

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Aston Lodge Primary School**  
Rotherham

LEA area : Rotherham

Unique Reference Number : 106888

Headteacher : Mr C Jennings

Reporting inspector : Mr A Clark  
21596

Dates of inspection : 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract [lmm1] 706844

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Infant and Junior
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	4 to 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Lodge Lane Aston Sheffield S26 2BL
Telephone number :	0114 2872432
Fax number :	0114 2876997
Appropriate authority :	The governing body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr O Eyre
Date of previous inspection :	May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Mr Andrew Clark, RgI	Science Information technology Design and technology Music	Characteristics of the school Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Children under five.
Mrs Kath Berry, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support and guidance Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural guidance Partnership with parents and the community
Mrs Margaret Handsley, Team Inspector	English Geography Art	Equal Opportunities Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Efficiency
Mr John Porteous, Team Inspector	Mathematics History Physical Education Religious Education	Attitudes, Behaviour and Personal Development Curriculum and Assessment

The inspection contractor was:

ISIS  
5, Huntsmans Close  
Beaumont Park  
Huddersfield  
HD4 7BR

Telephone Number: 01484 667385

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The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
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## MAIN FINDINGS

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above those of similar schools

Teaching is very good in over a quarter of lessons and good in almost all others. Teaching is particularly good at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

Pupils make good and better [lmm2]progress in almost all subjects. Progress [lmm3]is very good in art and design and technology.

Behaviour and attitudes to work are very good. Support and guidance for all pupils is very effective.

The school is very well led and managed.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

The school's partnership with parents and the community is very good and has a positive affect upon pupils' learning. [lmm4]

### WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

No significant weaknesses were identified through the inspection.

However, in the context of its many strengths the following are aspects which can be improved to raise[lmm5] standards even higher.

Planning in the nursery.

The time allocated to teaching religious education is too short.[lmm6]

**The weaknesses are far outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school[lmm7].**

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

The school has overcome weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection and has maintained or improved on its many strengths. Planning in English makes sure that writing is consistently developed in other subjects. The school development plan is now a very effective document with clear objectives and priorities. Monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators is of a very good quality. There are clear and appropriate procedures for child protection. Standards of behaviour have been maintained. The school has set realistic, but challenging targets for pupils to do better in national [lmm8]tests. The school is very well placed to continue to improve and meet its targets.

### STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in [lmm9]1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	C	A
Mathematics	C	A
Science	A	A

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

The information shows, for example, that while standards are in line with national averages for English and mathematics, they are much better than those in similar schools.

Standards in English and mathematics for pupils currently in Year 6 are above these levels and reflect higher than average National Curriculum results reached over the past three years. Pupils' competence in information technology is better than average and is satisfactory for religious education. Work in art and design and technology is of a high standard. By the age of five children's achievement is appropriate in all areas of learning except for reading.

## QUALITY OF TEACHING

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

Teaching is satisfactory and often better [Imm10] in all lessons. In 84 per cent of lessons teaching is good or better, including 26 per cent where it is very good. Teaching in the nursery is largely satisfactory. The quality of teaching is particularly high at the end of both key stages.

*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	Very good and contributes to the quality of learning.
Attendance	Good. Above the national average.
Ethos*	Very good. There is a strong commitment to raising standards and pupils are enthusiastic.
Leadership and management	Very good. The headteacher leads well with good support from other senior [Imm11] management. School development planning is very effective and the involvement of governors is good.
Curriculum	Good. The school provides a rich and broad curriculum. The amount of time devoted to teaching religious education does not give pupils the depth of learning evident in other subjects.
Pupils with special educational needs	Teaching and planning is good and pupils achieve their learning targets. They participate fully in all lessons.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good overall [Imm12].
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. The arrangements for the professional development of staff are very good.
Value for money	The school gives very good value for money.

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





## THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school enables the children to achieve a good standard</li> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The school is easy to approach with problems and questions</li> </ul>	

Forty per cent of parents responded to a questionnaire seeking their views of the school. No significant concerns were expressed and this was reflected in a meeting before the inspection and in discussions during the inspection. The positive views of parents are wholly supported by the judgements of the inspection.

### KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

**No significant weaknesses were identified. The following, less serious issues should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan:**

Planning for all areas of learning in the nursery  
There is too little time for teaching religious education.[lmm13]

### INTRODUCTION

#### Characteristics of the school

Aston Lodge Primary School is in the former mining village of Aston on the outskirts of Rotherham. There are 152 pupils on roll and a nursery where 26 pupils attend part time. There were 57 pupils under five years of age at the time of the inspection. Pupils are admitted to the school in the term of their fifth birthday in line with the policy of the local [lmm14]education authority policy. One pupil is from a home where English as a second language. Thirty per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals [lmm15]which is above the average nationally[lmm16]. Approximately half the pupils are from private housing and half from local authority rented accommodation. There is a high element of unemployment in the area, but also families from skilled occupations and different professions. Approximately a fifth of pupils are on the register of special educational needs including over 3 per cent of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This is above national average[lmm17]. Further children will start to transfer from nursery to reception in spring and summer and there will be new entrants into nursery. A significant proportion of children transfer from the nursery to neighbouring schools; these children tend to be higher attaining children from more affluent backgrounds. Pupils overall attainment on entry to the school is below that typically expected for their age. At the time of the inspection there were 51 children attending the nursery on a part time basis.

Since the last inspection in 1996 the numbers on roll have declined dramatically due to changes in the community and competition with neighbouring schools. The headteacher was appointed to the school after the last inspection.

The school has clear and comprehensive aims with a significant focus on raising attainment for all aspects of school life. For example the school will 'Promote the highest standards possible'. The schools motto is 'Developing excellence and achievement'.

Priorities for development are effectively identified in the current [lmm18]school development plan. They include implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy; clear learning objectives in planning, and continuation of the National Literacy Strategy.

## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	7	6	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6	6	7
	Girls	4	5	5
	Total	10	11	12
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	72(77)	85(88)	92(90)
	National	82(80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6	7	6
	Girls	5	5	4
	Total	11	12	10
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	85(79)	92(97)	90(77)
	National	82(81)	80(85)	86(86)

### Attainment at Key Stage 2

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	13	23	36

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	16	15	20
	Total	27	27	33
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	75(71)	75(71)	92(65)
	National	70(63)	69(62)	78(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	9	10	11
	Girls	16	15	17
	Total	25	25	28
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	69()	69()	78()
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

*Figures in parenthesis refer to the previous reporting year*

## Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.2
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.3
	National comparative data	0.5

## Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	26
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is generally above national averages for English, mathematics and science and well above standards in schools with a similar entitlement to free school meals. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress through each key stage and very good progress overall. Pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy are good. The school has maintained and built on the good standards identified [lmm19]at the time of the last inspection.

Attainment on entry to the school is below that typically found in children of this age[lmm20]. A significant number of higher attaining pupils go to other neighbouring schools from Aston Lodge nursery. This lowers attainment on entry to the reception class.

By the time children are five years of age they have made successful progress towards the desirable learning outcomes for their age. Personal and social development is good and children are well prepared for classroom practice by the time they start [lmm21]school. In particular, they are well prepared for literacy and numeracy. Standards are satisfactory overall for language and literacy, although early reading skills are at a lower level. The school recognises this and has put several initiatives in place to improve standards including literacy based training for parents and good guidance booklets. Mathematical standards are sound[lmm22]. For the current pupils in reception attainment in mathematics is likely to be above desirable outcomes by the age of five. This is largely a result of the very effective teaching and high expectations in reception. Knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development is at least in line with expectations and above for a significant minority of children. They make good use of computers and are able to represent their ideas well in paint and other media. Children with special educational needs are identified early as under fives and given good support allowing them to make sound progress.

The number of pupils in the testing group at the end of both key stages is relatively small. This means that there are often variations in the level of attainment of the groups of pupils and this limits the reliability of identifying clear trends from the data. The school supports its own analysis of attainment trends through a good range of objective tests including the optional national tests at the end of each year in Key Stage 2.

In the national tests for seven year olds in 1999 standards in reading were below the national average and average when compared to similar schools. Standards in writing were in line with national average and above that of similar schools. Over the last three years attainment in reading has been below national averages for reading, but in line for writing. Inspection evidence shows pupils' attainment to be broadly in line with what is expected for their age in reading and writing with pupils attaining across a wide range. There is no clear trend over time for reading at Key Stage 1.

By the end of Key Stage 2, although there are variations, pupils' attainment in English is above national expectations and well above that of similar schools. In 1999 attainment in the national tests was in line with national averages, and well above that of similar school. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment for current pupils in Year 6 is above average with many pupils working at high levels. The national tests and inspection evidence show a trend of improvement over time since the last inspection and that the school is well placed to continue to improve.

The pupils' attainment in national tests for mathematics in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average and well above that of similar schools. The national tests for the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with national averages and well above that of similar schools. Over the last three years attainment is above the national average at the end of both key stages. The evidence of inspection indicates that attainment for pupils currently in Year 6 is above expectations and that a significant percentage of pupils are on line to attain the higher levels in national tests. There has been a trend of improvement over the last three years and this is set to continue.

Attainment in science is well above national averages at the end of Key Stage 2 and well above that of similar

schools. This is similar for the end of Key Stage 1 assessments. Over the last three years attainment has consistently been above the national average [lmm23]. This is reflected in the findings of the inspection and many pupils in the current Year 6 are on line to attain the higher level 5 in national tests.

Although there are variations from year to year there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls over time in any subject.

Almost all pupils are at least working at the expected level in information technology by the end of both key stages and a significant number are above this. Attainment is strong in all aspects of information technology and is better than that usually found.

Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the local education authority's agreed syllabus. The depth of understanding is not as thorough as other subjects such as history and geography and reflects the limited guidance and the amount of time given to the subject.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons and attainment is in line with targets set for them. They listen carefully to their teachers and work hard for extended periods. The school keeps good records of work undertaken by pupils with special educational needs and these records help teachers to plan appropriate work for future lessons.

Pupils' progress through both key stages is good and is very good against general levels of attainment on entry to the school. Pupils' progress is a direct reflection of the quality of teaching and planning for progression. The impact of national strategies for literacy and numeracy is beginning to have a positive impact on progress in lessons and, particularly in mathematics, over time.

Speaking and listening skills are well developed through the school and pupils express themselves well. In Key Stage 1, pupils listen carefully and discuss the main points of the 'Detective Talik' story they are studying. In Key Stage 2 they are aware of the needs of the listener, adding detail where necessary. They use Standard English when speaking to adults and in formal situations such as sharing work with the class.

Pupils make at least sound progress in reading at Key Stage 1 and 2. In Key Stage 1 pupils use their knowledge of phonic skills, looking at pictures and the meaning of the story to deduce new words. Higher attaining pupils discuss the main points of a story and talk about characters. However, a significant proportion of pupils are not fluent enough through lack of practice both in school and at home. Through Key Stage 2 pupils become more fluent and read a range of text with enthusiasm. They use reference skills well in both key stages.

Pupils make particularly good progress in writing. In Key Stage 1 pupils write stories, poems and reports with a widening vocabulary. They chose words to good effect. This is extended through their work with word processors. Through Key Stage 2 pupils develop good use of punctuation and accurate spelling. They use exclamation marks, commas and colons to make their writing more lively. Handwriting is well formed, fluent and legible. They make good use of dictionaries and thesauri.

Writing in other subjects makes a good contribution to progress. For example, reports in science and evaluations in design and technology are of a high standard. Natural history studies of the school grounds lead to logical writing of several pages carried out over a long time period. Teaching in all subjects contributes effectively to progress in speaking and listening.

Progress in mathematics and particularly numeracy is very good. By the end of Year 1 many pupils have a sound knowledge of the 3 and 4 times tables. They plot and make a large graph of cars and transport. In Year 2 they draw and measure accurately in centimetres and metres and plan routes for a floor turtle robot. In Key Stage 2 they understand what a quadrilateral is and define a right angle and by Year 6 they calculate successfully the volume of a cuboid. Mental agility with numbers is good.

Progress in art and design and technology is very good in both key stages. Pupils work with a wide range of media and learn to select the most appropriate tools for their work. The finished products are consistently of a very high standard, particularly observational art from the grounds and designs and

models from residential visits. This is in response to the very high expectations of most teachers and the good quality of display throughout the school.

Pupils make good progress in music and physical education. The skill of the teachers in asking the right questions and encouraging pupils to evaluate their work helps to raise standards. In history and geography progress is good and pupils have a depth of understanding which is unusual for their age. The use of relief models, field trips and role-play, all with a clear purpose, promotes higher standards.

The school has set very demanding targets for the next three years. These are based upon a very thorough analysis of past achievement and the impact of initiatives. So far the targets agreed with the local education authority have been achieved and seem realistic. The expectations for current Year 6 pupils are very high, but on the schools past performance are likely to be met.

### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

Pupils have very good attitudes to their work. They are eager and enthusiastic learners. They listen carefully to their teachers at all times and they concentrate on their work for long periods. Pupils want to achieve success and strive hard in all lessons to attain goals which they have set for themselves or which have been set for them by their teachers. Pupils in Year 6 assess their own capabilities when working with protractors and decide what they need to do to improve their skills. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their work and they work with good concentration for extended periods. Younger pupils work hard in movement lessons to perform to a high standard and are determined to improve even more. Pupils learn their mathematical tables at home and take pleasure in demonstrating their knowledge to their teachers and their friends. They take pleasure in the success of their friends. When a Year 2 pupil adds on very quickly using a number line another pupil was heard to say 'Ah, she knows.' On several occasions pupils applauded spontaneously when someone in the class does something well.

Children under five have good attitudes to work. They are interested and enthusiastic about their activities. For example, in reception children working with magnets were keen to discover their buried treasure in the sand tray and to observe the effects of two magnets together. In nursery they enjoy using the computer to create pictures. They concentrate for good periods of time and rarely flit between tasks. The nursery is very successful at making the children feel confident in the classroom and within a very short time after entry they select and participate in self-chosen activities.

The behaviour of the pupils throughout the school is never less than good and usually it is very good. No misbehaviour was seen during the inspection and no adult's voice was ever raised to rebuke any pupil. Pupils come into school without fuss and settle into their class routines without a teacher telling them what they need to do. They move around the school in a quiet and orderly manner and conduct themselves along the school's long corridors impeccably. Children under five behave well. Pupils work well in lessons children often help one another unobtrusively. On the playground they play sensibly in friendship groups and co-operate well. Pupils are unfailingly polite and courteous to adults, including visitors, and to one another. There have been no exclusions.

Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. Pupils are given time to express their thoughts and ideas in lessons and teachers take time to listen to pupils at break times. Pupils and teachers are at ease in one another's company. Adults treat pupils with respect and are, in turn, respected by the pupils. A gentle humour is the hallmark of many of the conversations between pupils and teachers. Relationships between the pupils are very good. Older pupils are often seen talking to younger ones on the playground and helping them. Whenever a pupil is hurt there are always helpers on hand to offer comfort and advice. In lessons pupils share equipment and books without fuss and they take turns to speak during discussions. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities in a most natural way.

Pupils' personal development is very good. They act in a very responsible way whenever they are given any task to do. They return attendance and dinner registers to the office at the beginning of the school day. Older pupils are allowed to work on computers during the lunch break and are very proud of the responsibility they have been given. Pupils operate the sound system for assemblies and others tidy books on library shelves without direct supervision. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 go into the infant classes

during wet playtimes and help to look after them. Both younger and older pupils value the shared reading time, when Year 6 and infant pupils come together. It is also a time when older pupils learn about caring and sharing. During the past twelve months pupils have raised over £1800 for selected charities. Older pupils negotiate with the school to organise fund raising events such as table top sales for charity or school equipment. Older pupils help to distribute the produce from the harvest festival. The school has maintained the very good attitudes and behaviour seen at the previous inspection.

### **Attendance**

Attendance is good and consistently above the national average. The school has worked hard to raise attendance figures and encourage punctuality. Parents have responded to this by ensuring their children attend regularly and on time.

Pupils obviously enjoy coming to school and arrive ready and eager to start the day.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

The quality of teaching is good and often very good throughout the school. Teaching was never less than satisfactory and 84% of lessons were good and very good. Almost all teachers taught very good lessons and teaching is particularly strong at the end of both key stages. The quality of teaching contributes significantly to standards of attainment and the quality of learning.

Teaching of children under the age of five is satisfactory. It is satisfactory and sometimes good in the nursery and good or very good in reception. The nursery is well organised to allow children regular access to all areas of learning and to work in different social groups. Teachers and nursery staff know the children well and make accurate assessments of their daily and long term progress. There are well-planned activities for language and numeracy sessions with groups of pupils. However, some activities to promote other areas of learning do not always have a clear learning purpose and planning does not identify the specific vocabulary or achievement expected. Teachers very successfully promote children's personal and social development in nursery and reception. In reception the teacher carefully balances the needs of the younger children with those of the Year 1 pupils, but generally it is very difficult to tell them apart as children in the reception age group take an increasing part in group and class activities. These are regularly challenging and exciting. In mathematics and science children learn through challenging practical activities. Teacher's questions are well-planned to motivate children and make them think. Good day-to-day assessment ensures that learning is consistently built upon.

In Key Stage 1, teaching is always at least good and very good in almost half lessons seen. Teachers manage the mixed age classes extremely well and relationships are very good. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good and frequently very good particularly for the oldest pupils in both key stages. In both key stages lessons are planned well. There are clear and precise learning objectives. These are explained to the pupils at the start and assessed at the end of lessons. As a result pupils' progress is good as they know what they are trying to achieve. Teachers' plans build on early knowledge. Good use is made of the literacy and numeracy strategies to ensure the content of English and mathematics lessons is both appropriate and challenging.

Teachers' subject knowledge is good and often very good. This is evident in the quality of questioning and the teachers' skill in allowing pupils to ask questions and explain their ideas. Good examples were seen in English, science, music and design and technology. The teachers make lessons interesting and often entertaining. Good use is made of information technology and the school grounds and local environment to interest pupils. In history in Key Stage 2, for example, pupils acted as archaeologists using a metal detector and presenting a detailed graph showing the depth at which different objects were discovered. In music, pupils at Key Stage 1 produce an 'orchestra' of over twelve pupils on a range of percussion instruments. In English texts are carefully selected to interest and motivate.

The pace of teaching is generally good and often very good, maintaining the best progress. Introductory sessions in English and mathematics, for example, are succinct and purposeful and lead promptly into

group and individual work. Very often pupils are set tight time limits in which to complete work. However, within these sessions and the plenary, pupils are given time and encouragement to reflect on their learning and to consider their ideas. This was very evident in a games lesson in Key Stage 2 when pupils were considering the effectiveness of sports they had devised. This promotes both good progress and effective spiritual and social awareness.

Pupils with special educational needs are taught well by their teachers and receive good help from skilled support staff. Teachers include pupils with special educational needs in all parts of lessons, especially in the discussions relating to literacy and numeracy lessons. Careful thought is given to the activities which pupils undertake so that they achieve a measure of success. Targets set for academic progress in individual education plans are largely met.

Relationships throughout the school are very good and contribute to the quality of work. The Year 5 and 6 classes have a calm and professional ethos that makes learning a pleasure and prepares pupils well for the future. The enthusiasm of many staff, particularly in Year 1 and 2, is contagious and engages pupils' interest. Support staff make an effective contribution to learning throughout the school.

Pupils' work is closely monitored and accurately marked. Marking is constructive and helpful. Pupils are often set individual targets to achieve throughout the school. This helps staff monitor progress for both individuals and the school as a whole.

Sound use is made of homework which is regularly set and marked. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, building upon the strengths identified at the time.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

The school provides an effective, broad and balanced curriculum for all subjects of the National Curriculum. The curriculum for religious education covers the areas of study outlined in the locally agreed syllabus but insufficient time is allocated for the subject to be covered in depth. Sufficient time is allotted to all other subjects. The school is successful in meeting its curriculum aims. Pupils at the end of both key stages receive a particularly broad and enriching curriculum.

The curriculum for children under five is appropriately broad and balanced. Children's progress is planned for in all areas of learning and the balance between directed and self-chosen activities is good. The long term plans make sure that the children have a wide range of experiences. Medium term planning is satisfactory, but is too general in the nursery and does not provide enough guidance for daily planning.

The curriculum promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development well. The school has adopted the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and both are helping to maintain the improvement in pupils' attainment over recent years. Pupils have abundant opportunities to use their good speaking and numeracy skills in most subjects. Policies are in place for all subjects and consideration is given to the recent national schemes of work to see where the school can make improvements. Sex education is taught in Years 5 and 6 when the school invites the school nurse to work with pupils and teachers. Drugs awareness and other social issues are taught in co-operation with the local police through the work of Crucial Crew. One particularly interesting initiative is a discotheque run in conjunction with the police to which pupils can come only if they bring an adult. In this way basic information about social issues is distributed into the whole community. A local drama company also visits school to reinforce the seriousness of important social issues. Teachers give time for the discussion of social and personal issues in lessons when pupils are able to share their ideas and concerns. The school uses the expertise of one member of staff to teach music to all classes in school. This makes a significant contribution to the good provision for music throughout the school.

There is good equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum for all pupils. The curriculum provision is monitored systematically by the senior management team and this ensures equality for all pupils. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is an effective procedure for the early identification of pupils who may have learning, emotional or behaviour problems. The procedures comply fully with the recommended Code of Practice and help pupils to receive access to an appropriate curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in classrooms from teachers and very good classroom support assistants.



Teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 plan their lessons well. The curriculum for children under five is planned to meet the recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes and leads smoothly into the programmes of study for the National Curriculum. Teachers use good medium term plans to help them to prepare individual lessons in all subjects. Policy documents generally give clear guidance to teachers and help them to plan well for the systematic development of pupils' knowledge and skills. The policy document for religious education lacks sufficient detail to help non-specialists teach the subject to any depth.

The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities which enhance the curriculum. These include writing, computer, soccer and netball clubs. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make a five day residential visit to Whitby. They gain great benefit from this especially in English, geography, history and art. The school grounds are used well, especially for history, art and environmental education. Facilities in the local area such as the church and a large hotel help pupils to appreciate their own locality. Visits to a sculpture park, museums and nearby large open spaces such as Rother Valley Park and Langsett Reservoir give pupils good experiences on which to base their learning. Visitors who make a valuable contribution to the curriculum include theatre companies, police, music groups and sports coaches. Parents appreciate the rich curriculum.

At the time of the last inspection co-ordinators had few opportunities to monitor their subject or to be fully involved in planning. Co-ordinators now monitor the medium term planning and are in the process of extending their role to monitoring work in classrooms. The last report commented on the variable quality of the teachers' planning. This is now consistently good. In the areas of planning and monitoring the school has made a good improvement since the previous inspection.

The school's system for the assessment of pupils' work and progress is good. The headteacher monitors and analyses teachers' assessments and shares the analysis with teachers. This helps teachers to plan future work for all pupils, especially those who may be experiencing difficulties. This is a significant contributory factor in the maintenance of the steady rise in pupils' attainment since the last inspection. Children in the Reception class are assessed towards the end of their first half term in school and these assessments provide a baseline from which teachers plan for their needs. From Year 1 to Year 6 a record of achievement is maintained for each pupil and this gives a clear picture of the progress of each pupil as they pass through the school. Teachers keep good records and these help them to plan lessons which meet the needs of individual pupils. The school has developed a very effective tracking system which helps teachers to judge the academic progress made by each pupil and by separate year groups. Co-ordinators have good portfolios of work which help their colleagues to make sound judgements about the levels at which pupils are working.

Procedures for identifying assessment opportunities and for using assessment to inform planning are now good and have improved since the previous inspection. The school is well placed to maintain the present good standard of assessment.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Overall provision is very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and a strength of the school. The school's provision for the cultural development of its pupils is good.

Good use is made of the school's immediate environment and especially the 'wild area' to enable pupils to sit and reflect on the changing seasons and the effect on living things. In many lessons pupils are given opportunities to explore personal expression and self knowledge through poetry and design technology. The teaching of art, science and information technology encourages a sense of wonder at what pupils themselves can achieve. Pupils' own ideas are valued and discussed particularly in areas such as religious education, geography and the study of the Victorians and Ancient Greeks in history. The daily acts of collective worship make a sound contribution to pupils' moral and social development and meet statutory requirements.

The moral framework forms an integral part of the school's ethos and underpins the pupils' social development, reflected in the high standard of relationships and behaviour demonstrated throughout the whole school. Pupils of all levels of attainment have a strong sense of justice and responsibility towards each other and their environment. The Year 6 and Year 2 shared reading session encourages an insight

into simple parenting skills and pupils are prepared well for future life. The quality of regular discussions in lessons frequently reinforces this aspect and pupils express their feelings on moral issues well.

A wide variety of cultural experiences are provided through trips, visits and an annual residential experience. Pupils' lives are enriched by extra-curricular opportunities including music, sport, computers and the opportunity to learn a European language. Pupils are actively encouraged to organise fund raising projects and be pro-active in the community. The community police officer is a regular visitor and talks to both pupils and parents on drug awareness and citizenship. Raising multi-cultural awareness remains a challenge but the quality of ethnic displays and artefacts are helping to address this.

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

This area of pupils' development is extremely well provided for and makes a strong contribution to educational standards overall. There is a clear system of tracking pupils' progress and target setting enabling teachers to monitor individual progress and development and providing both pupils and parents with information on areas for improvement. Children under five are well cared for. New daily assessment procedures in the nursery ensure that progress is followed carefully.

There is a clear framework for promoting and maintaining discipline. It is consistently applied by all adults, encouraging the exemplary behaviour, good manners and positive attitudes to learning demonstrated by the pupils. The quality of relationships within the school community is very good and is reflected in the low incidence of oppressive behaviour including bullying which are dealt with effectively.

The regular attendance and punctuality is achieved through high expectations, close monitoring and co-operation between home and school.

There is good support for pupils with special educational needs. The work of teachers and the skilful support staff helps pupils to maintain good progress in lessons. They also receive good support from their friends who enjoy seeing them succeed, especially in mathematics lessons. Adults have time to listen to pupils and help them to overcome worries and difficulties. Parents appreciate the support their children are given. The school makes very good use of the support offered by the local education authority for the work with pupils with special educational needs.

The school now has an effective policy for child protection well known to all staff. There are well-established accident and medical procedures with staff trained in first aid always available. The health and safety of pupils is a high priority and promoted through many subjects. Pupils enjoy clean and well-maintained surroundings both in school and in the immediate outdoor area, providing them with a pleasant and safe [lmm24]environment in which to learn. Since the last inspection the strengths in this aspect have been maintained and weaknesses have been addressed through the child protection policy. Parents have fulsome praise for the quality of support and guidance given to their children and the care and concern of all staff.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

The school enjoys a good relationship with parents and the community. Pupils benefit significantly from these links. This is an open, welcoming school with a friendly approach to parents and visitors. There are well-established lines of communication with full information of school events and activities. The prospectus and governor's annual report to parents are well presented and informative and are widely circulated to raise the profile of the school. Information on literacy sessions and topic areas is readily available with meetings to raise parents' awareness on curricular matters.

Before starting school, nursery staff sometimes meet children at home and arrange regular visits to the school. This ensures children quickly settle into the nursery. There [lmm25]are a regular feature with smooth transition from one key stage to another through close liaison and planning. There are also effective links for pupils transferring from the nursery to neighbouring schools. Preparation for transfer to the comprehensive school is thorough and developing year on year. Good links with the local secondary school enable the school to make use of resources often not available to primary school pupils such as the ray boxes in science. The school provides helpful booklets for parents to support their children's

learning at home and has successfully recruited volunteers to be involved in the Better Reading Partnership.

There are two opportunities a year for parents to formally discuss their children's progress with a helpful annual record of achievement on which they may comment. Parents of pupils with special educational needs receive copies of all documents relating to their needs. They are consulted at a very early stage if the school is considering placing a child on the special needs register. Most parents attend annual review meetings and they also take advantage of opportunities to talk to teachers throughout the year. The school encourages the partnership between home and school and welcomes parental support in the classroom. The Friends of Aston Lodge Association is working hard to raise funds for equipment and learning resources. Parents feel well informed about all aspects of school life and how to help their child.

The school makes full use of the resources within the local and wider community encouraging visiting speakers and performers to enrich the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to take full part in community activities and regularly raise funds for local and national charities. The school's reputation is growing and is well placed to play a central role within the community it serves.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

The quality of leadership and management is very good. The leadership of the head teacher is a significant strength of the school. He has a very good understanding of the needs of primary school pupils and the demands of the curriculum. There is a very clear drive towards high attainment which runs through all aspects of the school's work and is shared by staff, governors and other members of the school community. In a short period of time the new headteacher has established very good procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and school development planning. The management of the school is the concern of all staff who feel that their strengths are valued and that weaknesses are addressed in a professional way. All teachers are trained to monitor their colleagues against appropriate criteria for teaching and learning in the subjects, and to feedback in a positive and constructive way. The ability to reflect upon shared and individual practice in order to improve is an important underlying feature of the effective management. A reflection of the team management approach is evident in the letter heading for the school which has both the headteacher's and deputyhead's name and roles.

The governing body is very effective in all aspects of its work. Monitoring and evaluation of developments are good. School development planning is built up in a structured way, which involves regular feedback to the governing body. It is based upon thorough reviews of provision by the subject co-ordinators, the head teachers' own monitoring and careful analysis of National Curriculum tests and assessment results. Priorities for development are clearly established and presented as carefully structured projects. New developments for numeracy, literacy and information technology are discussed fully in advance and monitored regularly. The governing body is very professional in its work, bringing a wide range of appropriate skills and interests. Full advantage is taken of training for governors provided by the local authority[lmm26]. All statutory policies are up to date and reviewed regularly and consistently. The concise and strategically focused reports from the head teacher to the governing body allow school developments to be carefully monitored. This is improved by established close links between individual governors and subject co-ordinators, so that the governors are better informed about teaching and learning in their particular area of responsibility[lmm27].

The aims of the school are effectively met. They are clearly expressed in the prospectus and set the drive to high achievement. Many of the aims are very specific and have a precise educational purpose. The achievement of these aims are monitored and measured effectively and this has a positive impact on learning. Parents views reflect the strong quality of leadership and management.

The school's provision for special educational needs is led by an able and committed co-ordinator. The requirements of the Code of Practice are met in full. The school has devised good systems for helping teachers to keep track of the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

The school has very effectively built upon the many strengths identified in the last inspection report and successfully addressed the weaknesses. The high quality of teaching has been maintained and the headteacher has put effective strategies into place to create a strong staff team. All key issues have been addressed. Procedures for monitoring the curriculum have been strengthened by regular focused visits to classes and reviews of planning and pupils' work by subject co-ordinators and senior management. Procedures for writing across the curriculum have been significantly improved. As described above, the priorities and objectives in the school development are clear and practical. Child protection procedures are appropriate. The school actively monitors behaviour and this is still very good. Parents feel that the school has improved significantly under the leadership of the new headteacher. Overall, the school has by no means rested on its laurels since the previous inspection and is well-placed to continue to improve.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

Teachers are well qualified and experienced and have a good level of subject knowledge. They advise and support colleagues well in their roles as subject co-ordinators. Teachers demonstrate knowledge and understanding of pupils with special educational needs. They have received a very good range of up-to-date training, including training for the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. There are sufficient teachers for the number of pupils. The school is fully staffed and class numbers are all under thirty.

The school has a good number of support staff who are well qualified to meet pupils' needs, particularly those with special educational needs. They are included in the school's training programme and have developed a good level of expertise. They complement the work of teachers well, have a good understanding of pupils and are instrumental in building up pupils' self esteem and confidence as they pass through school. The nursery nurse is well qualified and well deployed. Voluntary helpers also make a valuable contribution to the school's educational provision, in the Better Reading Partnership project, for example. The school is fortunate to be able to use a classroom as the base for additional support for pupils with special educational needs. The school has good resources for special educational needs and makes good use of the resources provided by the local education authority.

Mid-day supervisors care for pupils at lunchtime in accordance with the positive behaviour policy. The school secretary manages administrative duties smoothly and efficiently, making a positive contribution to the day-to-day running of the school. A support assistant, provides care and security for pupils who are ill or distressed. The caretaker and cleaning staff make sure the school is thoroughly maintained, cleaned and well cared for. All staff have up-to-date, detailed job descriptions.

The school building and grounds are very well cared for. The caretaker takes responsibility for a wide range of maintenance tasks, which are carried out to a high standard. The accommodation is sufficiently spacious, with adequate storage areas. The hall can accommodate whole school assemblies and is suitable for physical education. The indoor learner swimming pool is used well and effectively maintained. The playing field and well-developed environmental areas enhance the quality of teaching and learning in a variety of subjects, such as science. Pupils have sufficient space to play outside without disrupting each other. The attractive, good quality displays of pupils' work throughout the school have a positive impact on learning.

The quality of learning resources is at least satisfactory in all subjects, and good in science, art, design and technology and history. The school has enough resources in all subjects. Learning resources are readily available and are used well.

Provision has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection.

## **The efficiency of the school**

The efficiency of the school is very good. The quality of resource management has remained at the same high standard as seen at the last inspection, and financial planning has improved.

The quality of financial planning is very good and spending reflects the priorities in the school's development plan. The school's income varies from year to year, as the number of pupils starting school changes each year. Although the overall number of pupils entering the school is declining, there are variations from year to year. The headteacher and governing body plan ahead very carefully to maintain good quality educational provision in spite of the fluctuating numbers of pupils entering school. Effective use is made of funds available for special educational needs and training grants and funds for information technology. The headteacher, chair of governors and members of the finance committee work closely together on long-term financial planning and keep a good balance between current needs, stability of staffing and long term financial viability. They successfully maintain a good level of financial monitoring and review.

The use of teaching and support staff is good. Teachers are effectively deployed to each year group; with three mixed aged classes, of reception and the younger Year 1 pupils, Year 2 and older Year 1 pupils and Year 3 and the younger Year 4 pupils. All teachers take responsibility as subject managers and are very well qualified in their subject. Support staff are well deployed to support groups of pupils, making the most of their skills. The special educational needs funding is well focussed in providing skilled support to meet pupils' needs and help them to make good progress. Volunteer helpers make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly in reading, and to the life of the school.

Staff make good use of learning resources and accommodation. Resources are readily available, and used well in lessons. The accommodation is used well. The classroom space is used in different ways for particular kinds of lessons. The use of carpeting in the classrooms and shared areas allows the floor space to be used extensively for small group work. The shared areas are used well for individual and group work and, as the school has a separate dining room, the hall is fully used for assemblies and lessons such as music and physical education. The playing field and hard core area are used effectively for physical education lessons and the well developed environmental areas are used well for work for example in science. Teachers make good use of the indoor accommodation for display and the outdoor grounds for subjects such as art and geography.

School administration and financial control are very good. The everyday administration is carried out smoothly and efficiently. The headteacher, governors of the finance committee and the school secretary work together very effectively. A recent audit shows financial administration to be secure. School administration and internal communication are smooth and efficient.

Pupils make good progress during their time in school. Standards of attainment have risen over the past three years. The school provides a good quality of education and a strong commitment to equality of opportunity. Although the spending per pupil is above average, this is to be expected for the size of the intake in recent years. The school, therefore, gives very good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

Children under the age of five are taught in the nursery and joined reception and Year 1 class. Children [Imm29]attend part-time in the morning or afternoon in the nursery from four years old. There are currently 26 children in the morning and 25 in the afternoon sessions. In September six children started in the reception class. Overall children's attainment is below typical levels for their age. Many children start nursery with limited speaking skills and unclear speech. By the age of five children have made at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress towards the desirable learning outcomes for their age and standards are broadly in line with expectations. Attainment in personal and social development is above expectations for children currently in reception. It is in line for language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Standards are similar to those identified in the last inspection.

Children's personal and social development is good. Children progress from working alongside each other and sharing resources in the nursery to co-operative play and work in the reception class. They generally sustain interest for long periods, for example, when working on the computer in the nursery or on science tasks in reception. Children are very confident to talk about their work and in reception express their ideas very clearly to visitors. They quickly learn classroom routines and learn to relate well to adults. Children select [Imm30]activities in the nursery and respond well to the teacher's directions. They are interested in their work and in both nursery and reception are beginning to ask sensible questions. They dress themselves after physical activity and help to tidy up.

The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and support staff are caring and know the children well. Activities are planned carefully to allow the children to work in a range of [Imm31] groups or individually. The nursery and reception classes are organised effectively to motivate children, but resources for role-play in the nursery are unimaginative and of unsatisfactory quality. Teachers make good use of regular assessments to plan for children's individual personal and social needs.

Language and literacy.

Progress is satisfactory overall and good for writing and speaking and listening. Pupils are on line to attain desirable learning outcomes. Children enjoy listening to stories and looking at books. They become familiar with characters and key words from the reading scheme. In reception, children retell familiar stories with good expression and show lively interest in characters in books. Books are handled well and early reading skills are sound overall. Teachers' assessments and inspection observations indicate that standards of reading are below typical levels. Children develop their writing skills effectively from simple mark making to sentences based on key vocabulary. Higher attaining children in reception develop good writing skills in line with the early stages of the National Curriculum. Teaching of language and literacy is at least satisfactory and good in literacy sessions in reception. Tasks are planned to specifically encourage reading and writing in the nursery and teachers focus effectively on this. However, they do not identify language opportunities sufficiently in other areas of learning, including role-play, and do not intervene enough to promote the highest standards of language development. This lack of focus was also evident at the time of the last inspection and has not [Imm32]improved significantly. Lessons in reception have clear learning objectives and the teacher has high expectations.

Mathematics.

Children make sound progress overall. A significant proportion of children in the reception class show good levels of attainment. In both nursery and reception they benefit from direct teaching of numeracy skills. Children count on and back to at least ten and beyond. In reception children match one to one up to at least 26. They read numbers to 10 and many write their numerals with reasonable accuracy. They have a good knowledge of more and less than a given number and organise objects into sets and groups of numbers. A few children read and understand very high numbers. Children make a range of shapes on peg boards and name them appropriately. In both the nursery and reception teachers make good use of group work, songs and rhymes to interest the children. Actual numeracy sessions are planned well, but displays and activities to promote mathematical learning in the nursery are not particularly stimulating.

The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Activities are challenging, particularly in the reception class, and there is a good pace of work. In the nursery children are introduced to a numeracy session and learn through a range of songs and rhymes. There is a sound range of matching and counting activities to encourage learning. In the reception class lessons are planned with very clear and challenging learning objectives and the quality of teaching is very good.

#### Knowledge and understanding of the world

Children make satisfactory progress overall. They make good use of computers and control the cursor to produce words and pictures. By the end of reception they plan detailed routes for a floor robot[lmm33] and write and record the route effectively. They respond with obvious delight. They have a sound understanding of domestic situations and learn about seasonal changes and weather through first hand observation. In reception children make good progress in understanding that magnets attract some metal objects and that two magnets cannot always be joined together. Children work with construction toys with enthusiasm and are beginning to plan out their ideas before making models. In reception children's model boats are often of a high standard. Children in the nursery are good at selecting their construction toys and work well with jigsaws. The range of activities in the nursery is sound for this area of learning, but there is not always a clear focus.

#### Physical and Creative development

Children use scissors and tools with increasing care and accuracy. They draw from observations of natural objects with a sound awareness of colour and shape. They use chalk and crayons effectively. Children make leaf prints and work in a range of materials. By the age of five observational drawings are often advanced for their age. They produce increasingly good portraits of each other and teachers with a good awareness of body parts. Pupils develop appropriate physical skills. They twist, turn and jump with control in a physical education lesson for example[lmm34]. They ride wheeled vehicles with suitable control and awareness of each other and they have positive attitudes. The range of outdoor equipment is satisfactory and the nursery playground is a safe and spacious area.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Children benefit from ample opportunity to work outside on vehicles and climbing equipment. In reception good use is made of available hall time for physical education. There is a sound range of painting and drawing activities available and lessons are planned to extend experience of working in a variety of techniques and media. For example, through autumn prints and collage work.

### **THE CORE SUBJECTS**

#### **English**

In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average, and well above average when compared with similar schools. Standards of attainment in the national tests in 1998 were above the national average, and well above average when compared with similar schools. Taking the 1996 - 1998 results together, although there are variations year on year, pupils' performance was above the national average. Inspection judgements [lmm35] show that pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 attain standards above the national average. The difference between pupils' levels of attainment in 1999 and those evident at the time of the inspection are judged to be a reflection of the percentage of pupils with special educational needs[lmm36]. The last inspection report of 1996 stated that pupils' attainment was broadly in line with that expected for their age. The national test results show a trend over time that demonstrates significant improvement. The school is very well placed to maintain the present standards.

In the national tests for seven-year olds, in 1999, standards in reading were below the national average, and average when compared with similar schools. Standards in writing were in line with the national average, and above average when compared with similar schools. The attainment of girls appears to be higher than that of boys, although the size of the year group is too small to make this a significant difference. Taking the 1996 - 1998 results together, pupils' performance was below the national average in reading and in line with the national average in writing. Inspection judgements[lmm37]

show pupils' attainment to be broadly in line with that expected for their age in reading and writing for the current pupils in Year 2. There is no clear trend over time for standards in reading. The close monitoring and review of teaching in the literacy hour, together with the school's strategy to develop writing in recent years, has resulted in improved standards of attainment in writing.

At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above national expectations in speaking and listening. Pupils express themselves clearly in lessons and most speak confidently. They are aware of the needs of the listener, adding detail as necessary, such as when talking about the work of their favourite author. Pupils listen carefully, in a class discussion about a biography of Amy Johnson, for example, and are ready to respond both to the teacher and to each other. They use Standard English more consistently when speaking with adults and in formal situations, such as when sharing their work with the rest of the class. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards of speaking and listening are in line with national expectations and building on the secure base at the end of the reception year. [Imm38] Pupils listen carefully and talk confidently in class lessons, in groups and individually. They show understanding of the main points, for example, when discussing the 'Detective Talik' story, and give considered responses using the correct English vocabulary. They speak out well when talking about their work to the rest of the class.

At the end of Key Stage 2, overall attainment in reading is above the national average. A significant proportion of pupils read at a higher level. Pupils read a good range of texts with enthusiasm and talk readily about their favourite authors. The majority show insight into characters' motivation and behaviour. They are developing a good understanding of genre and can compare and contrast texts using elements such as style, theme, setting, and character. Pupils can use reference books and libraries to research information effectively.

At the end of Key Stage 1, overall attainment in reading is in line with the national average and progress is good. A good proportion of pupils know how to go about reading new words, such as using their knowledge of letter sounds, looking at pictures, using their knowledge of sentence structure and the meaning of the story. However, despite the school's efforts in hearing pupils read at lunchtimes, a significant proportion of pupils has not had enough practice to become fluent. Higher attaining pupils discuss the main points of a story and talk about characters and events. Pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and that non-fiction books can be used to find out information.

At the end of Key Stage 2, the range of attainment in writing is above the national average. The higher attaining pupils write with an interesting choice of vocabulary and expression, developing and sustaining their ideas through the text. Pupils use punctuation correctly, such as speech marks, commas, question and exclamation marks, in lively story writing. Their poems are well constructed, sensitive and expressive. Pupils write in a wide range of forms in different subjects, such as role writing in history, charts and diagrams in science. Pupils take notes, write instructions and reports well. Most pupils' handwriting is fluent and legible. A good number of pupils develop a very attractive style of handwriting towards the end of the key stage. Pupils make frequent use of dictionaries and thesauri and standards of spelling are sound.

At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is in line with the national average. Pupils write stories, poems and reports which draw on an increasing range of descriptive vocabulary. They are becoming aware of choosing words to achieve the right effect, such as when writing a shared story about an exciting event at school. They structure sentences correctly; some using more complex sentences, and arrange them in a logical sequence. Pupils' attainment in spelling is generally satisfactory for their age. Pupils' handwriting is joined and legible.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time in school. Those with special needs receive good quality support from teachers and support assistants which enables them to make good progress towards their targets. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good gains, particularly in speaking and listening, and in writing. They learn to listen more closely in well-led class sessions, give more extended answers to questions and become more able to explain their thinking. Pupils learn more about reading, particularly during the literacy hour, and read a wider range of texts, although a significant number have not yet developed sufficient fluency. Many make good progress in developing their comprehension skills. They make good progress in letter formation and sentence construction and in developing their writing.



Pupils continue to develop their reading and writing to a good standard by the end of Key Stage 2. They tackle an increasing range of texts in reading, developing the ability to make inferences about characters and events. Their writing becomes more diverse and interesting, drawing on a wider vocabulary. They make good progress in organising and extending their writing, and in using punctuation for effect. Pupils make sound progress in speaking and listening, in response to teachers' skilful questioning.

Pupils' attitudes to English are very good. They enjoy the lessons and most are keen to take part in discussion. They appreciate the texts that are chosen for them and are always keen to start a new one. In writing, poetry for example, they are willing to share ideas and appreciate each other's work. They concentrate very well in lessons and work well in independent group tasks. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good; they form very good relationships with adults and with each other.

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, and often very good. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' rate of work and the standards expected from each group. They motivate and challenge the pupils so that they make good progress. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They have a secure grasp of the subject which enhances their teaching. Their planning is clear and soundly based on the National Literacy Strategy, enabling pupils to make good progress as they move from year to year. Teachers assess pupils' learning carefully and give extra support where required. A hallmark of teaching is the teachers' skill in oral language development. They make very good use of the introductory sessions to develop pupils' speaking and listening, and include opportunities in their lessons for pupils to plan and present their work to a wider audience, for example, in the class plenary session. Teachers form very good relationships with pupils and manage behaviour very well. They make lessons interesting, and often entertaining, so that pupils are involved throughout and work well independently. Their classroom displays are well presented to help pupils to work at a good standard. Teachers make sound use of homework to support classroom learning.

The curriculum is well organised to make sure pupils cover a good range of work and make good progress. Writing is developed well in other subjects, such as history. Additional opportunities are planned to improve speaking and listening, such as when dramatising a play script. The curriculum is enriched by events, such as that of a visiting drama group, and book weeks. The literacy hour enhances pupils' appreciation and enjoyment of literature.

The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The school has made good progress in implementing the National Literacy Strategy.

## **Mathematics**

The 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds indicate that the performance of pupils in mathematics was above the national average and high when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds indicate that the performance of pupils in mathematics was above the national average and above the average for similar schools.

The findings of the inspection show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level and the higher levels at the end of both key stages is above the national average. The findings of the inspection agree with the results of the national tests with one small amendment. There is a significant percentage of Year 6 pupils working well above expectations[lmm39]. Standards in mathematics have been rising slowly and steadily over the past three years and are expected to continue to rise in the current year, especially at the higher levels. This can be explained by the difference in groups of pupils and by the school's recent adoption of the national strategy for numeracy which is already having a good effect on the mathematical ability of the highest attaining pupils.

Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have good skills in mathematics. They have effective recall of mental arithmetic facts which they enjoy demonstrating in competition with each other. They know that the number 90 has twelve factors and is itself a factor of multiples such as 180 and 360. They manipulate numbers with ease when challenged by mental arithmetic problems and they are able to explain the reasoning and processes they go through to reach the answer. Most pupils use[lmm40] a protractor with ease and measure angles carefully and correctly to within 1 degree. They multiply hundreds, tens

and units by hundreds, tens and units accurately and work in decimals to the third decimal place. They work with fractions and have little difficulty subtracting three fifths from three-quarters. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are proficient in counting, halving and doubling numbers using mental strategies. They double and half numbers up to 24 and can order numbers between 0 and 10 and in tens between 10 and 100. They have a good grasp of mathematical language such as 'after', 'before', and 'in between' and enjoy demonstrating their skills. One pupil wrote 'A number after 70 is 1 000 000' and knew that the final number represented one million. They recognise coins and calculate costs for shopping[lmm41].

Pupils in both key stages make good progress and often they make very good progress. In Year 1 they work hard to use terms such as 'fewer', 'fewest', 'greater', and 'greatest' correctly. They learn multiplication tables of 2 and 10 and complete problems such as  $6 + 4 = ?$  Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress because they are confident in their knowledge of number and their ability to use the language of mathematics correctly. Pupils in Year 3 make good comparisons between rectangles and squares recognising that both have four right angles but that there is difference in the lengths of the sides. Pupils in Year 4 know their 9 times table and can explain the number pattern they see. In Year 5 pupils work on percentages and starting from no knowledge of percentages but good knowledge of fractions come to see that 50% is the same as a half, that 20% is the same as one fifth. They understand that it is important to know about percentages so that they can know whether a sale item with 30% off really is a bargain.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in both key stages because of the care teachers take to prepare work from which pupils can achieve success. They are occasionally helped in the classrooms by very able classroom support assistants and other helpers.

Pupils enjoy mathematics. They behave well during lessons and join in with enthusiasm. The good behaviour of the pupils is a major contributory factor in the good progress made by pupils in mathematics. They listen carefully to their teachers and offer sensible answers to teachers' questions during the first part of lessons. They enjoy working on number facts and take pleasure in demonstrating their knowledge and recall. Pupils explain their thought processes well. One pupil was asked how she had worked out a number sequence and she replied, 'I whispered it in my head'. Pupils are eager participants in spoken sessions but also wait their turn to speak and offer an answer or explanation. On many occasions there was spontaneous applause when a pupil showed good skill in number.

The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school. Teachers think carefully about the mathematical concept they are trying to teach and plan lessons which enable [lmm42] pupils to succeed. Planning is based on accurate assessment of pupils' needs and attainment. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and application to the tasks they are given. Learning objectives are set for the lesson and very often pupils are given relatively short periods in which work must be completed. Lessons are based on the numeracy session [lmm43] and pupils of all levels of attainment are challenged to succeed. The good pace of lessons ensures that pupils are usefully employed for every minute. Teachers make good use of praise to raise pupils' self esteem. The hallmark of most lessons is the very good relationships between adults and pupils. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is constructive and helpful.

The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator gives good support to colleagues and monitors planning and teaching regularly. Teachers make [lmm44] learning materials for pupils and this helps to ensure an exact match between the pupils' needs and the work pupils undertake. There are sufficient resources for the subject to be taught effectively. Teachers use the classroom space well and organise whole class and group sessions efficiently. Good assessment procedures identify areas of weakness and help teachers to plan work which helps pupils to overcome problems. Regular monitoring and analysis of assessment by the co-ordinator and the headteacher is also helping to raise standards throughout the school. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in other subjects.[lmm45] Skills in the presentation of data are seen in the analysis of an archaeological exploration of the school field and the accurate measurement of angles in work on reflection in science is based on pupils' earlier work in mathematics.

The school has made significant progress in raising the levels of pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages since the last[lmm46] inspection. The quality of teaching, the quality of planning and the

progress made by pupils have all improved since the previous inspection.

## Science

By the time the pupils leave school at 11 standards of attainment are well above the national average. Standards have been improved since the last inspection. Attainment is well above that of similar schools[lmm47]. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is also above the national average and well above that of similar schools. Standards achieved by higher attaining pupils in both key stages are also well above average levels, particularly in 1999. The teachers' assessments for the end of Key Stage 1 are below the national average in 1999 reflecting the attainment of that year group and are not consistent with the previous year's results. The National curriculum tests and assessments from 1996 to 1999 reflect these high levels of attainment at Key Stage 2.

Standards are high for current Year 6 pupils. The majority of pupils are already working at or close to the level 5, above the nationally expected level 4, in science and are likely to meet the challenging targets that the school and local education authority have set for them. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are also on target for attainment above nationally expected levels.

Pupils make at least good progress against their earlier learning throughout school and sometimes, in lessons, progress is very good. Those with special educational need and the higher attaining pupils also make good progress. P[lmm48]upils progress well through all aspects of the science curriculum and there is no significant difference between attainment in any one aspect of the subject. Progress is good for all age groups.

Progress in experimental and investigative skills is effective through both key stages. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils develop a good range of recording methods for science. They use diagrams, charts, graphs and written reports well. Year 1 pupils produce very accurate and closely observed drawings in a diary on seed growth. Older pupils produce good written descriptions of sound and vibrations and make good links between sound and movement. Year 1 pupils describe the uses of water in maintaining a healthy body in simple diagrams and sentences. By Year 2 they analyse the contents of their lunch box and classify them in the main food groups. In Year 1 pupils make sensible predictions about the basic properties of magnetism and in Year 2 they make deductions from their observations about the materials which magnets attract. Progress in understanding of materials and their properties and physical forces is good. Pupils learn to classify objects to a wide range of criteria including electrical conductivity. They build up a secure knowledge of forces based upon first hand investigation on floating and sinking, gravity and other forces. In their written responses Year 2 pupils show a significantly more mature understanding than in similar work in Year 1. The progress pupils make is a direct result of careful planning and good teaching.

Pupils very successfully build on the strengths in their attainment at Key Stage 1 as they progress through Key Stage 2. Throughout Key Stage 2 progress is very good for the majority of pupils. Progress is built upon thorough first hand experience and accurate and varied methods of recording. Pupils of all levels of attainment[lmm49] make good progress. Their use of a scientific vocabulary reinforces learning and earlier knowledge is consolidated and developed. For example, Year 5 pupils describe, in detail, how the north and south poles of magnets attract each other and like poles repel. Their reporting is of a very high quality through writing and diagrams. Year 6 pupils investigating light draw very sensible conclusions about refraction and reflection from experiments with a ray box. Pupils extend their knowledge of materials in investigations on filtration and solutions. They measure capacity accurately to provide the results. Year 4 pupils understand that metal is not a suitable substance for a pan handle because of heat transfer. Their reporting shows a secure understanding of solid, liquids and gases. Lower attaining pupils carry out their scientific investigations logically and neatly although their understanding is weaker than that of other pupils. However, they generally understand the main concepts. For example, Year 4 pupils understand that the position of the sun influences the length of a shadow although they cannot always accurately predict where shadows will fall from information given. Year 5 and 6 pupils have a very good understanding of living things and accurately use terms such as 'photosynthesis' and 'chlorophyll'. Excellent projects involving regular observations of seasonal changes to the school wildlife area supported by high quality paintings and sketches improve learning. This, and Internet work on international weather conditions, helps the pupils to produce sustained long-

term investigations. Pupils with special needs make good progress and are fully involved in science work.

Pupils' attitudes to learning in science are very good. They take a significant pride in presenting all their work well and select and suggest the most appropriate methods of recording. Pupils of all ages collaborate on tasks and by Year 6 they plan each other's contributions to the activities. They use their writing and reading skills very effectively. Older pupils adapt their style to suit their reporting needs well and their enjoyment of language is evident in the use of a scientific vocabulary and lively descriptions of seasonal change. Information technology skills are employed well in word processing, data handling and art programs, often combining them to good effect. Mathematics skills are used accurately in the measuring of time, distance, weight and capacity.

The strengths in attainment and progress arise from the good quality of teaching and overall curriculum planning. Teaching in both key stages is at least good and often very good. Teachers have very high expectations. Pupils are expected to approach their work in a logical and scientific way. They are given sufficient independence to reflect on their work and draw conclusions. In both key stages teaching methods are stimulating and very good use is made of resources such as a magnetic treasure hunt in Key Stage 1 and the use of the wildlife area. The pace of teaching is good and very good use is made of the plenary session at the end of lessons to review the main learning objectives and look towards the next lesson. Teachers assess the pupils' attainment [lmm50]accurately and ensure that knowledge and understanding is built upon. New topics often start with an activity devoted to finding out precisely what the pupils already know of the subject. The very best teaching is marked by the high expectations which are given to the pupils at the start of the lesson.

The subject is supported by an effective scheme of work which makes certain that learning is progressive and that all attainment targets are taught. The subject is led well. The school has improved on standards reported at [lmm51]the last inspection.

### **Information Technology**

Standards of attainment are at least in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. In both key stages there is evidence of a significant number of pupils working above expected levels. The school has developed standards from the last inspection, making full use of technology introduced in the last few years. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress in all aspects of the information technology curriculum. Overall, standards are much higher than those found in most primary schools.

Pupils make good progress in control technology and data handling. In reception and Year 1 pupils plan detailed programs for a floor robot [lmm52]and plot accurate routes. By Year 4 pupils are using a control [lmm53]program to plot and draw regular and irregular polygons and produce accurate descriptions of the process. In Year 6 they produce complex patterns and detailed pictures such as tractors with spiral wheels. Pupils have a good understanding of the subject. Throughout the school pupils make and analyse graphs and charts for learning in many subjects. Pupils work well independently[lmm54]. By Year 3 pupils are producing pie charts by dividing a circle into twelve segments. In Years 5 and 6, pupils produce graphs from an extensive traffic census. They ask good questions from the information provided and present their work to a high standard combining text and graphics. Year 5 pupils collect, sort and organise their own data on a range of interesting subjects. For the towers they are building in design and technology the Year 6 pupils create windows of different sizes and repeatedly copy them using advanced facilities on the computer.

Pupils use[lmm55] the digital camera effectively to combine text and pictures for work following historical and geographical field trips. Christmas card designs are to a high standard and a nice touch is the realistic copyright and publishing details. Pupils use spreadsheets effectively in work on Ancient Greeks and projects on shopping [lmm56]in Year 5.

Pupils make good progress in communication technology. By Year 2, pupils write independent first drafts directly on to the computer. They change the font style and size to good effect in poems on fireworks. They save their work and print appropriately. Very often pupils write at length and punctuation and spacing is accurate. In Year 3 and 4 pupils write letters of complaint to a fictitious coach company placing address and greeting details in the correct place and with accurate use of colons and semi-

colons.

Year 5 and 6 pupils produce [Imm57]extended booklets and stories often relating to work in many subjects. Writing on the Eyam Plague and Gainsborough Hall is highly imaginative in the use of paragraphing, punctuation and font style.

Throughout the school pupils' confidence in using technology is extremely good. [Imm58]They load, print and save their documents both to disk and hard drive. They access CD-ROMS and use e-mail effectively from office computers. Pupils make good use of the Internet in science and geography. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in using information technology. They have similar confidence and capabilities to other pupils and the use of information and communication technology supports their learning.

Pupils' response to information technology is very good. They handle computers with respect that comes from understanding and are not afraid to attempt complex tasks. They understand [Imm59]the purpose of information technology to the world of work and learning. This is because of the purposeful nature of their activities. In both key stages pupils work well together and share the workload sensibly. Pupils' enthusiasm is also evident in the overwhelming response to the computer club for Year 5 and 6 pupils[Imm60].

The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have a good subject knowledge which is evident in the purposeful way computers [Imm61]and recording equipment are used. Tasks are carefully planned to develop information technology skills in a meaningful context. Teachers have high expectations for pupils to complete work, often independently, to a high standard. The pace of direct teaching is good, allowing pupils to consolidate earlier learning and progress to new ideas and skills quickly. Pupils are expected to be able to explain their ideas and they respond well to this. The subject is well led. Curriculum planning is good and contributes to the good progress and high standards. Resources are generally good and used effectively. Work in information technology makes a significant contribution to learning in literacy, numeracy, geography, history, design and technology and art.

## **Religious Education**

Standards at the end of both key stages are in line with the levels expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school allocates a single half hour session per week to the subject. This means that pupils do not cover the syllabus in the same depth as some other subjects. The very good speaking skills of the pupils do not develop in religious education lessons as they do in other subjects of the curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the subject overall.

Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 make good connections between biblical times and modern times. They understand that we see symbols in our every day lives and that symbols such as the cross and the fish are important for Christians. Pupils [Imm62]have their own ideas about the biblical account of the way in which the world was created. One pupil wrote, 'I think God made the world because He was lonely'. In lower Key Stage 2 pupils study the beliefs and customs of Islam and realise that although dress and 'special books' may be different, there are many similarities with Christian belief. Older pupils look at the story of the prodigal son and conclude that they have neighbours all over the world. They apply their knowledge of the ten commandments to their own lives and try to think of ten rules for living. They make very sensible suggestions such as 'Use your manners', and 'Don't be giddy'. All pupils have a good sense of right and wrong.

The teaching of religious education is never less than satisfactory and often it is good. Lessons are too short and [Imm63]it is difficult for teachers to develop ideas and beliefs beyond a superficial level in such a short space of time. Within these short lessons teachers make good use of every day events such as television advertisements to help pupils make connections with religious ideas. In the best teaching good connections are made between religious ideas and the every day lives of the pupils. Teachers help pupils to think carefully about right and wrong and encourage them to think positively about their ideas.

Pupils attitudes are good. They enjoy religious education. They join in discussion with enthusiasm and take care to listen to the opinions of their friends. They appreciate the efforts of their friends and applaud a pupil who had written ten rules for his home.

The scheme of work for the subject follows the locally agreed syllabus very closely. It does not, however, elaborate on the syllabus. There is little guidance for the non-specialist and teachers depend on their own knowledge and ideas. At the time of the previous inspection the time allocated to religious education was described as reasonable. This is no longer the case. The recently appointed co-ordinator is aware of this and is planning to draw up a new scheme of work which will be more helpful to teachers. Attainment is similar to that reported in the last inspection.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Art**

By Year 6 pupils' attainment in art is well above what is usually seen in pupils of this age. They make very good progress in art during their time in school. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and make very good progress in practical work. Pupils in Key Stage 1 gain a good understanding of colour and form when contrasting work by L.S.Lowry from different stages of his life.

They learn to make comparisons and contrasts between the painting of different artists, such as when comparing an early Lowry with works they had previously studied by Monet. The younger pupils' pictures of a helicopter, done in chalk and crayon from real life, show their developing understanding of the use of colour. Drawings of 'My School' demonstrate developing observational skills as pupils add realistic detail to stylised drawings. They work well with [lmm64]a good range of work in paint, collage, crayon, chalk, pastel and clay, which show variety and individuality. In lower Key Stage 2, pupils' paintings in the style of Chagall show individual and imaginative responses to non-representational art. The majority of pupils have an appreciation of colour, shape and overall composition. Their clay figurines, on display in the school library, are individual, well executed, show character and are often amusing. Pupils in upper Key Stage 2 study a range of artists as diverse as Holbein and Miro. Their portraits of famous Tudors include appliquéd decoration to add interest and texture. A scraperboard drawing of Sir Walter Raleigh is particularly effective. Pupils' own compositions in paint, pastel, chalk and pencil become more confident and skilful. Pupils' computer generated work, such as pictures in the style of Miro, is well controlled. Three-dimensional work in clay, such as their representations of local buildings, is well depicted. Other memorable examples are the [lmm65]Tudor masks, moulded in papier-mâché on a clay base, and sculptures in wire and plaster in the style of Henry Moore.

Pupils have[lmm66] a very good attitude to their work. They respond readily to their teachers, are willing to answer questions and express their thoughts and ideas. Pupils enjoy lessons, concentrate and take a good deal of care, working hard to achieve a good quality result. They take care of resources and organise themselves well. They co-operate well when clearing away, for example.

Teaching is very good. Lessons are clearly introduced and teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. They are careful to teach the pupils the appropriate language for the subject so that they can discuss and convey their ideas using the correct terminology. Teachers use good quality resources, such as fine examples of other pupils' work as well as good quality prints of the work of famous artists. They make clear what they expect of the pupils, give[lmm67] time for them to develop and complete their work and help pupils to improve their skills. They use plenary sessions well to share and evaluate the work carried out.

The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject co-ordinator is very well qualified and enthusiastic. He works hard to support other members of staff in their teaching, giving written guidance for example. A strong feature of the art are the links with other subjects. Art is used well in history, for example, to create an understanding of the beliefs of Ancient Egyptians. The subject is reviewed every year to make sure the quality of provision is maintained and that pupils continue to make very good progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

### **Design and technology**

Pupils of all levels of attainment make very good progress through both key stages and attain standards well above those normally found. A particular strength of the pupils' work is the high quality planning and presentation of finished products. Good links are made between design and technology and other

subjects and this helps the pupils to consolidate their learning. Standards are above those reported at the last inspection.

In Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils design effective narrow boats from their geography work. Their designs are mature, detailed and drawn with care and accuracy. Pupils evaluate their work very carefully with honesty and use a [lmm68]good vocabulary. For example, 'Our boat is ready. It was difficult because it was too narrow and kept falling down.' 'We need a long tiller at the bottom.' In Year 2 pupils design magnetic board games applying a questioning approach and a good awareness of the requirements of a board game. Even the first draft sketches reflect a good understanding of the practical constraints of using the magnets under the board. For example, they realise that there needs to be some sort of stand, and that magnets can only slide rather than jump across the board. Completed games have[lmm69] a very high quality of design and finish. Pupils work successfully with a good range of materials and are increasingly careful and organised.

Through Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress in their understanding of design and evaluation processes and in making products. All work is presented very well. In Years 3 and 4 [lmm70]pupils evaluate the effectiveness of different umbrellas and their suitability. The pupils apply a logical process to evaluating the umbrellas and respond well to the teacher's guidance and simple framework for planning their research. The finished project is based upon carefully evaluated diagrams and a wide range of tests. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are involved in an extensive range of design projects. Evaluations of modern and Victorian domestic appliances reflect a good understanding of technical drawing techniques and logical thinking. Pupils work very effectively with a good range of flexible and rigid materials. They understand the limitations of building a tower with art straws, but also the advantages of working with a light material that can be strengthened through using a triangular structure. Awareness of safety procedures for using glue guns and saws is very good and pupils work with high levels of independence. Following an educational visit to Whitby pupils produced [lmm71]excellent working models of the swing bridge, lighthouses and lifeboats supported by designs from different perspectives. Evaluations are detailed and focus on the main strengths and weaknesses of the materials and their suitability for their purpose.

In both key stages pupils of all levels of attainment make the best possible progress. Pupils with special educational needs are successfully encouraged to use their skills and generally work at a similar level to other pupils[lmm72]. Higher attaining pupils apply themselves fully to the tasks and take the opportunity to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills evident in the high quality of many products.

Pupils' response to design and technology is very good. They behave very well and use their time well. Pupils work effectively in different groupings. In Key Stage 1, pupils concentrate hard and show imagination and initiative in their activities. This is a direct response to the teacher's high expectations. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils work in a professional manner. The ethos of the Year 6 classroom is that of a productive workshop. Pupils use a range of tools and materials in an informed and matter of fact way. They discuss their ideas with each other or with the teacher and plan the next phase of their work. Girls and boys bring the same enthusiasm to the subject.

The quality of teaching in both key stages is very good. Lessons are well-planned and build consistently on earlier learning. The objectives of any design brief are clearly explained to the pupils. Introductory sessions have a clear purpose and teacher's questions challenge pupils and encourage them to use their initiative. There are many good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their work and ask questions of each other. There are very high expectations for care, accuracy and creativity in all the work. The pace of work is very good, although the overall ethos in both key stages is relaxed and orderly. Relationships are very good.

The subject is well planned and managed. Resources are very good and well cared for. Very good use is made of pupils' speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy skills in the careful planning and written evaluations. Design and technology tasks are carefully planned to be meaningful and consolidate learning in other subjects.

## **Geography**

By the time they leave the school pupils attainment in geography is above that normally seen in pupils of this age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress in geography. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in their understanding of maps and plans. They develop a sense of scale when plotting a route on squared paper. They understand concepts such as that of the rain cycle and the effects of rain on the landscape. Pupils develop an awareness of the geographical features of their own locality and know which have been created by people. They become aware of differences between their own locality and countries in other part of the world, such as when sorting fruit and vegetables into those which can grow in this country and those which grow in other countries. They can relate this understanding to differences in climate.

In Key Stage 2, pupils become more skilled in interpreting maps and charts, such as when planning airline routes between countries, and in extracting information from tables, such as when comparing climatic conditions in different parts of the world. They gain a good understanding of physical geography from their experience on field trips. Pupils have a good [Imm73] understanding of how the characteristics of the landscape are influenced by local geography, such as the local building materials, and the effect of human activity on the landscape. They understand how the landscape changes over time as human populations grow and develop. Pupils compare and contrast locations within this country and other countries, such as India, understanding differences in climate, physical features of the landscape, and differences in people's culture, lifestyle and religion.

In the one lesson seen teaching was good. Teachers' planning is of good quality. They provide interesting activities and a wide range of opportunities for pupils to gain a good understanding of the subject. Teachers make good use of opportunities to develop writing, for example, when discussing the effects of building a new cinema on the local town. They also make good use of information and communication technology to support their lessons, such as when compiling a database about climatic conditions in different parts of the world.

Pupils' behaviour is very good. They become involved in the lesson, showed interest, expressed ideas and were keen to answer questions. Most pupils worked well in pairs or small groups supporting each other in activities. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils collaborate well and many show a capacity for serious study.

The school has an up to date good quality policy. The scheme of work is due for review. The co-ordinator has been responsible for the subject for a short time but is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. A strength of the subject is the provision of field study visits when knowledge and skills gained in the classroom can be applied to the real world.

## **History**

Attainment in Year 6 is above that typically seen in pupils of this age and pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress through both key stages.

Older pupils begin to understand that the social classes in Britain during the reign of Queen Victoria had very different lifestyles. They come to realise that the roles of men and women began to change at this time with women seeking work in the professions such as teaching and nursing. They appreciate that religion played a much more significant role in the lives of ordinary people than it does today. Younger pupils compare photographs of people in Victorian times with modern clothing and realise that their movements would be very restricted if they wore Victorian costume. Pupils make good comparisons between their lives and times past. Pupils in Key Stage 1 look at maps of their village at different times in the past. A Year 1 pupil wrote, 'There is a railway line on the new map but not on the old map because there were no trains a long time ago'. Pupils recognise that Britain has been invaded by other nations such as the Vikings and has, in turn, invaded other countries.

Pupils have good attitudes to history. The older pupils behave very well when watching a video of Victorian life. During subsequent discussion they make very sensible suggestions about the ways in which they can approach their study of the era, for example by writing and performing a play on Victorian life for the whole school. Younger pupils behave very well when looking at photographs and give good explanations of the differences between modern dress and Victorian dress. They take great pride in their written work and enjoy showing the finished product to their teacher. Pupils gain a great



[Imm74]deal of pleasure and knowledge from the lessons.

The teaching of history is good. Teachers are careful to choose stimuli for lessons which engage the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils. For example, the photographs from Victorian times studied by the younger pupils in Key Stage 2 were authentic period photographs from the teacher's family. The link between the growth of leisure in Victorian times and the establishment of many soccer teams captures the imagination of pupils. Teachers have good understanding of the subject and the pupils, and are able to relate historical facts to modern life. The good relationships which exist between teachers and pupils help lessons to proceed in a pleasant atmosphere at a brisk pace.

There are adequate resources for the subject and the school enlivens the subject by visits and visitors. For example, [Imm75]classes studying the Vikings are visited by a 'Viking warrior'. Teachers often successfully choose to link pupils' work in history with their work in art. One result is a series of first class displays of two and three dimensional pieces of art linked to the work on Tudor and Egyptian history. The link with other subjects is an improvement since the last [Imm76]inspection. The subject makes a good contribution to literacy and information technology.

## **Music**

Pupils attainment in Year 6 is better than that usually seen in pupils of this age. Pupils make very good progress through Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. They respond well to the enthusiastic teaching, particularly by the music co-ordinator who works in both key stages. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils successfully maintain a rhythm for a sustained period. They are very confident when handling percussion instruments and identify accurately a range of instruments matching names to sounds. They accompany songs accurately and show good improvement through practice. Pupils respond well to the instructions and conducting of the teacher. They know a good selection of songs and sing from memory. Many pupils are confident enough to sing solos in front of all the key stage. By Year 6, pupils sing in tune with good awareness of the dynamics.

In Year 4 pupils use a computer program to organise and reorganise sounds in simple compositions. They identify a specific musical melody and successfully put in lyrics to fit. By Year 6 pupils sing in four parts tunefully and accurately. Pupils are familiar with basic musical notation and use a good vocabulary of musical terms. Pupils enjoy music lessons in both key stages and their response is very good. They concentrate hard and behave very well. They follow instructions well and are confident to lead other pupils. Pupils in both key stages choose songs they would like to sing and have good recall of earlier work.

The overall quality of teaching is very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In a lesson in Key Stage 1 teaching was excellent. The best teaching features high expectations, very good pace and challenge and a lively and enthusiastic approach which transfers to the pupils. Questions and guidance direct the pupils to make thoughtful and confident responses. There are clear, learning objectives. Teachers make good [Imm77]use of curriculum guidance and information and communications technology to support learning.

Learning in music is enriched by opportunities for pupils to learn a musical instrument including brass and string instruments. Two pupils play violin in assembly to a good standard. Pupils take part in concerts and performances through the year.

The subject is well led and curriculum planning is good. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection.

## **Physical Education**

Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress and, by Year 6, attain standards that are better than those typically found in pupils of this age[Imm78]. Pupils at Key Stage 1 develop good bodily control. They practise movement at three levels and are then able to combine movements and respond to music intelligently. They twist, roll and travel as they interpret music. At Key Stage 2 pupils use a greater

number of movements but they are not as graceful as the younger pupils. They show much greater inventiveness than the younger pupils as they combine rolls, headstands and cartwheels into a sequence of movement. In games lessons pupils throw and catch over ever greater distances with increasing confidence. Their tactical awareness improves as they invent and play attack games. They understand the strategies of defence, marking and blocking and apply them with improving skill. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop good bat and ball skills.

Pupils clearly enjoy physical education lessons. Their behaviour is never less than good and often very good. They change for lessons sensibly and move into the hall quietly. On most occasions pupils arriving in the hall occupy themselves with simple exercises to warm up their muscles[Imm79]. They listen to teachers very carefully and carry out tasks such as setting up apparatus without fuss. They pay proper regard to health and safety rules. Pupils evaluate their work sensibly. A Year 6 movement lesson was recorded for pupils to see later. They accept criticism in a very mature manner and offer good ideas of ways in which they could improve their own performance. The whole class was delighted that the star performer was a pupil who had shown no great ability in most previous lessons.

Teaching is at least good and often it is very good. All teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and encourage pupils to attain ever improving performances. Teachers plan in accordance with guidelines from the local education authority which are based on the National Curriculum. Lessons have good pace with pupils always being challenged to improve. Teachers make very good use of praise to raise pupils' self esteem and confidence. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and this leads directly to pupils striving for improved performance. Areas for improvement are shared with pupils and this helps pupils to attain the high expectations set for them by their teachers.

The inspection of this school included a focussed view of swimming which is reported below. The school has its own pool for beginners\_[Imm80]which is used by pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4. The pupils receive a good grounding in basic technique and gain greatly in water confidence through using this pool from such an early age. Years 5 and 6 use the local community pool to which they travel by coach. Only two pupils in the present Year 5 display any sign of disliking the water and even they manage to work in the shallow end with the encouragement of their teacher. It is anticipated that all of the current Years 5 and 6 will be able to swim the expected 25m by the time they leave school. This means that only one pupil in the years 1998 - 2001 will have left the school unable to swim the expected distance. Many of the Year 5 and 6 pupils are already proficient swimmers and it is anticipated that they will reach a high standard by the time they leave school. The standard of swimming in the school is above that which would normally be expected.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

4 inspectors, including a lay inspector, spent a total of 4 days in the school representing 14 inspector days.

Inspectors examined pupils work and discussed it with them.

45 lessons or parts of lessons were observed.

All teachers were observed teaching English and mathematics.

Representative samples of work for pupils of all ages and ability were scrutinised and similar samples of pupils were heard reading.

Documents presented by the school pertaining to management, leadership and the curriculum were studied before the inspection.

Discussions were held with teaching and non-teaching staff, particularly those with management and subject responsibility.

Nine parents expressed their views on the school through a meeting before the inspection and 59 parents returned a questionnaire.

## 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
YR – Y6	152	5	31	45
Nursery Unit/School	26	0	1	0

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	7.15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.26

#### Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week	31

#### Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

#### Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week	33

Average class size:	25.3
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### Financial data

Financial year:	1998
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	£
Total Income	373730
Total Expenditure	364820
Expenditure per pupil	1688
Balance brought forward from previous year	8044
Balance carried forward to next year	16954

**PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:

152
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Number of questionnaires returned:

59
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**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	54	46	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	69	29	0	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	35	51	14	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	44	54	2	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	42	53	5	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	60	38	2	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	36	55	9	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	37	56	7	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	42	53	5	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	50	50	0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	63	34	2	2	0