strategic direction of the school's development are clearly understood and effectively carried out. The governors are conversant with the work of the school through the regular contact between the chair of governors and the headteacher. The governors' planned visits to the school, their discussions with curriculum leaders and the curriculum presentations they receive at their meetings are used effectively to inform their deliberations. The governors have active committees for finance, curriculum and buildings and health and safety to which appropriate responsibilities have been delegated and through which they monitor school development and engage with staff as well-informed critical friends. The governing body has built a structured and systematic approach to their monitoring of standards through their successful engagement with curriculum development and their careful analysis of nationally organised and school-based test results. All statutory requirements are met, including the provision of daily acts of worship. The governors receive regular reports and professional advice from the headteacher which inform their decision making and they have every confidence in his day-to-day management of the school.
- 81
- 82 All of the teachers have school responsibilities, some for management and some for organisational issues. All are provided with an appropriate job description which is approved by the governing body. Curriculum co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science offer effective support and guidance to colleagues within their areas of responsibility and play a very significant part in the monitoring and evaluation of curriculum development and teaching. The role of other co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the curriculum is less well developed. This is recognised as a corporate responsibility for all staff with management responsibility and they have adopted a systematic approach to their monitoring. Under the informed guidance of the headteacher, and using carefully structured forms and defined procedures, curriculum co-ordinators assess planning, teaching and standards through the scrutiny of samples of pupils' work. This is complemented by the headteacher's thorough analysis of testing, regular meetings of curriculum co-ordinators and their formal dissemination of monitoring outcomes. The analysis of testing has also assisted the school in target setting and enabled the governors to set challenging annual targets which they keep under review. The school's most recent targets were met in full, having been raised earlier in the year. Drawing on these procedures the school has extended target setting to each year group to continue its drive to raise standards. This is an effective approach to management which has resulted in the significant improvements in teaching and the raising of pupils' attainment.
- 83 The teacher with responsibility for the library manages this aspect of the school's provision very well. She has written a very good policy which is effectively implemented; library staff and pupil helpers are clear about their roles. She ensures that resources are well selected and organised and the development of the library is set within the context of the school's development plan.
- 84 The effective co-ordinator for English as an additional language has set a clear educational direction to ensure high quality provision for all pupils. The co-ordinator's decision to draw on the local authority's advice and support for assessment helps staff to identify effectively pupils' individual requirements and offer them well-focussed provision. This ensures that support is directed towards those pupils in greatest need.
- 85 The special educational needs co-ordinator, well supported by the nominated and well-informed governor, gives good leadership to ensure the identification of pupils with special educational needs and to secure the conscientious implementation of well-targeted support for each of them. With the help of the teacher for special educational needs she organises effectively the writing and monitoring of the pupils' individual education plans in consultation with their teachers. The administrative procedures for special educational needs are good and comply with statutory requirements. The governing body is regularly informed of developments in the provision of special educational needs in the school.

- 86 The school's clearly expressed and relevant aims and values are agreed, understood and regularly reviewed by staff and governors; they fully inform the work of the school. They are strongly supported by parents. In reply to the pre-inspection questionnaire 87 per cent of parents agreed that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children. The aims provide a clear focus for the school's well-structured development plan, the compilation of which involves all staff and governors; this ensures that they have a clear view of the school's priorities. It sets realistic and challenging targets for the year and includes detailed action plans for agreed priorities. The implementation of the plan is monitored effectively by the headteacher and governors' curriculum committee. A comprehensive review of the previous year's planning by the headteacher is an integral part of this monitoring process and its outcomes rightly inform the school's strategic planning.

- 87 This very well-structured approach to planning has effectively led the school's drive for improvement; in particular, through its implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school's well managed approach to the implementation of these strategies resulted in effective introductory planning. The staff's decision to pilot each strategy before national implementation helped them review their experiences over time and secured the implementation of the strategies on the required dates. This well-judged decision helped the staff to enter training with experience of the strategies behind them. Its success is reflected in the high quality of teaching and in the pupils' sustained high standards in English and mathematics.
- 88 The leadership and management of the headteacher, staff and governors contribute effectively to the very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships within the school. These aspects and the very good management of equal opportunities make a significant contribution to the school's excellent ethos which guides and nurtures each of its pupils. This is reflected in the views of parents: 95 per cent state that they find it easy to approach the school with problems; 95 per cent believe the school keeps them well informed about their children's progress; and 86 per cent agree that the school achieves high standards of behaviour.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

- 89 The school has an adequate number of teachers who are suitably qualified and experienced, and appropriately deployed to teach the National Curriculum. There are specially qualified members of staff appointed to co-ordinate the provision for whom English is an additional language. The effective deployment of these staff together with the work of the bilingual assistants has an important impact on the quality of pupils' learning.
- 90 There is a very good allocation of staff to pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator and the special needs teacher are experienced and very well qualified to fulfil their roles.
- 91 The staff form a very good team which is committed to the school's aim of raising standards.
- 92 Additional learning support assistants are effectively deployed and they make a valuable contribution to the quality of educational provision. They are well qualified and many have attended additional training to improve their qualifications. They work closely with class teachers to ensure a consistent approach in their teaching; this has a beneficial effect on the pupils' good progress. The library assistant is appropriately trained and makes an excellent contribution to the development of pupils' library skills. All staff know their role in the day-to-day running of the school and understand the role of others.
- 93 Pending the outcome of the national review for teacher appraisal, the headteacher has established an effective policy for professional development which has had a positive influence on the raising of standards of teaching, particularly in English, mathematics and design and technology. There are regular opportunities for the subject leaders to monitor and assess teaching in these subjects through classroom observations. There are very good arrangements for the professional development of all staff connected with special educational needs. Training for support staff focussed specifically on raising pupils' attainment in English and in the use of computers. The school follows the local authority's induction programme for newly qualified teachers.
- 94 The work of staff with responsibility for administration, premises, cleaning and lunchtime supervision is effective; they are well informed about procedures and their work contributes to the efficient running of the school.

- 95 The accommodation is of a high standard; classrooms are attractive and provide a good learning environment for the teaching of the National Curriculum. The school library provides a welcoming and stimulating environment which encourages pupils to enjoy reading. It fulfils the school's aim 'to promote a love of books, curiosity and the desire for knowledge and information'. It is an excellent resource for personal study. Its size is adequate; it accommodates about fifteen children at study tables; there is also a carpeted area which is sufficiently large to accommodate a whole class. The displays enhance the school's environment, celebrate the pupils' attainments and encourage them to read widely and search for answers. The school has a very good library policy which permeates all areas of the curriculum and is successfully implemented by staff so that pupils benefit from this valuable resource.
- 96 The outdoor area is unsatisfactory. The playground area is small and bleak and there is insufficient space for all the pupils to gather together. There are no grassed areas.
- 97 Resources for English, English as an additional language and special educational needs are very good. The school has invested heavily in the purchase of large texts and sets of books to support the teaching of literacy. These attractive books have a significant impact on pupils' attitudes to reading and make a positive contribution to the raising of standards. There is a wide range of books from different cultures and dual language texts. When appropriate, pupils with special educational needs have their own laptop computers and a good range of equipment is available for pupils who have visual or hearing impairments.
- 98 Resources in mathematics, and religious education are satisfactory, in all other subjects they are good. They are accessible to staff and pupils.

The efficiency of the school

- 99 The school is very well run and continues to make effective use of its resources to help meet its aims and objectives. Teachers are deployed effectively, and good use is made of support assistants. Accommodation is used well and there is good use of resources.
- 100 Financial planning is very good. The annual budget is carefully prepared by the headteacher with full and active support of the governing body's finance committee in response to priorities identified in the school development plan. In recent years a broadly balanced budget has been maintained with a modest reserve retained to meet contingencies. The school development plan is a good working document. It has a clear, one-year focus and defined priorities for a further two years. It is appropriately costed and reviewed regularly to see how successfully the targets have been met. All curriculum areas have delegated budgets closely matched to their projected needs. Funds available for special educational needs and for staff development are spent appropriately.
- 101 Financial control is very good. Day-to-day transactions are properly managed and carefully documented. Due attention is paid to securing value for money when purchases are made, and school accounts are monitored regularly to ensure that spending remains within agreed limits. The most recent auditor's report confirms that financial systems are sound, and all of its recommendations have been acted upon. The general office is well equipped and daily administrative routines carried out very efficiently by the registrar and the secretary. As a result, the school functions smoothly and teachers concentrate on teaching.
- 102 Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are below the national norm. By the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment is above the national average. They make good progress, and have very good attitudes to work and levels of behaviour. Given that the unit cost per pupil is low, the school provides very good value for money. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the school was judged to be giving sound value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

- 103 The school has successfully addressed the key issue from the last inspection and raised standards in all aspects of English. By the time they reach the age of eleven almost all pupils are on course to meet the standards expected of eleven-year-olds and a significant minority are on course to reach the higher level. This reflects the results of the national tests in both 1998 and 1999. In 1998, compared with all schools, the percentage of pupils who attained the national standard for their age, (Level 4) was well above the national average and very high in comparison with pupils in similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level, (Level 5) was also well above the national average and very high in comparison with schools with pupils of similar backgrounds. The results of the 1999 national tests indicate sustained high standards at both the expected and higher levels.
- 104 Over the three years, from 1996 to 1998, standards of attainment have improved significantly. This is reflected in the year-on-year improvement in the results of the National Curriculum tests. The percentage of pupils who attain the national standard, (Level 4) has risen steadily. The latest results show that this improvement has been sustained with a greater proportion reaching the higher level.
- 105 There is no significant variation in the attainment of boys and girls or of pupils of different backgrounds.
- 106 Pupils' progress in English is good, it accelerates as they move into Years 5 and 6 and by the time they leave the school at the age of eleven, the pupils have made very good progress.
- 107 The school's strong emphasis on improving pupils' skills in literacy and the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy have helped raise standards. Teachers are confident and effective teachers of literacy and provide very good opportunities for pupils to apply and improve their skills in other subjects, and this is making a very good contribution to raising achievement in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils are encouraged to express themselves clearly in speech and writing and to develop their reading and writing skills in other subjects. The fostering of these links with work in other subjects both extends and enhances pupils' knowledge and understanding of the individual subjects of the curriculum. The school gives appropriate attention to pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils who have special educational needs. The school's agreed priorities and procedures for raising standards in English include setting challenging, measurable targets for improvement and the school is on course to meet them.
- 108 By the age of eleven, pupils' standards of attainment in speaking and listening are good. As they move through the school, pupils listen with growing attention and concentration, and sustain more prolonged conversations. They use language effectively to explain, enquire and compare. They share ideas and offer advice to one another. They state their opinions articulately and justify their views confidently; for example, when protesting about fox hunting or the building of a by-pass. They demonstrate their understanding of the importance of speaking expressively by giving precise instructions for the way dialogue is to be spoken in their play scripts. They present their work at the end of lessons or in assemblies and become more confident in speaking to a wider audience. The teachers encourage pupils to use appropriate, specialist vocabulary and this has a positive effect on pupils' ability to express themselves accurately.

- 109 By the time they leave the school, standards of attainment in reading are very good. In Year 3, most pupils read accurately from published reading schemes of progressively more difficult texts and consolidate their skills by reading books at similar levels of difficulty. Most pupils read accurately, fluently and with good expression. Lower-attaining pupils read highly predictable texts with repetitive vocabulary, and supportive illustrations. They use their knowledge of sounds and the illustrations to help them read unknown words. They segment words into syllables, identify little words within big words and use the structure of the sentence to determine the type of word needed to make sense. As they become more confident, they self-correct, read-on and re-read to clarify meaning. Higher-attaining pupils orchestrate all the reading strategies to make sense of what they read. They pay greater attention to punctuation and read with more expression. They use good phrasing when reading aloud, and use their comprehension skills well to deduce information and ideas from the text.
- 110 The pupils' effective use of the school's very attractive, well-stocked library makes an excellent contribution to the development of their independent reading skills. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they read, recalling the storyline well, talking about the characters and explaining what they like or dislike about them. They are familiar with a good range of authors. There are very good examples of pupils sending their reviews of books to their favourite authors, for example Robert Swindells, Jackie Wilson and Dick King-Smith, and asking them about their work. Their interviews with authors are thoughtful, clearly planned and well recorded.
- 111 The pupils' appreciation and understanding of literature and poetry are enhanced in whole-class and group reading sessions. By the time they are eleven, the pupils have studied a good range of challenging texts including extracts from 'David Copperfield' by Charles Dickens, 'The Secret Garden' by Francis Hodgson Burnett and 'The Highwayman' by Alfred Noyes. Higher-attaining pupils are familiar with some significant contemporary and well-established authors. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are motivated to read widely, from a variety of different texts through the school's 'World of Books' project. This well-conceived book trail gives very good guidance to pupils and encourages them to read from a wide range of topics and authors. Many parents give valuable support by reading regularly with their children and this has a positive impact upon standards.
- 112 Pupils' skills of research and information are very good and systematically developed throughout the school. In Years 3 and 4, pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction, that fiction is classified alphabetically and non-fiction according to the Dewey decimal system. They use the subject index books and charts confidently to locate resources. In Years 5 and 6, most pupils are skilful in accessing the library search system through classroom or library computers. Younger pupils are familiar with technical terminology such as author, title, classification number and keyword. For example, pupils in Year 4, researching artists, select appropriate books and use the contents and index to help them find the answers to specific questions framed by their teacher. As they move through the school, they become increasingly independent and frame their own questions for research. In Year 6, pupils preparing a leaflet to persuade people to visit Leicester identify a range of media to support their research and make good comparisons between fictional, newspaper and factual accounts to inform their work.
- 113 By the time the pupils reach the age of eleven, standards of attainment in writing are very good. Standards in non-narrative writing are particularly high. Pupils build upon their early skills and make good progress. Progress improves as pupils move through the school and during Years 5 and 6, it is very good. Pupils write for a range of purposes including letters, stories, reports, biographies, instructions and poetry and for a range of audiences. They listen and look at the language and lay-out of established texts and plan, draft and edit their work. Pupils recognise the main features of different types of fiction and non-fiction texts and use them effectively as models in their own writing. Pupils' writing is well-organised into paragraphs and spelling and punctuation are accurate. Their work is very well presented in a good, fluent handwriting style.

- 114 Pupils enjoy English and are keen to learn. They are enthusiastic about all aspects of the subject. They are active participants in role-play and contribute ideas and comments during discussions. They listen attentively, respecting one another's viewpoints. They demonstrate a keen interest in books and their authors and are delighted when they receive replies to their letters. They are keen users of both the school and the local public library. They settle quickly to their tasks and concentrate on their work. They are clear about the class routines; for example, they do not disturb the teacher during guided reading or writing because they have a clear understanding about what they should do if they complete their work or encounter difficulties. They work independently when required and co-operate and share ideas well when working in groups on such activities as writing poems and playscripts. They behave very well in class and this helps to create a very good environment for learning.
- 115 The quality of teaching is good and there are examples of both very good and excellent of teaching. The pupils are grouped by prior attainment for English in Years 3, 4 and 5 and for comprehension in Year 6; this enables teachers to focus on specific learning objectives that are better matched to the needs of all pupils. Teachers take due account of the National Literacy Framework in their planning and apply the principles well. They have a secure knowledge and understanding of the objectives, they make clear what pupils are expected to learn and what they are required to do to improve their work. Big books and enlarged texts are used appropriately and group work is matched to pupils' differing levels of ability. The review time at the end of lessons is used effectively in helping pupils to consolidate and extend their learning and to relate it to their previous work. In the most successful lessons teachers have a good command of English, they challenge and inspire their pupils. They have very high expectations and use skilled questioning to assess pupils' knowledge, to confirm and extend their understanding, and help pupils make connections between points arising from discussion and their previous knowledge. These consistent features of high quality teaching are significant factors in enabling pupils to improve their rate of progress.
- 116 Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive very good quality teaching from specialist teachers and bi-lingual assistants which ensures that these pupils make very good progress. Adults are quick to identify their language needs and plan a learning programme which ensures that they have a good range of opportunities for speaking and listening.
- 117 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is well planned and relates appropriately to the literacy targets in their individual education plans. Learning support assistants are well briefed and work is appropriate to pupils' needs. As a result, the pupils make very good progress.
- 118 The school has a good marking policy and there are many good examples of teachers' marking giving written feedback to the pupils on what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. Marking is closely linked to the National Curriculum requirements which are clearly displayed in all classrooms. Parents and pupils are aware of what pupils must do to improve the level of their work. Pupils also evaluate their own work and set personal targets for improving the standard of their work.
- 119 Most pupils take reading books home and learn spellings. Teachers set regular homework which is used effectively to re-inforce and extend what is learned in school. It is a consistent feature of all classes and contributes to the high standards of achievement. Parents are supportive of the homework policy and report that it helps them become involved in their children's work

119

Mathematics

- 120 Attainment is above the national average by the time the children are eleven. Pupils make good progress overall across the school; in Year 6 this progress is accelerated and the majority of pupils make very good progress during that year. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive very good support to help them to develop appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and as a result they make very good progress towards their appropriate individual targets. Since the last inspection overall attainment and progress has improved considerably.

- 121 Pupils' attainment in the 1998 national tests for 11-year-olds was above average when compared to school's nationally and well above that of similar schools. The results of the 1999 national tests indicate sustained high standards with two fifths of pupils achieving the expected standard (Level 4) and over two fifths achieving the next higher level (Level 5).
- 41 There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls or of pupils from different backgrounds.
- 123 The school's implementation of the National Numeracy strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' confidence and accuracy in number. Opportunities to use number and mathematical vocabulary are provided in other subjects such as science, geography and history. For example, in a lesson on the planets pupils wrote about how far different planets were from the sun and compared their size to that of the earth.
- 124 By the age of eleven the majority of pupils have a very good knowledge of number and show considerable skill in mental recall of facts including multiplication tables. Since the last inspection pupils' activities in problem solving and investigative mathematics have improved. Pupils are very competent in applying their mathematical knowledge to everyday situations. Pupils in Year 3 are confident when working with fractions. Most pupils recall successfully the names of and properties of a wide range of two- and three-dimensional shapes. The higher-attaining pupils recognise right angles and identify which shapes are symmetrical. Pupils in Year 6 convert fractions to decimals and explain their calculations correctly. Higher-attaining pupils work out whether biscuits are value for money based on their appearance, taste, weight and price. Lower-attaining pupils choose the appropriate unit of measurement for measuring the length of the classroom and a long journey. In Year 6 pupils work on prisms and make nets. Pupils are confident in their knowledge and understanding of number patterns, multiples and factors and work effectively in data handling activities.
- 125 Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are always good and often very good. Pupils enjoy mathematics and are very enthusiastic learners. This has a positive effect on their levels of attainment and progress. Pupils are clear about the structure of the lessons and are aware of what they are expected to learn over a week. This results in a shared sense of purpose and a very good working atmosphere. Behaviour in lessons is very good and pupils enjoy very good relationships with their teachers. Work is particularly well presented and pupils take great pride in organising their files and producing work that is neat and legible. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and are eager to answer questions and give explanations. They respond well to challenging activities and follow their teachers' advice to improve their work further.
- 126 The quality of teaching is good and almost a quarter of lessons are very good. Throughout the school teachers create excellent conditions for learning. There is a commitment to high standards evident in all lessons. Teachers have very high expectations of the pupils and set interesting and challenging activities. They provide pupils with the strategies to achieve high standards in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics and in their test results. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are confident in their understanding of mathematics. They are enthusiastic and explain clearly and confidently new skills and concepts pupils are to learn. Their organisation of pupils into groups according to their attainment is effective and enables teachers to plan work that is challenging. Short-term planning sets clear targets and these are written on the board so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. Careful questions and comments are used effectively to check and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. In the best lessons, the teachers' enthusiasm transfers to the pupils and the pace of the lessons is brisk. There are frequent high-quality discussions where pupils use correct vocabulary well. In all classes homework is given regularly to support work done in classrooms.

126

Science

- 127 Inspection evidence indicates that pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress throughout the school. By the time they are eleven a high proportion of the pupils attain the average standard (Level 4) and a large minority achieve above the average (Level 5). This accords with both the 1998 and 1999 national test results. In the 1998 tests pupils attained well above the national standard at the average level in comparison with all schools and with similar schools; and they attained very high standards at the above average level in comparison with all schools and similar schools. In the 1999 tests pupils attained above the national standard at the average level and well above the national standard at the higher level in comparison with all schools. Their performance was well above that of pupils in similar schools at both the average and the above average national standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they move through the school. For all pupils this is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
- 128 Pupils in Year 3 make careful observational drawings of plants, and correctly label the external parts and describe their functions. They recognise the major internal organs of the body and accurately identify their location. They make attractive and amusing models which incorporate the action of a lever; for example, faces with extending tongues and moving ears. They explore a grassy area and using a magnifying glass with care they identify correctly the animals and plants they find. Pupils in Year 4 know that sound is caused by vibrations and examine musical instruments to identify precisely how they are used to produce sounds. They recognise open and closed electrical circuits, and work carefully with the latter to sort materials accurately according to their conduction or insulation properties. With careful measurement and accuracy in assembly they make simple instruments to measure forces of pushing and pulling. Pupils in Year 5 identify a wide range of materials, describe their properties and explain clearly their uses. They distinguish between solids, liquids and gases, list examples of each and correctly explain the differences between them. They set up appropriate experiments to investigate the conditions for rusting, and use a range of techniques carefully to separate mixtures into separate substances. They study reversible and irreversible changes and accurately distinguish between them. Pupils in Year 6 study carefully the planets and moons of the solar system; they explain why there is day and night and why the seasons change. They describe correctly the functions of the major organs of the body; for example, that the heart pumps blood around the body carrying oxygen from the air breathed into the lungs. They use their clear understanding of a fair test when investigating the solubility of different substances in water.
- 129 Pupils with special educational needs make good steady progress during their lessons and throughout the key stage. Pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, make at least good progress during their lessons, and very good progress across the key stage. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are lower-attainers pupils increase the precision with which they use scientific vocabulary and symbols. For example, they use permeable and impermeable to distinguish between different types of rock and drawing electrical circuits with appropriate symbols for switches, lights and power sources. Average-attaining pupils develop their understanding of the world through their explanations of the events they observe. For example, from describing the sun's apparent movement across the sky and the phases of the moon in Year 4, they explain these events in terms of the relative movements of the earth and moon and the light from the sun when they are in Year 6. Higher-attaining pupils increase their ability to undertake more systematic investigations by recognising the need for careful preparation, precision in measurement and repetition to test for accuracy. This was evident when they were investigating the insulating properties of a material by measuring the loss of heat from a hot water container enclosed in the material.
- 130 Throughout the school there are good examples of pupils' work in science being developed because of the high standards of their literacy and numeracy skills. They write well-planned, informative descriptions of their investigations enhanced by good spelling and punctuation, and neat handwriting. Their diagrams are clearly labelled. They compile accurate block graphs and read measuring instruments with care during their studies; for example, reading a thermometer scale to identify the temperature of a cooling liquid.

- 131 Pupils are very well behaved. They listen attentively to their teacher and to each other. They work effectively on their own, in pairs and in groups. They handle apparatus safely and take care in their measurements and readings. They are supportive of one another and plan their work carefully before deciding how they will proceed. They take pride in the appearance of their work, including the clarity of their drawings and the neatness of their labelling.
- 132 The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are confident using scientific terms when explaining ideas and activities. They have high expectations of the pupils which they demonstrate through the high quality of their presentations and the brisk pace at which their lessons are conducted. The best lessons are carefully planned and well structured. Teachers' lesson objectives are clear, relevant and assessable. They are clearly explained to the pupils who are left in no doubt about what is expected of them. Teachers make effective use of well-judged questions to engage all pupils, help them recall previous work and develop their understanding. There is a good emphasis on investigations and the development of skills, including those of observation, comparison, measurement, sorting, predicting and concluding. Teachers use information technology programs effectively to support pupils' learning. For example, Year 3 pupils use basic programs to study the human body, Year 4 pupils set up a simple materials database and Year 6 pupils use the internet to extend their investigations. Homework is effectively used to involve parents in their children's learning and foster pupils' research skills.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

132 Information technology

- 133 The school has raised standards in information and communication technology and they are now good. By the age of eleven pupils' attainment, including that of pupils for whom English is an additional language, is above national expectations, and all these pupils make good progress in acquiring information technology skills throughout the school. Pupils develop their skills across the curriculum, enhancing learning in, for example, history, religious education, English and science. Pupils with special educational needs make good steady progress across the years Pupils use their skills effectively to support their learning in literacy and numeracy.
- 134 Across the school, pupils make regular, purposeful use of information technology to develop and consolidate their work in most subjects. This includes the use of computers, audio-tapes, video-tapes, programmable models and, for older pupils, calculators. They undertake appropriate tasks to improve their computer capability; they use a keyboard effectively, handle a mouse correctly and successfully store, retrieve and print their own work. Pupils use a range of programs correctly to generate and communicate their ideas in text and pictures, and help them handle information. They input their work directly to the computer screen using word-processing programs competently and they modify it as it is composed on the screen.
- 135 Year 6 pupils confidently and competently use a wide range of software to a good level. They operate a modelling program with relative ease and they are very familiar with the control of images on screen and have, for some time, been using programmable devices such as a control centre to guide a buggy. Pupils use word processing, simple spreadsheets and desktop publishing to a good level. They make effective use of their information technology skills when using the library computers to identify sources of information or locate a popular book. They load data, download information and access the internet; for example, pupils in Year 6, very effectively contact a school in Blackpool to communicate on a joint venture in religious education. Pupils use information from the internet to develop their work on local history in Victorian times. They obtain pictures from an electronic source and use them appropriately to illustrate their work with other programs.
- 136 Pupils in Year 5 also make good progress. They competently use the internet to research mummification in ancient Egypt, contact pen pals and download works of the artist Paul Klee. Pupils in Year 4 find information about planets and print out the findings; they also enter information about the planets and produce tables with the gathered information. Year 3 pupils use simple information programs to develop their research skills.

- 137 Pupils have positive attitudes. They concentrate for long periods, take pride in their skills, learn to share resources and work collaboratively. Behaviour is very good and this assists teachers when deciding to deploy pupils on to the computers. The majority of pupils enjoy the responsibility of using the computer classification in the library. They clearly enjoy using computers and talk confidently about their work. They are aware of their responsibilities in handling computers with care and recognising the importance of safe practice.
- 138 Although it was not possible to see information technology lessons during the inspection, the teachers' effective classroom management, monitoring and support were observed. Most of the teachers recognise the potential of information technology to support pupils' learning and find useful ways of incorporating it into their lessons. At present they are developing further links between information and communication technology and literacy and numeracy to enable pupils to extend their skills. Teachers draw effectively on their sound knowledge and understanding to provide a wide range of activities so that pupils become familiar with the many uses of information technology. They have high expectations of their pupils and they provide appropriate opportunities for pupils who are confident in the use of computers to support those less proficient. This reflects teachers' good management of their pupils, the value they place on pupils' contributions and the trust they give them. They work successfully to improve their own skills. They introduce new programs confidently, answer pupils' questions clearly and solve minor technical problems quickly. Teachers are sensitive to safety issues and display clear instructions for pupils about using computers in the classroom.
- 138 **Religious education**
- 139 By the age of eleven the pupils' attainment is above the average expectations set out in the local authority's agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 140 Pupils develop a secure understanding of the beliefs and practices of the world's major religions and of the ways in which religion influences people. They recognise the importance of worship, prayer and celebration and know how and why the believers of various religions worship God, meditate and celebrate their faith. They discuss in some detail the attributes of a modern leader; for example, they study the life of Martin Luther King.
- 141 Pupils make good steady progress throughout the school. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress in their understanding of prayer and its importance in the world's major religions. This is reflected in the prayers they write and their descriptions of their visits to the Mosque. Pupils in Year 4 develop a clear ability to empathise. For example, in their work on the meaning of death they recognise and understand feelings such as shock, sadness, disbelief, puzzlement and unfairness. In his story about a boy who lost his mother, a higher-attaining pupil asks: 'Why wasn't I there when she died?' In Year 5, pupils gain a mature insight into environmental issues when studying 'The Creation'. They make significant progress in recognising man's duty to protect God's world. In Year 6, pupils make good progress in understanding moral and social issues; for example they consider sensitively apartheid in South Africa and explore notions of peaceful protest.
- 142 Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are enthusiastic, keen and listen attentively. Pupils collaborate well at appropriate times and express their ideas confidently. Older pupils make sensitive and mature responses to moral and social issues. They have high levels of self-discipline and their behaviour is very good.
- 143 The quality of teaching is good and half the lessons observed were very good. In the very good lessons the teachers draw effectively on question and answer sessions to encourage pupils to recall previous work, explore new areas and reflect sensitively on their studies and the opinions of other pupils. Teachers modify the work to match the pupils' full range of abilities. They give all pupils sufficient independence to undertake research activities; for example, pupils undertook some very good research about Martin Luther King. Teachers' expectations are high and their lessons are planned well. They maintain good relations with their pupils through which they develop pupils' confidence to expressing their views. Teachers are effective in encouraging pupils to reflect on the stories from world faiths and relate them to their own lives. Teaching techniques include the good use of brainstorming ideas in collaborative groups. For example, in Year 3, pupils worked co-operatively to find suitable objects for thanksgiving after being inspired by an assembly about the 'Flight from Egypt'.

- 144 During the inspection no art lessons were observed. Judgements are made from observation of children's work and displays around the school, discussions with the co-ordinator and other teachers and examination of planning documents.
- 145 The last report indicated that work in art generally was satisfactory but that opportunities for pupils to develop imaginative skills were limited. This has been fully addressed by the school and there are now many examples of imaginative work.
- 146 Pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress throughout the key stage. They gain appropriate experiences and there is evidence of clear progress in the development of skills and understanding. Pupils show a good awareness of colour, line, tone, shape, form and space, recording their ideas in a variety of media. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress during the key stage. Higher-attaining pupils are given opportunities and resources to develop their skills and there are many examples of work from such pupils effectively displayed in the school.
- 147 Pupils in Year 3 research native Australian art, using books and information technology facilities appropriately. They use pastels sensitively to produce work in this mode. A poem and work on weather inspire them to use colour-matching skills as they make effective representational drawings of autumn leaves. They develop good printing techniques to make prickly hedgehog pictures. Pupils in Year 4 become increasingly aware of the work of various artists and produce good self portraits in the style of Adelaide Labille-Guiard and Agnolo Bronzino. They use their creative and imaginative skills well. They write accounts of Frida Kahlo's different depictions of herself and develop their work on portraiture as they look at themselves in a mirror and draw self-portraits with careful attention to features and perspectives. In Year 5 work on facial features is further developed. Children produce engaging portraits composed of different tones of the same colour with an emphasis on expression. Their knowledge of tonal values is further extended as they use pencils carefully to shade observational drawings to produce a three dimensional effect. Year 5 pupils produce work in the style of Roy Lichtenstein and use tissue paper effectively to reproduce the dot technique which is a feature of his work. They paint effective pictures using strong line and colour in the style of Picasso. Pupils in Year 6 produce traditional designs in the style of William Morris and modern paintings in the style of Mondrian. They use shading techniques well in good quality observational drawing and creative skills are displayed in pencil drawings of modern objects such as a microwave oven and a computer.
- 148 Art is successfully linked to other areas of the curriculum. Skills of literacy and historical research are developed as pupils in Year 4 examine Tudor portraits and write detailed descriptions of their own facial features before using pencils and pastels to draw self portraits. They illustrate their work in English with attractive patterns and drawings appropriate to the subject. Mathematical skills are developed through the study of shape and pattern.
- 149 The quality and quantity of the artwork is an indication that pupils are keen and enjoy their artwork. They talk enthusiastically about their work and how they could improve it. Evidence of their enjoyment of and involvement in this topic may be found in the fact that some brought in further work done on their own initiative at home.
- 150 The school has a pottery kiln and there are many examples of work of a very high standard showing that good use is made of this provision. Very good use is made of visits to art galleries and museums in Leicester to observe artefacts and paintings and there are good examples of the use of information technology for researching information and as an artistic medium.
- 151 Art makes a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils as they explore other cultural traditions, collaborate and celebrate the achievements of others.

151 **Design and technology**

- 152 No lessons were observed during the inspection. Samples of work and children's plans and evaluations, teachers' planning and discussions with the curriculum co-ordinator and teachers give sufficient evidence to judge that pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress throughout the key stage. Pupils with special educational needs are always fully involved in activities and they make good progress during the key stage.
- 153 In the previous inspection the report stated that most pupils' attainment in design and technology was below average and that progress was unsatisfactory. Teaching was also unsatisfactory and teachers lacked confidence, knowledge and expertise. The school has worked hard to improve these aspects and has been successful. The teachers now are knowledgeable about all the processes and skills involved in the subject and this has had a positive effect on children's progress.
- 154 By the end of the Key Stage pupils have sufficient knowledge and skills to use a wide range of components and materials and an appropriate range of tools. Throughout the school, in all the work observed, pupils engage in a variety of activities related to design such as research, investigation, planning, modelling and evaluating. Work is displayed in the classrooms and in other areas of the school which clearly show the range of activities that take place in the subject.
- 155 From the start of the key stage onwards pupils develop their skills. Year 3 pupils make creative pop-up pictures and a lollipop stick puppet to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of levers and pivots. Year 4 pupils make attractive appliqué pennants after practising sewing skills. Pupils in Year 5 use slab techniques appropriately to build up Egyptian style plaques. They work collaboratively as they design and make a pop-up book suitable for younger children and they build moveable toys powered by air. By the time pupils are in Year 6 these skills are well developed, as are such skills as measuring, cutting, assembling and sewing. They make attractive felt pencil cases using a variety of stitching techniques. They make different kinds of biscuits. After investigating paper strengthening and rigid shapes they design and make successfully a bridge from newspaper capable of carrying a two-kilogram load.
- 156 Opportunities for pupils to experience design and technology are often linked to other areas of the curriculum. Literacy and information technology skills are developed as pupils research and evaluate their work. Pupils practise numeracy skills as they plan and measure.

156 **Geography**

- 157 Because of timetabling arrangements, there were no lessons seen during the inspection and the range of work in the scrutiny was limited to small amounts in Years 3, 4 and 5. Consequently, there is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching or pupils' progress throughout the school. Evidence was gathered by scrutinising pupils' work, teachers' planning, discussions with pupils, and observing pupils' geographical skills in other subjects.

158 Pupils in Year 3 develop good mapping skills and apply them confidently. Higher-attaining pupils have a sound knowledge of their locality, they find their route to school and identify the key features of the locality. Average-attaining pupils locate the street where they live and various local schools. In Year 4, pupils' knowledge and understanding of maps develops and they acquire a greater range of skills and techniques. Higher attainers identify the location of key places in the United Kingdom, the continents and find significant countries of the world. They extend their skills to finding places by using grid references precisely. Lower-attainers use resources well to improve their mapping skills and as they assemble a jigsaw of the United Kingdom, they become more confident in recognising different places on the map. In Year 5, pupils further develop their mapping skills to introduce a key that illustrates understanding of precise geographical terms, such as source, tributary, meander and flood plain. The majority of pupils increase their knowledge of the world's great rivers and understand the attendant environmental difficulties, such as pollution. Although pupils in Year 6 have not done any geography this year, they develop good geographical skills in history. For example, they identify many of the similarities and differences in maps of the locality which were drawn 50 years apart, in 1828 and 1878. Many recognise settlements and places of interest and compare them ultimately with the present situation.

158

158 **History**

159 By the age of eleven pupils make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, and those who have special educational needs also make good progress because they receive very good support. Progress is most noticeable in Years 5 and 6 where pupils develop good investigative skills and are confident in interpreting resource material. Their written work demonstrates their understanding of the importance of first-hand evidence and they combine information well to write interesting accounts.

160 Pupils in Year 3 begin to understand the role of an archaeologist and build on their mapping skills by tracing maps of the Roman Empire. Higher-attaining pupils, considering the authenticity of evidence, understand the need to take into account the perspective of the writer, and become aware of the problems of bias. In Year 4, teachers build effectively on oral work to demonstrate that there are often several interpretations of past issues and events. For example, pupils read and discuss two accounts of 'The Gunpowder Plot', and show good understanding of the different viewpoints in their discussions. Pupils in Year 5 studying ancient Egypt develop their skills of historical enquiry understand the importance of artefacts, photographs and other primary source materials as they identify the findings of an archaeologist. Pupils in Year 6 interpret and evaluate a wide range of historical evidence relating to the Victorians. They describe the similarities and differences between the conditions of children in Victorian times with those of children today. They have a good understanding of the importance of Britain in the 19th century and know the significance of key people and events in this period. They understand the purpose and importance of census data and use contemporary maps well.

161 The pupils' attitudes to history are good. They enjoy being challenged to think, collaborate when appropriate and show pride in their work. Year 6 pupils are clearly fascinated by life in Victorian times. Pupils behave well, respect each other's views and show pride in their presentation.

162 The quality of teaching is a good, overall. A sixth of lessons were very good, a third were good and half were satisfactory. In the very good lesson, the teacher showed secure knowledge and understanding of the subject matter; introduced good links with literacy and used Victorian texts very well to illustrate the children's lives. Overall, teaching is planned well, questioning is lively and resources are imaginatively used. Activities are well matched to pupils' levels of attainment.

162 **Music**

163 Pupils make very good progress in the development of their musical skills. Progress since the last inspection has been very good and music is a strength of the school. The standards are well above those expected of pupils in this age range. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy music lessons and make good progress. They make a positive contribution to the school's many excellent musical productions. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make very good progress in music and this enhances their acquisition of a second language.

- 164 All pupils have excellent opportunities to develop their singing skills through very well planned, whole-school singing lessons. They make excellent progress in the development of listening skills and in the identification of pitch, rhythm and musical notation. Singing lessons are very carefully linked to themes such as 'The Stages of Life'. Whilst listening to 'Pacific 321' by Honneger, pupils reflected on the energies adults need to work creatively. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 learn about dynamics and are able to sing loudly and softly when they see ff and pp (in response to appropriate musical notation). All pupils are learning to sing their 'millennium' songs in two parts. They sing with accuracy, expression, controlled phrasing and very good articulation.
- 165 In class lessons, pupils listen and appraise music from different traditions such as African, Spanish, Indian and Irish. Younger pupils choose appropriate instruments to create different sounds and record their efforts onto tape. Older pupils are learning that music is composed for different purposes and audiences. They have listened to selected parts of Mozart's 'Requiem' and compared his secular and religious music. Year 6 pupils confidently identify and state preferences for different types of music such as jazz, classical, country and 'pop'.
- 166 Pupils have many excellent opportunities to perform live music. They have worked with a professional company in a production of 'Joseph' and have performed at the Royal Albert Hall. They take part in a range of local festivals and were invited to perform 'Carols' for Christmas shoppers in the city centre. The highlight of the school's musical performances will be to sing in the 'Millennium Dome' during the first year of the new century.
- 167 Pupils' enthusiasm for music is matched only by that of their teachers. In one lesson pupils were so engrossed in their music lesson they were reluctant to leave the classroom at the end of the school day. Pupils are very proud of their musical achievements and put considerable effort and time into improving their performances and achieving high standards.
- 168 Teaching of music is very good and often excellent. Teachers are very sensitive to and respectful of the cultural and religious backgrounds of the pupils. Work on Mozart's 'Requiem' was linked to the importance that world religions place on prayers for the dead. Wherever possible music is linked to other subjects; for example, as part of a topic on the Tudors pupils performed 'Kingham Games', a medieval Cantata. The teachers have very high expectations of pupils' musical knowledge and skills. Lessons are motivating and challenging and as a result pupils achieve very high standards of performance and musical appreciation. Pupils understand how to improve their work by developing their performing skills, refine their compositions and enhance their aural skills.
- 42 Music is effective in supporting pupils' literacy skills through the development of vocabulary, rhythm and rhyme. Pupils develop their mathematical skills in a musical context. They use their language skills well to discuss music.

169

Physical education

- 170 Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress throughout their time at school in their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding in gymnastics. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when progress for most pupils was described as satisfactory and that of younger pupils as unsatisfactory.
- 171 The school offers a balanced programme of activities; in each year group, gymnastics, dance and games, including athletics, are undertaken throughout the year. Swimming is provided in Year 4 at the local public pool. In addition, adventurous activities, such as abseiling, caving and 'a climbing wall', are covered during visits to a residential centre in Norfolk. Because of timetabling arrangements it was not possible to see a range of lessons in dance and games during the inspection.

- 172 Throughout the school pupils plan, perform and reflect on their activities competently and display improving agility and control. They move carefully, showing increasing awareness of space and other pupils. They build effectively on their early experiences to improve their sound skills in ‘travelling’ over different surfaces, rolling and linking activities. For example, pupils in Year 3 perform a variety of rolls, jump and land with satisfactory control and link their actions imaginatively. Pupils in Year 6 travel creatively over the floor and across the apparatus and join their movements with thoughtful changes of direction and speed. Pupils plan their performances with care and refine their actions after experimentation and helpful comments from their teacher and other pupils. For example, pupils in Year 3 extend the range of rolls they perform to increase the control with which they move from one action to the next. Pupils in Year 6 improve the smoothness of their sequence of movements from apparatus to floor by ordering their individual movements so that one leads naturally into the next. Pupils in Year 4 use space imaginatively, changing by direction, level and speed. They move their bodies creatively shaping movements of floating, stretching and pulling. Pupils in Year 5 show increasing control in their handling, throwing and catching a rugby ball during a series of challenging paired and team activities. Pupils describe how they feel after their exercises; for example, pupils in Year 3 put their hands on their chest to help them describe their increased heart beats.
- 173 Across the school the pupils’ response is very positive and their enjoyment obvious. They listen carefully to instructions, perform energetically and they are keen to succeed. They are very well behaved and sustain very good relationships through which they encourage and support each other. They confidently explain their planning, readily volunteer to give demonstrations and display sensitivity in evaluating the work of others.
- 174 Almost all the teaching is good. This good teaching is characterised by the consistency with which pupils plan their work, demonstrate their ideas and discuss their performance and that of others. All teachers have a clear understanding of the skills to be developed. They give appropriate instructions, supported by useful pupil demonstrations and the modification of activities to secure some success for each pupil. Teachers engage pupils in energetic activities and maintain a brisk pace to their lessons. Their interventions are effective in moving pupils on to the next step in their work. This has a positive impact on pupils’ progress. They make satisfactory use of published materials to help them track pupils’ progress; for example, they use a national athletics programme to record pupils’ attainment and monitor their progress.
- 175 A useful contribution to the curriculum is made by the school’s provision of extra-curricular activities which include basketball, netball, cricket and carrom. Locally organised, competitive sports are an integral part of the school’s programme and in this the school has enjoyed some success, notably in the carrom tournament.

Swimming

- 176 The inspection of this school included a focussed view of swimming which is reported below.
- 177 There was insufficient evidence on which to judge the pupils’ progress, and attainment by the age of eleven because the school had not retained pupils’ records from earlier years. Consequently, there is insufficient evidence to judge the effectiveness of the school’s provision and its organisation of swimming in Year 4.
- 178 In the two lessons seen, the pupils in Year 4 made good progress because of the teachers’ clear instructions, carefully planned activities and effective use of praise. The pupils, who are divided into two groups by attainment, display increasing control in entering the water and moving through it. Most of them hold the handrails and undertake simple confidence-building exercises satisfactorily; for example, putting their faces in the water, jumping up and down and splashing water with their legs. They build effectively on the demanding tasks they are asked to perform during their lessons. All pupils display high levels of involvement and they are keen to succeed. The lower-attaining group display increasing confidence as they carry out a series of routines which requires them to move through open water away from the handrails. The higher-attaining group hold the float appropriately and glide across the width of the pool, increasing the distance they travel and the time they keep their face in the water. By the lesson’s end two pupils swim unaided across the pool encouraged by their teacher and their class.

179 The pupils respond positively to swimming and their enjoyment is obvious. Their behaviour is excellent, both during the lesson and the journey between school and swimming pool. They listen attentively and readily volunteer to answer questions or give demonstrations. They sustain energetic performances in response to their teachers' expectations. They work well on their own and in pairs.

180 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers recognise that pupils have little experience of water activities and the excitement it generates. They retain control and purpose by maintaining a brisk pace, presenting a variety of well-structured short activities which challenge the pupils and retain their interest. They use praise effectively to encourage the pupils to pursue the set tasks and make good use of pupil demonstrations and comment. Teachers' interventions offer pupils useful support to improve their skills and develop their performance. They make good use of a national swimming award scheme to record pupils' attainment and track their progress.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 43 The inspection was carried out by a team of six inspectors who spent a total of 25 inspector days in school. Seventy-three lessons or parts of lessons were observed as well as assemblies, registration periods and playground sessions. Twenty-four pupils read to the inspectors and the full range of pupils' work was scrutinised. Teachers' planning notes and records of pupils' work, together with individual education plans and statements of special educational needs, were examined. Discussions were held with staff, including the special educational needs co-ordinator and the co-ordinator for pupils who speak English as an additional language, the chair of governors, the governor with oversight of special educational needs and other representatives of the governing body. School documents were read, including financial, curriculum, management and special educational needs papers, minutes of governing body meetings, the school's last inspection report and the action plan produced in response to it by the governing body.
- 44 A meeting was held before the inspection to provide parents with an opportunity to express their views about the school and to find out about the inspection process. It was attended by eleven parents. Two hundred and sixty eight parents completed questionnaires and the written observations accompanying them were also considered by the inspection team.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 – Y6	402	8	110	102

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	18.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.85

Education support staff (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked each week	169

Average class size:	28.7
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Financial data

Financial year:	1999
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	£
Total Income	585,602
Total Expenditure	573,621
Expenditure per pupil	1,427
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,670
Balance carried forward to next year	39,651

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	402
Number of questionnaires returned:	268

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	32	59	5	3	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	39	56	3	1	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	28	53	10	3	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	40	51	6	2	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	46	49	3	2	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	44	47	4	3	1
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	38	48	9	3	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	36	53	6	3	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	34	53	8	3	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	38	48	6	4	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	64	33	1	1	1

NB Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, sum may not = 100%.
 Percentages given are in relation to total number of returns INCLUDING nil replies.