

INSPECTION REPORT

FIELDHEAD JUNIOR, INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Birstall, Batley

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107679

Headteacher: Mrs M F Lodge

Reporting inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie
23482

Dates of inspection: 14 - 17 January 2002

Inspection number: 185359

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior, Infant and Nursery School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Charlotte Close
Birstall
Batley
West Yorkshire

Postcode: WF17 9BX

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R Khan

Date of previous inspection: March 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23482	Mrs E M D Mackie Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Provision for children in the foundation stage Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are the pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19343	Mrs M Howel Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16408	Mr C Rhodes Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
22058	Mrs C Richardson Team inspector	English Art Music Special educational needs English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Fieldhead Junior, Infant and Nursery School is located in a residential area consisting mainly of local authority built property. The school was built in 1962 and has been recently altered to provide extra rooms for school and community use. Most children are from families who live near the school. There is a high level of social and economic deprivation in the area and pupil mobility, at 22 per cent, is high. There are 148 pupils on roll between the ages of three and 11 years old, 49 of whom are in the Foundation Stage. Of these, 41 children attend the nursery part-time. Children start school in the nursery with overall attainment that is well below that typical for three-year-olds. Very few pupils are from ethnic minority groups and there are none who speak English as an additional language. Twenty-six per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs for learning or behavioural difficulties; this is above the national average. Five pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. The school has had difficulties recruiting staff of high quality. The school is participating in the government's 'Excellence in Clusters' initiative.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school with much to celebrate. Standards of attainment are rising and pupils achieve very well from a low start. They behave very well and relationships are very good. The quality of teaching is very good overall and classroom support staff, including nursery nurses, provide support of high quality for the pupils. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- ****Pupils achieve very well from a low start.**
- Standards in art are above national expectations throughout the school, and in physical education, they are above national expectations for 11-year-olds.
- Pupils behave very well and make very good relationships. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good.
- The overall quality of teaching is very good and classroom support staff, including nursery nurses, make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- The headteacher provides excellent educational direction for the school and the deputy headteacher and senior staff contribute very well to the management of the school.

*** Achievement refers to the progress pupils make from a given starting point.*

What could be improved

- *Standards in English are below national expectations for 11-year-olds
- *Standards in English, mathematics science are below national expectations for seven-year-olds.
- *Standards in geography and history are below national expectations for seven and 11-year-olds and they are below the expectations outlined in the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education for seven-year-olds.

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

**The school has identified these areas for improvement and is already addressing them.*

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate in March 2000 stated that the school had serious weaknesses and identified six important issues which governors and staff should address. The

school has made very good progress, beyond what might be reasonably expected, to overcome these weaknesses and:

- pupils now achieve very well and standards have risen in English, mathematics and science;
- the quality of teaching is now very good overall;
- there has been excellent progress in the improvement of pupils' behaviour and current procedures ensure pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes;
- the governors have striven to maintain stability in staffing and the current picture is brighter than at the time of the last inspection;
- financial management is now very good;
- the local education authority's action plan has been very effective in helping the school to function with appropriate autonomy;
- the school now has the very good capacity to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E*	E*	E
mathematics	E*	E*	E	D
science	E*	E*	E	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Standards for 11-year-olds are now in line with national expectations in mathematics and science. They are below national expectations in English. From a low start, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority groups, achieve very well by the end of Year 6. Over the past five years, the trend in the school's test results has been upwards and above the national trend, with particular success in science. The trend continues. For example, the school's results were in the lowest five per cent nationally in English in 2001 but are now much improved because of the improved quality of the teaching and the school's concerted drive to raise standards. Targets set with the local education authority were met in 2001 and the school is on course to meet challenging targets for 2002.

Standards for seven-year-olds are below expectations in English, mathematics and science. In the 2001 national tests and assessments at the end of Year 2, pupils' results were in line with the national average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, Fieldhead's results were well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. The trend has been upward in all three areas of learning over the past five years.

In religious education, 11-year-old pupils achieve in line with the expectations outlined in the locally Agreed Syllabus, but standards for seven-year-olds are not high enough. In art and design, standards are above those typically seen for seven and 11-year-olds. Standards in physical education are above the expectations for 11-year-olds. In both geography and history, standards are below national expectations. In all other subjects, standards are broadly typical.

In the nursery and reception class, children make good progress but do not reach the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They achieve them in personal, social and emotional, physical and creative development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and are very interested and involved in school activities. The attitudes of many pupils have been improved through the involvement of the neighbourhood enrichment officer and the learning mentor.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The significant improvement in pupils' behaviour has a positive impact on pupils' progress and achievement. Behaviour during lunchtimes has improved because of the committed and consistent approach of lunchtime supervisory assistants.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils relate very well to one another and to adults. As a result, there is a happy, purposeful atmosphere in the school.
Attendance	Good. The school works hard to keep pupils in school. The high rate of attendance has a positive effect on pupils' academic standards.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is very good, and there was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. Some of the teaching in Years 5 and 6 is excellent. Teaching in the nursery and reception class is very good and provides children with a good start to their schooling. As a result of the very good teaching, pupils learn at a very good rate and achieve very well.

The overall quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science is good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good for five to seven-year-olds and very good for seven to 11-year-olds. Throughout the school, teaching is very good in art and design and it is good in design and technology, geography, information technology, music, physical education and religious education. Teachers' planning is of very high quality and they have a secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. Relationships are very good, and this has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and rate of learning. Teachers manage the pupils very well. In many lessons, this management seems effortless. As a result, pupils concentrate, work hard and enjoy success. The work of classroom assistants and nursery nurses is exceptionally effective. The teaching meets the needs of all pupils and promotes equal opportunities for them to achieve very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is interesting, relevant and well organised so that pupils are well motivated and learn in a systematic way. The school has sensibly focused on the teaching of literacy and numeracy over the last few years. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Individual education plans are thoughtfully written and pupils receive a lot of extra help.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and it is good for their cultural development. As a result, there is a positive ethos which underpins how pupils relate to one another, respect views which are different from their own and value a range of cultures and faiths.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Educational support and guidance for pupils is of high quality. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress are excellent.
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The school works very well to forge positive relationships with parents. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about their children's progress, is very good. Parents are encouraged to participate in school through helping in class and supporting school outings.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides excellent educational direction and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior teachers. The co-ordinators for subjects and aspects of learning contribute very successfully to the school's continuing improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body is committed and increasingly effective in fulfilling its responsibilities. Governors visit the school regularly.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher has a very comprehensive and realistic understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors are increasingly involved in planning to meet the school's priorities, and the school is evolving a development plan of high quality for its continuing improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial planning is prudent. The school uses grants and resources very effectively, and day-to-day administration is very good.

Considerable improvements have been made to the accommodation, so that the school is a bright and attractive place in which to learn and work. Staffing levels and quality are now good overall, and the governing body has a clear grasp of the importance of appointing staff of high quality when current temporary contracts come to an end. Resources for ICT are very good, but resources for design and technology are inadequate. The governing body understands and applies the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • The children behave well and the school has high expectations of them. • The quality of teaching is good, an appropriate amount of homework is set and there is a good range of activities outside lessons. • They are well informed about their children's progress and feel comfortable in approaching the school with any problems. • The school works closely with them. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no adverse comments.

Inspectors agree wholeheartedly with parents' positive views of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 Standards in English, mathematics and science for 11-year-olds have improved since the time of the last inspection in March 2000 and the trend of improvement has been above the national trend from 1997 to 2001. In the last two years, results for 11-year-olds have risen dramatically in all three subjects. From 2000 to 2001, the percentage of 11-year-old pupils achieving the expected levels improved:

- from 20 per cent to 41 per cent in English;
- from 16 per cent to 45 per cent in mathematics; and
- from 36 per cent to 66 per cent in science.

2 The trend upward for seven-year-olds has also been strong. From 2000 to 2001, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels has risen:

- from 71 per cent to 93 per cent in reading;
- from 63 per cent to 87 per cent in writing; and
- from 83 per cent to 93 per cent in mathematics.

3 In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2, the school's results were in line with national averages in reading and writing. Most pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are below average in reading and writing overall because of several unavoidable changes of teacher during the autumn term which have adversely affected the pupils' rate of learning. However, higher-attaining pupils are achieving at levels close to the average for their age. More stable teaching is now improving pupils' progress.

4 In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds, the school's results in English were very low compared with those of all schools nationally and well below average compared with those of similar schools. In mathematics and science, results were well below average compared with those of all schools and below average when compared with those of similar schools. As found in many schools nationally, girls performed better than boys in all three subjects. Pupil mobility is high, and those who are in the school for seven or eight years do better than new arrivals. The school monitors these pupils' progress as a group. On the evidence of current inspection, standards continue to rise and in Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations in mathematics and science but they remain below average in English. The targets set with the local education authority for English and mathematics in 2000 were met, and the school is on course to achieve this year's challenging targets.

5 In the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds, the school's results in reading were in line with the national average for all schools in reading and writing and well below the national average in mathematics. Its performance compared with that of schools in a similar context was well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. In teachers' assessments in science, results at the expected level were close to the national average. Boys performed better than girls in reading and mathematics but girls performed better in writing. The evidence of the present inspection indicates that standards for seven-year-olds are below average in English, mathematics and science. This does, however, represent good achievement in view of pupils' low start. There were unavoidable changes in staff during the autumn term but these have now been resolved. Increasing numbers of pupils are achieving the levels expected nationally when they are seven and 11 years old. The school has taken a robust, determined and successful approach to raising standards.

6 Teachers have analysed the school's results in national tests in order to build on strengths and overcome weaknesses. In addition, procedures for assessment have improved in the school and targets have been set for each pupil. These targets are shared with the pupils and their parents in order to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve. From the current inspection, all pupils achieve at similar rates. This is because of the high quality of the teaching and classroom support. It is also because of the school's emphasis on changing and improving pupils' attitudes to learning. Pupils' attitudes are now very good and have had a particularly positive effect on the performance of boys.

7 Children start school in the nursery with levels of attainment which are well below those expected for their age. Despite good progress in the nursery and reception class, the children are unlikely to reach the goals which are set for their attainment in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Many children find it hard to express what they know and understand, and the staff work consistently to develop this area of children's learning. Children achieve the goals in personal, social and emotional development, creative development and physical development, but skills for writing and finer work are weak. Children achieve well because of the very good teaching based on secure understanding of the needs of young children. The planning of the curriculum is very good and staff provide a wide range of stimulating and relevant activities so that children want to learn.

8 Pupils are achieving well in English and mathematics because the school has made good use of the national strategies for the improvement of literacy and numeracy to quicken pupils' progress in reading, writing and number. Teachers have become expert in using the strategies and most pupils in Year 2 gain skills, knowledge and understanding of English and mathematics at a good rate and achieve well from a low base. A significant number of pupils cannot express their ideas and views confidently but their speaking and listening skills improve well over time. They widen their vocabulary consistently in all subjects. Less able pupils read hesitantly, but they use their knowledge of letter sounds to try to sound out words and they look at illustrations to help them to understand stories. A few higher-attaining pupils read simple stories confidently. Writing skills vary widely. A significant number of pupils have difficulty in stringing sentences together, but a sense of narrative shows through as they write simple stories and record what they have been doing. Higher-attaining pupils use capital letters and full stops confidently to demarcate sentences. The standard of handwriting is good and most pupils present their work well. In mathematics, a significant number of pupils need skilful help from staff to sort out their thoughts during individual and group work. The school's practical approach to teaching helps pupils to develop an increasing awareness of the use of mathematics in everyday life. Unavoidable changes in staffing during the autumn term have slowed the progress of pupils in Year 2, but current teaching is addressing this, particularly in clearly focused work with groups of pupils. In science, teachers plan and prepare interesting and relevant investigations to help pupils to progress well. Most pupils develop skills of observation and recording at a good rate. However, weak skills in speaking and listening hamper the progress of many pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs.

9 Because of the very good relationships in the school, most 11-year-olds answer teachers' questions confidently and are keen to contribute their ideas. However, a significant number of pupils are unable to express themselves clearly and still need help from staff when formulating questions and ordering their answers during discussions. Pupils benefit from reading together from enlarged texts during the literacy hour. They explore spelling patterns, look for specific punctuation and consider how words are used to create a range of effects. Consistent teaching of spelling and regular practice in basic grammar give pupils a good grounding so that their writing improves at a good rate. They write for a good range of purposes and use reading and writing well in other subjects. In mathematics, pupils' positive and enthusiastic approach to mental arithmetic helps them to gain increasingly secure knowledge of the four rules of number. However, many pupils have difficulty in using this knowledge to solve practical problems which are expressed in words rather than figures. The very good teaching is helping pupils to gain confidence and learn at a quicker rate. In science, pupils gain knowledge and understanding at a good rate because of the school's practical approach and the enrichment of the curriculum through the imaginative use of the school grounds.

10 Seven and 11-year-olds achieve levels typical for their age in information and communication technology (ICT). The installation of a suite of computers in the school has led to the acceleration in the rate of pupils' learning. Seven-year-olds use computers confidently and can word-process their writing and carry out simple editing. They use simple programs to extend their learning in a range of subjects, including art and mathematics. Eleven-year-olds gain increasing experience with spreadsheets, data handling and control and modelling to achieve appropriate standards for their age. Throughout the school, pupils use CD ROMs with increasing confidence and are beginning to use the Internet by the time they are 11 years old. Constant evaluation of provision and pupils' attainment gives the school a clear picture of what the next stage of development should be. For example, as part of the drive to raise standards further, the co-ordinator is currently devising plans to ensure that the use of computers is planned consistently in all subjects. In religious education, seven-year-olds do not achieve the standards expected for their age, as outlined in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' attainment is hampered by their weak skills in speaking, listening and writing. However, pupils achieve the standards expected for their age by the time they are 11 years old. Christianity is the principal religion studied, and pupils know Bible stories, including those about the life and work of Jesus. They visit a variety of places of worship and, by the time they are 11 years old, recognise the importance of religious faith in the lives of many people.

11 Standards in art and design are above national expectations for seven and 11-year-olds. In design and technology and music, standards are broadly in line with national expectations for both age groups. Standards in geography and history are below national expectations throughout the school because of the school's understandable focus on the raising of standards in the basic skills. In physical education, standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and above expectations in Year 6. Strengths in pupils' achievement in physical education and art and design, evident by the end of the reception class, are developed well so that pupils attain good standards by the time they leave the school. The school has ensured that, although the focus has been on English, mathematics and science, pupils have been kept active and have had opportunities to be imaginative and extend their creative skills.

12 Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, and in the development of self-esteem and confidence, because of the very good teaching they receive and the suitability of their targets. The school makes very good use of assessment information to set targets and to create individual education plans for pupils. As a result, pupils who need additional support are identified as soon as possible. Pupils with special educational needs frequently attain very well, based on their ability, in national tests. Pupils who have particular talents also make very good progress because the school recognises their needs and organises additional lessons, for example in mathematics, to ensure that they have opportunities to extend their learning further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13 Pupils have very good attitudes to their work. Behaviour throughout the school has improved dramatically since the last inspection and is now very good. These very positive factors make a significant contribution to the personal development of the pupils, and are now a strength of the school. The number of exclusions in 2000 to 2001 was 26, involving seven boys. The number has dropped dramatically so that exclusion is now rare.

14 Home visits and the staff's welcoming approach to parents ensure that children starting school in the nursery settle into school life well and their first days at school are happy ones. Children gradually learn to follow the simple and clearly explained rules and build very good relationships with the staff and other children. In the reception year, the children's period of concentration lengthens so that they take part productively in literacy and numeracy lessons. Children behave very well and enjoy school.

15 In Years 1 to 6, pupils display a lively interest in their lessons and take a full part in all the activities provided. The extra-curricular activities are well supported, and the lunchtime supervisors

and classroom assistants make a significant contribution to the pupils' enjoyment of the opportunities provided. The pupils enjoy coming to school and the good attendance figures endorse this fact.

16 The behaviour of pupils is very good. This continued improvement in pupils' behaviour has been well recognised by the various groups who work in or with the school. Pupils, parents, departments of the local authority and school staff all make very favourable comments on the very significant improvement that has taken place over the last few years. Pupils move around the school in a very calm and sensible manner. They play happily together during breaks and at lunchtime, displaying tolerance and consideration for others. There are very few instances of bullying or oppressive behaviour but when they do occur, they are dealt with promptly and fairly. Pupils and parents are confident that the anti-bullying policy works effectively. Pupils are polite and courteous and very willing to talk to visitors and offer help. They show good respect for school property and equipment.

17 Relationships within the school are very good. There is a friendly and comfortable atmosphere and the pupils are confident they can turn to their teachers for help. Pupils have the confidence to express their views, knowing they will be listened to by their teachers and fellow pupils. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for activities within the school, and these opportunities increase as the pupils move into higher year groups. There is an active school council, and this is supported by individual class councils. Time is allocated for the work of the councils and the pupils take their roles seriously. Older pupils act as 'buddies' for the younger ones, helping them with reading and during the lunchtime breaks. They also help to put out the play equipment in the mornings. Pupils work co-operatively, sharing ideas and supporting each other as needed. They are given opportunities to contribute to the smooth running of the school by undertaking responsibilities. For example, pupils in Year 6 train pupils in Year 5 to use the computer in the library. They carry out their tasks very efficiently because they are trusted to do this task well. The recent introduction of a residential visit has provided pupils with a good opportunity to discover new and challenging activities.

18 Attendance rates are above the national average, with below average figures for authorised absences. These good figures demonstrate the support the school is now receiving from the parents. They also demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's active approach to dealing with absence. If there is concern, members of the school staff visit the pupil's home as soon as possible. Very few pupils arrive late to school and lessons begin and finish on time. Registration meets the statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19 The quality of teaching is very good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when most teaching was sound but there was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. In this inspection, excellent teaching was observed in Years 5 and 6, most teaching was good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. In the nursery and reception class, the quality of teaching was very good. It was good overall for five to seven-year-olds, with examples of very good teaching in both classes. The overall quality of teaching of seven to 11-year-olds was very good or better in nearly half of the lessons. As a result of the high quality of the teaching, pupils now learn at a good rate and achieve very well. The overall quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science is good. It is very good in English and mathematics for seven to 11-year-olds. Throughout the school, teachers, classroom assistants and nursery nurses promote equal opportunities for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from ethnic minorities, so that they make good progress and achieve very well during their time in the school.

20 Very good teaching in the nursery and reception class reflects the teacher's secure knowledge of the curriculum and a clear understanding of the needs of young children. Planning is

very good. These features give the children a very good start to their schooling. The teacher and the nursery nurses work closely together and all are involved in the teaching. Staff listen to the children well, keep clear and useful records of their progress and build well on what children already know. As a result, children learn at a good rate, with very good progress in some areas of learning. For children in the reception year, the teacher raises the pace and includes challenging activities linked to literacy and numeracy. All staff teach letter shapes and sounds thoroughly and practise early arithmetical skills rigorously with the children in the suitably adapted daily mathematics lessons.

21 The quality of teaching is good overall in classes for five to seven-year-olds. In some very good lessons in both classes, teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and give clear explanations so that pupils know what they have to do. As a result, learning takes place at a very good rate. Teachers have secure knowledge of the curriculum, which helps them to respond well to pupils' questions and extend the learning in each lesson. Because they listen well to what pupils have to say and assess written work well, teachers have a clear picture of each pupil and are able to build securely on earlier learning. This is particularly beneficial for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers identify specific features which pupils are expected to learn or understand in lessons. For example, in a science lesson in Year 2, pupils knew that they were to learn that pushes and pulls sometimes change the shape of objects. Because this was made clear at the beginning of the lesson and was reinforced throughout, pupils were able to focus on the ideas as they talked to members of staff in well-organised discussion groups.

22 The very good quality of the teaching for seven to 11-year-olds in most lessons reflects the teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour, effort and quality of work. In these lessons, pupils know that only the best will do. This leads to high levels of attention in class, a purposeful, achieving ethos and well presented work. Most lessons are taught at a brisk pace. Clear, direct teaching is followed by challenging activities. In most lessons, teachers are enthusiastic and they teach in a lively way which captures the pupils' interest and imagination. Pupils' ideas are picked up and taken forward effectively; for example, when a pupil in Year 5 suggested that sound travelled 'like ripples in the water'. The teacher immediately showed how sound waves can be represented in diagrams. Lessons end with a period of reflection, consolidation and anticipation of what is to be learned next. Teachers question the pupils well to elicit their understanding and extend their learning.

23 The quality of learning in lessons was clearly matched to the quality of teaching. In art and design, teaching is very good throughout the school. Teachers provide interesting artistic experiences for pupils and finished work is beautifully displayed to celebrate what pupils can do. Good teaching in design and technology leads to high levels of interest from pupils; for example, when they brought a wide selection of headgear into school for a lesson on the use and purpose of hats. The teaching of ICT is good because of the teachers' improved confidence and knowledge in the subject. Teachers are as enthusiastic as the pupils as they use the new suite of computers. The pupils sense this excitement and want to do well. In music, the quality of teaching is good and teachers ensure that pupils have plenty of opportunities for playing instruments and creating their own simple scores. Good teaching in religious education is linked to the school's programme for personal and social education. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective, considerate and thoughtful for other people's ideas and cultures.

24 Literacy is taught very well throughout the school. The regular and thorough teaching of letter sounds and spelling patterns helps pupils to approach new texts confidently. Numeracy is taught well and, as pupils' numerical skills improve and they become more confident in devising and interpreting graphs, it is used increasingly in other subjects. Teachers use appropriate technical language in each subject. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 4, the teacher did not shy away from using the word 'genre' as she discussed different kinds of writing with the class. Teachers use ICT increasingly to reinforce and extend pupils' learning, but it is not yet planned with sufficient rigour in all subjects. However, plans are in hand now that the revised National Curriculum is in place and co-ordinators of all subjects are making links with ICT. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils to extend their knowledge as they search for information in CD ROMs and on the

Internet. Teachers also plan for pupils to explore the use of computers to analyse information and create graphs in subjects such as mathematics, science and geography.

25 Teachers manage the pupils very well, with examples of excellent management. This is a major feature which has contributed greatly to the school's success in improving pupils' behaviour and raising their attainment. Teachers make it quite clear that they expect good behaviour and will insist on it. In a very good physical education lesson in Year 1, the teacher was very firm in dealing quickly and effectively with a few pupils who did not 'toe the line'. They rapidly revised their behaviour and followed the teacher's instructions, leading to very good progress. In Year 2, teachers use the school's agreed procedures to monitor the behaviour of pupils. Because of this, pupils who break the simple but well understood school rules know the consequences and soon want to get back 'on track'. In Years 5 and 6, the teachers' excellent management of the pupils led to learning of high quality in English, mathematics and science.

26 Lessons are planned and prepared very well and classroom support assistants are clear about what is to be taught and learned in each lesson. As a result, pupils get on with tasks promptly, knowing that they can ask for help and will get it. In most lessons, teachers prepare appropriate work for different groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs. The help given by classroom assistants is of extremely high quality. In addition to working with pupils, they collect information during the introduction and the final section of each lesson. As pupils answer questions and contribute to discussions, classroom assistants record who is answering, how well they do so and how they are behaving. Teachers use this information to plan how they question pupils in the next lesson in order to ensure that all are being attentive, answer regularly and understand the teaching points. Teachers use resources thoughtfully to help pupils understand and remember what is being taught. Resources are chosen and used well to bring life to pupils' learning; for example when the teacher of pupils in Year 5 used a wide range of interesting musical instruments to stimulate interest and reinforce pupils' understanding of sound in a science lesson.

27 Teachers and support staff plan to include the targets for pupils with special educational needs, and for those pupils with higher attainment. Pupils are grouped according to their attainment and particular needs in numeracy and literacy. This ensures that tasks are matched well to pupils' abilities. Pupils have very skilled help from teachers and support staff when they are taught as individuals, in groups or when working with the rest of the class. Support staff are deployed sensitively and all staff work together very well as a team.

28 Teachers keep regular and rigorous records of assessments of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, pupils' skills and knowledge are monitored and recorded each half term. In this way, the school has an up-to-date picture of how each pupil is progressing, and teachers have secure information for planning work which is well matched to pupils' needs. As a result, pupils make good gains in their learning. Teachers' willingness to reflect on the quality and effectiveness of their work is a strength of the school. Staff have worked very well together as a team to ensure the success of initiatives such as the literacy hour and the daily numeracy lessons, in the interests of raising standards. Most work is marked in a way which helps pupils to see what they have done well and what they can do to improve.

29 Parents feel that the teaching is good, and teachers work hard to involve them in the children's learning. Homework is set regularly and teachers encourage parents to help in the classroom. There is a strong community feeling at the beginning and end of the school day when staff make valuable links with parents. This contributes well to pupils' attitudes and progress.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO

PUPILS?

30 The curriculum reflects the school's aims well and makes a valuable contribution to the learning of its pupils. It provides good opportunities for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and with special talents. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in the curriculum. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been fully implemented and developed. Very good management and teachers' hard work is evident in the upward trend in standards in literacy and numeracy.

31 The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is taught in an interesting and stimulating way so that pupils achieve very well overall. Religious education is taught in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus and there are daily acts of collective worship. There are good links between many subjects, especially through aspects of literacy. For example, high standards of presentation, handwriting and spelling are expected in all subjects. The teachers make good use of nationally recommended guidance for the curriculum and supplement this with the school's own guidelines for each subject. The result of this is that teachers' careful and thoughtful planning is of very high quality. The school plans well for pupils to have regular exercise and take part in practical and creative work. As part of the next stage of its development, the school is aware that the amount of time given to other subjects, such as history and geography, should now be increased.

32 The school has organised the curriculum well for the Foundation Stage. Staff plan lessons very well for children to follow the 'stepping stones' suggested in the curriculum. Activities are chosen thoughtfully to provide opportunities for children to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding in all the six recommended areas of learning. The school emphasises the importance of children's personal, social and emotional development. Language development is clearly planned into all activities in order to extend and enhance children's speaking and listening skills.

33 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils receive specific help in literacy and numeracy lessons, and very good support is given to pupils with emotional, behavioural or physical needs. Teachers prepare challenging work for higher attaining pupils. The school has identified a small number of pupils who have particular talents and has organised specific lessons to ensure that their needs are met.

34 The provision for extra-curricular activities, both at lunchtimes and after school, is very good. The school offers a very wide range of activities for pupils of all ages and these are well attended. For example, boys and girls in Years 1 to 6 enjoy the twice-weekly practices with the 'majorettes'. Very good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning. In addition, pupils in Year 5 have a weekend residential visit.

35 The content and organisation of the curriculum ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity to experience all that the school has to offer. The school provides very well for pupils' personal, social and health education and has recently introduced guidelines for this aspect of education. The school is working towards the 'Healthy School Award'. Topics about healthy living are taught in science lessons, in personal, social and health education lessons and through visits by the school nurse and other people. The curriculum includes a sensitive approach to sex education and drugs awareness. There are good links with the neighbourhood policeman. Pupils have regular opportunities to discuss and consider difficult issues, such as fear, friendship, or bullying.

36 There are good arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the secondary schools. Links with other schools are good and they enhance the development of the curriculum; for example, when teachers meet to improve standards as part of the "Excellence in Clusters" initiative.

37 The curriculum is greatly enriched by the school's extensive links with the community. These purposeful links make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils have taken part in an archaeological dig at Oakwell Hall. They have helped to develop a pond there, which will provide

opportunities for scientific investigations. The school has very good contacts with the local church and businesses. Visits to museums and local sites bring relevance to pupils' learning in subjects such as history and geography. Pupils' understanding of citizenship was enhanced by visits from a local Member of Parliament and the Mayor.

38 The provision for pupils' personal development is very good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good, and for cultural development it is good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Spiritual development is enhanced through assemblies, religious education and in lessons. Assemblies are used well to develop pupils' spiritual awareness, encourage them to reflect on the world around them and respect individual differences. In class assemblies, pupils discuss stories told very skilfully by the teacher. They feel able to talk about their feelings in an open and supportive way. Pupils in Year 4 described their awe at visiting a church and remembered it as a special place. They learn stories from other faiths and develop their understanding of right and wrong. Pupils learn that it is important to help others. Assemblies are calm, orderly occasions which make a valuable contribution to the positive ethos of the school. Pupils are encouraged to have self-respect and to respect others.

39 The clear code of behaviour is evident throughout the school. It is used very well to promote moral and social development and pupils know the rules, which apply in both the classroom and the playground. The school, with help from the behavioural support team from the local education authority, has worked hard to develop an atmosphere in which pupils can express their views and practise moral decision-making. Older pupils say that behaviour has improved since the last inspection. 'It's well better!' explained one pupil with pride and pleasure. Everyone agreed. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong, as their reactions show when they see their classmates rewarded for doing good things. Relationships within the school are very good and provide pupils with very good examples on which to model their own social and moral behaviour.

40 The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Stories, music and literature are used thoughtfully throughout the school to extend pupils' knowledge of other cultures. In art, pupils appreciate the work of Picasso, Monet, Van Gogh, Barbara Hepworth and Terry Frost. They study the art and sculpture of other cultures and countries. Through partnerships with outside agencies and individuals, pupils extend their cultural awareness. For example, they visit museums and galleries and go to concerts and theatres, as well as meeting artists and musicians. Several cultures are valued in religious education; for example, when pupils study Judaism, and understand why the Torah and other artefacts are so precious to Jewish people.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41 The school provides a caring, happy and purposeful learning environment. Pupils are valued as individuals, and the teachers play an important and effective role in promoting the pupils' personal development. They know the pupils and their families well. Procedures for child protection are very good.

42 Very good care for children in the nursery and reception class includes the exceptionally good links with parents when children start school. These links continue so that staff pick up any difficulties and are able to plan appropriate support. Extensive assessment of children's attainment when they start school includes the collection of information from parents on the level of children's social skills. Skilful and regular day-to-day assessments of children's progress help staff to plan challenging activities in the six areas of learning for all children, including those with special educational needs. Staff keep formal records and pass them on to the next teacher to ensure continuity in the children's learning.

43 The very significant improvement in the pupils' behaviour throughout the school is clear evidence of the effectiveness of the school's policy on behaviour management. The pupils now clearly know and understand the high standard of behaviour expected of them, and respond well to

those expectations. Rewards and sanctions are used consistently and fairly by all staff. The full involvement of the lunchtime supervisors has played a significant part in the safe and happy playtimes pupils now experience.

44 The school benefits from the appointment of two support staff funded from the government's "Excellence in Clusters" initiative. The recently appointed neighbourhood enrichment officer provides a new and very useful service and is used sensitively by the school and helps both parents and children to manage when personal difficulties arise. The school's learning mentor, who works well with both pupils and parents, is very pro-active in encouraging parents to be involved in the life of the school and in promoting courses for parents. These initiatives contribute significantly to the improved attitudes of pupils and impact well on pupils' progress. The school is extremely supportive of the work done by these dedicated workers and they are made to feel a part of the school team.

45 Assessments of pupils with special educational needs or with special talents are carried out meticulously and all staff know pupils' targets and programmes, so that pupils make consistent progress. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good so that learning takes place in a purposeful and motivating atmosphere. The school liaises well with external agencies; for example, when the behavioural support team from the local education authority worked with the school to help pupils manage their own behaviour.

46 The introduction of an attendance policy has led to an improvement in pupils' attendance. The school now operates a 'first day call' system. Immediately after registration, the classroom assistants telephone the homes of any pupils who have failed to arrive at school. If there is no response, a home visit is made immediately by members of staff and a letter is also sent to the parents. This is proving effective and has resulted in improved attendance figures. The school has helpful health and safety policies. The caretaker is fully involved in health and safety issues and fulfils his responsibilities conscientiously.

47 Procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment have improved since the last inspection. The school now has excellent systems and procedures for tracking the progress of individual pupils. Staff use these consistently and effectively throughout the school, any weaknesses are quickly identified and teaching programmes amended. This has led to pupils' improved progress and higher achievement. For example, the school identified the need for pupils to have formal handwriting and spelling practice each day. There is now additional weekly coaching for all groups of pupils and this is having a positive effect on the standard of pupils' writing. Target setting is well established. Well chosen targets for improvements in English are pasted in the front of pupils' exercise books for all other subjects except mathematics. This ensures that pupils' attention is regularly drawn to the need to remember handwriting and spelling rules. This enhances the quality of assessments used by teachers and gives pupils valuable opportunities to develop insights into their own learning. Parents are involved in target setting. They value the opportunity to help their children to set goals and work hard towards reaching them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48 Parents and carers have positive views of the school. The school had recently carried out its own survey of parents' views. Parents responded well and expressed their support for the school and its work. There was a limited response to the parental questionnaire sent out before the inspection, but the views expressed matched those already given to the school. The inspection findings endorse the feelings of the parents that the school has a caring attitude and that it welcomes their involvement. Parents say that the standard of teaching is high and the school provides good information about the progress their children are making and other issues. The school has the confidence of everyone in the community, including ethnic minority groups.

49 Links with parents are very good when children start school. Home visits ensure that parents

are able to talk with staff in a relaxed atmosphere; parents learn about the school's provision and staff become more aware of the needs of individual children. Parents are welcome to visit and help in the nursery and there is an 'open door' policy so that they can ask questions at any time. Helpful information is provided regularly and end-of-year reports give a clear picture of how each child has progressed in the class for nursery and reception children.

50 The quality of information supplied to parents throughout the school is very good. The school prospectus contains all the statutory information and is produced in a clear and attractive style. Regular termly newsletters provide information about the staff and forthcoming events in the school. Parents' evenings are held each term and these are well attended. Pupils' individual annual reports which parents receive are very good. They give clear information about the work already done, the progress that has been made and what is now needed to further that progress. Teachers are available to talk to parents at any time and will readily make contact if the school identifies any problems or difficulties. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept fully involved and are able to discuss their children's targets and reviews with the school. They value and appreciate this.

51 The school encourages parents to be involved in their children's education. It promotes a variety of schemes and courses aimed at increasing parents' ability to help their children with homework. Courses are well attended and more parents are now showing interest in school activities. There is a room in the school for parents which is used well. A parent and teacher association has recently been formed, and the social and fund raising events it organises are well supported. An increasing number of parents are now helping in the school and on educational visits. The school has worked very hard over the last few years to make parents feel welcome, and parental support has improved. Increased parental involvement has contributed significantly to pupils' better attendance and considerably improved behaviour.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52 The quality of leadership shown by the headteacher is exceptional. She has a very clear picture of what she wants the school to achieve, and leads strongly but sensitively through personal example. There has been substantial improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher no longer needs to spend the majority of her time dealing with pupils' behavioural difficulties because the school is now a calm and purposeful place of learning. She has been able to concentrate on assessing the school's strengths and weaknesses, and on working with parents, pupils, staff and governors to create a school of which they can be very proud. She is very highly respected by the staff, parents and, most importantly, by the pupils.

53 The school has re-established its aims and values. They can be seen in all aspects of its life, including the strength of relationships, the very good achievement and rising standards. The senior management team is developing as a strong and highly motivated group who work closely with the headteacher in setting out and achieving the school's priorities. Subject co-ordinators are using their delegated responsibilities very well to spread good practice, support colleagues and work with them to raise standards. All non-teaching staff, including lunchtime supervisory staff, feel part of the school team. They understand and respect the part that each individual is playing in achieving the school's overall aims.

54 The management of the school is very good. The governing body is committed and increasingly effective in fulfilling its statutory duties, supporting the school, monitoring its progress, and being an integral part of its planned future. Governors have a growing understanding of the school's priorities through their involvement in putting together and monitoring the school's long-term development plan. The chair of governors makes regular visits to the school, and individual governors are learning about different subjects and aspects of the school through conversations with senior staff and subject co-ordinators. Because of this involvement, co-ordinators are able to discuss development plans for their subjects and inform governors of how the curriculum is being

broadened as pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy is raised. The governor for special educational needs is fully involved in the life of the school and matters concerning special educational needs are discussed thoroughly at meetings of the governing body. Provision of high quality has been managed over the past two years by very able and conscientious co-ordinators for special educational needs.

55 The headteacher and senior staff have established a rigorous programme for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. This has had a direct and positive impact on the quality of teaching, which has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The monitoring of English, mathematics and science has had a significant effect on the improved standards in these subjects. The system is being extended so that, by the end of the school year, all subject co-ordinators will have had an opportunity to observe lessons in order to raise standards further. The school's arrangements for reviewing teachers' performance are firmly established so that teachers' knowledge and expertise are enhanced to meet the priorities identified in the school development plan.

56 It was inevitable that the school's recent long term planning was driven by the outcomes of previous inspections. The headteacher and senior staff are moving effectively into the next planning stage. They have completed a detailed analysis of the school's current strengths and weaknesses, have consulted widely with parents, staff and pupils and are currently devising a draft strategic plan for future improvement. The school is meeting its current challenging targets for pupils' improved attainment because these are based on accurate information from assessments.

57 The school has worked very hard to improve its financial planning and has made very good progress in addressing this key issue in the previous report. The school now has accurate accounts, knows its budget and has a clear plan for future expenditure. A considerable deficit has been dealt with rigorously and there is now a small credit balance. The chair of governors and the headteacher check the budget every month and monitor spending closely. Spending is clearly linked to agreed priorities in the school's plan for improvement. The auditors' recommendations have been implemented. The school has carried out its own detailed analysis of its systems and practices, and has made further improvements. The school is participating in the government's 'Excellence in Clusters' initiative in order to improve pupils' attitudes to school and enhance opportunities for parents to be more involved in their children's education.

58 Grants are very carefully allocated, and the effectiveness of their spending is closely monitored. The school makes particularly good use of the grant for 'Excellence in Clusters'. This has funded a learning mentor and a neighbourhood enrichment officer and brought parents into a closer understanding of how they can help their children to be successful. The school is making effective use of new technology and office staff have been trained in the efficient use of a range of computer software. Closed-circuit television cameras monitor arrivals at the school. A digital camera is used by staff and pupils for day-to-day recording of visits and activities.

59 Any additional funding for special educational needs is spent very thoughtfully and the school uses money from its general budget to supplement the costs of provision. Money has been very well spent on the provision and training of classroom support staff. Good systems ensure that the administrative staff deal very efficiently with day-to-day matters so that teachers are not disturbed unnecessarily in the classrooms. The school promotes racial harmony and an atmosphere which values all pupils, regardless of gender, ability, colour, faith or culture.

60 There are sufficient experienced and appropriately qualified teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. This can be seen in the confident way in which they plan and teach lessons. The quality of the classroom assistants' work is particularly high, and has a direct impact on improving the behaviour and achievement of a significant number of pupils. All staff have a strong, shared commitment to improvement. The governing body has made good progress in addressing the key issue in the previous report which referred to the achievement of a stable staff. However, the school's longer-term success continues to depend on the governors' ability to recruit teachers of high quality when current short-term contracts come to an end. The arrangements for inducting

new staff are good. All staff, including members of the lunchtime supervisory, administrative and caretaking teams, have regular opportunities for professional development, and this contributes well to the way in which they carry out their work.

61 The overall level of accommodation is now good. It has improved since the previous inspection through extensive carpeting and building alterations. There is now an ICT suite, a room for teaching creative arts, additional office space and a larger staff room. Classrooms and shared areas are bright and well maintained by the caretaker and his efficient staff. Attractive displays of pupils' work add to the purposeful ethos of the school. This has a very positive effect on pupils' learning. The pupils are proud of their school and look after it well. The amount of vandalism has been reduced considerably. Resources for teaching and learning are adequate and they are well stored. The facilities for ICT are a considerable asset and have had a positive impact on standards. The governing body plans to increase the outdoor facilities for the youngest children.

62 The school is very effective because:

- pupils' achievement over their time in school is very good in mathematics and science and good in English;
- the overall quality of teaching is very good;
- educational leadership is excellent;
- management is very strong, and
- the rate of improvement has been very good.

Despite the high expenditure per pupil, the school now gives good value for money. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. The governing body and senior staff use the principles of 'best value' - comparison, challenge, consultation and competition - systematically in their decision-making. They ensure that expenditure is clearly focused on improving standards. .

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63 The school governors, in conjunction with the headteacher and staff, should take the following actions to continue to raise standards in the school.

- (i) *Raise standards further in English and mathematics and science throughout the school, by:
- raising the quality of all teaching to the level of the best; and
 - ensuring the recruitment of teachers of high quality.
(Paragraphs 3-5, 8, 80-81, 83, 84-85, 91-92, 100-102)
- (ii) *Raise standards in geography and history throughout the school and religious education by the end of Year 2 by:
- revising the amount of time spent on these subjects; and
 - using the existing high levels of teamwork amongst staff to produce effective development plans for the subjects.
(Paragraphs 10-11, 126-129, 149-150)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL:

64 The following should also be considered by the school for inclusion in the action plan:

- (i) *The governors' early organisation of recruitment plans to meet the school's staffing requirements for the next two years. (Paragraph 60)
- (ii) *Reviewing the balance of time spent on the teaching of all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. (Paragraphs 31, 126)

**The school has already identified these areas for development.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	19	21	6	0	0	0
Percentage	6	39	43	12	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	127
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	58

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	36

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	9	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	x	x	x
	Girls	x	x	x
	Total	14	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (71)	87 (63)	93 (83)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	x	x	x
	Girls	x	x	x
	Total	13	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (71)	93 (79)	93 (96)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

x The figures have been omitted where the number of boys or girls is ten or fewer so that individual pupils cannot be identified.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	x	x	x
	Girls	x	x	x
	Total	12	13	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	41 (20)	45 (16)	66 (36)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	x	x	x
	Girls	x	x	x
	Total	14	16	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	48 (0)	55 (0)	62 (0)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

x The figures have been omitted where the number of boys or girls is ten or fewer so that individual pupils cannot be identified.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.9
Average class size	18.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	13
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	15

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	26	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	487,652
Total expenditure	487,024
Expenditure per pupil	3,122
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	628

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	175
Number of questionnaires returned	12

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	33	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	33	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	58	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	33	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	75	25	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	42	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	25	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	33	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	75	25	0	0	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

65 Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in one nursery and reception class. The teacher is responsible for the planning and overall organisation. A member of staff (either the teacher or a qualified nursery nurse), known as the 'key worker', is responsible for each group of children. The curriculum is based on the nationally agreed curriculum for the Foundation Stage which leads to the Early Learning Goals for children at the end of the reception year. From a well below average start, children, including those who have special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups, achieve well, and sometimes very well, in the areas of learning for young children.

66 Most children are unlikely to meet the goals for the end of the reception year in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In personal, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development, children are on course to meet the goals. The quality of teaching in all the areas of learning is very good. The teacher and the nursery nurses work very well together, and nursery nurses play a significant teaching role. Staff follow the 'stepping stones' of the curriculum to ensure that children learn in a systematic way. They use effective strategies to ensure that children with special educational needs are involved in all activities.

Personal, social and emotional development

67 Children are on course to reach goals for their achievement by the end of the reception year. They make very good progress and achieve very well in this area of learning. They enjoy coming to school and soon follow routines and join in activities with enthusiasm. They relate very well to the staff and move confidently about the classroom and the outside play area. Standards of behaviour are very good. Children in the nursery year acquire independence in personal hygiene and dressing skills as they prepare for outside activities or get ready for painting or other practical activities. Their concentration and self-control strengthen but a significant number need constant help to maintain their interest in sedentary activities. Children become increasingly aware of what is right and what is wrong, so that they keep the simple but clear classroom rules. As they play together in the class 'hospital' and other role-play activities, children learn to share, take turns and play co-operatively so that everyone is happy. In the reception year, most children adapt well to the brisker pace of teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons. Their span of concentration lengthens and they are keen to offer answers and join in discussions. Less mature children are skilfully managed so that they gradually learn to complete short tasks successfully. There is a feeling of mutual respect between children and between adults and children. Children with special education needs make good progress because of this. All children know they will be listened to and go confidently to staff for help.

68 Teaching is of very good quality and staff have high expectations of what children can do unaided. They expect the children to put on their own coats but will help them with difficult fastenings. They ensure that children tidy things away before moving to a new activity. A signal indicates when children can go outside to play. When a child ran outside without clearing up first, a member of staff brought him back to tidy up. This consistent approach ensures that routines are firmly established and children develop independence, initiative and respect for the school environment. Children learn from the very good relationships with the staff and become increasingly able to apply these to their relationships with other children. This helps to develop their confidence and underpins the way in which they approach new learning and the good progress they make. Through stories, during activities and by example, staff develop an ethos of care and consideration for every individual.

Communication, language and literacy

69 Most children are unlikely to meet the goals set for the end of the reception year. Standards of speaking and listening are well below average by the end of the nursery year and below national expectations by the end of the reception year. Most children are keen to communicate with one another and with adults but they need help to express their ideas. Nursery children gradually learn to settle down quietly, listen attentively to stories and join in discussions. As they listened to a story, a significant number of children, though interested, fidgeted and moved about. The nursery nurses deal with such instances very skilfully by sitting with the children and encouraging them to look at the pictures and follow the story. Children's concentration improves significantly in the reception year. Children listen with increasing care and follow enlarged texts with the teacher to look for letter shapes and key words. Although most cannot read simple texts independently, higher attaining children do so confidently. All children benefit from the school's 'buddy' system, when older pupils come to read with nursery and reception children each day. Writing skills are weak. Most children's control of pencils is poor when they first come to the nursery. Throughout the day, children have opportunities to write in the well-equipped writing area, put their names on drawings and paintings and record a variety of experiences with 'scribble writing'. Despite the school's very good provision of tasks to develop skills for finer control of paintbrushes, scissors and pencils, few children reach satisfactory levels in writing by the end of the reception year. Most children write their names recognisably but few write simple sentences independently.

70 The quality of teaching is very good. Staff listen to the children considerately and this promotes children's confidence and helps them to express their ideas more clearly. Consistent teaching of letter sounds and shapes begins as soon as children start the nursery. The staff keep very good records of children's progress and use them very well to plan activities which are closely matched to children's needs. Staff label displays well and take every opportunity to develop children's language. They write children's names on the birthday chart and name principal characters in a display about 'The Little Red Hen'. The number chart has numbers written as words and figures. Staff engage children's interest with well-read stories. They involve children in the text so that they become familiar with the structure of books and the idea that print has meaning. The excellent 'story sacks' bring relevance to children's reading. They hold objects and pictures which relate to the stories and capture children's imagination. The teacher plans very well for this area of learning. Many of the play and creative activities help children to distinguish shapes and make patterns. Staff organise simple games and table activities to familiarise and reinforce letter sounds and key words. As a result, children learn at a good rate and achieve very well from a low start. They gain the confidence to speak up in discussions. Children progress well in writing because of the very good provision of stimulating opportunities. The staff value children's contributions; for example, when they record patients' notes or write in the 'hospital' diary. Activities, such as the threading of beads and the construction of simple models from construction kits, are well organised to assist children's hand-eye co-ordination and the manipulation of tools. The teacher has introduced the daily literacy lessons very effectively so that children are well prepared for more demanding work in Year 1. Activities are sometimes too challenging for some children. The teacher is monitoring this and adapting work to ensure appropriate challenge for all groups to make good progress.

Mathematical development

71 Despite their good progress in the nursery and reception years, children are unlikely to reach the expected goals for the end of the reception year. However, their very good achievement in personal and social skills helps children to join in activities which enhance their mathematical development. As children's levels of concentration increase, they work more productively as individuals and in groups. In the nursery, children join in number rhymes and songs and experience a wide range of counting, ordering and sorting activities. Most children count to ten by the end of the year, but a significant proportion do not count objects reliably up to five. Brighter children count forwards and backwards confidently. In the reception year, children build well on what they already know and most count forwards to 20 reliably. They are less reliable in counting backwards. They listen to one another and learn at a good rate during work in groups. Most children recognise

numbers up to ten. A few higher-attaining children begin to add two numbers together up to ten, but all need a great deal of support from staff. Children develop mathematical knowledge and understanding in a variety of activities which take place throughout the day. For example, a child played in the sand and filled moulds which she then turned out. She described some of the objects she had made as 'bigger' and others as 'smaller'.

72 The quality of teaching is very good. The teacher plans a very good range of activities to extend children's understanding of number, shape and measurement. Staff engage very well with children and encourage them to use mathematical vocabulary; for example when the teacher talked to a child who was painting and encouraged her to talk about the 'longer' and 'shorter' lines. In story times, staff emphasise mathematical ideas about size, shape and colour. Characters have 'older' or 'bigger' brothers and sisters. Stories such as 'The Little Red Hen' build up children's understanding of sequence. The staff set out a stimulating variety of puzzles and games to develop children's mathematical thinking. As they sit patiently and play counting and matching games with the children, staff tease out children's ideas and extend their mathematical understanding. Everyday routines are used very well to teach mathematical ideas of number, sequence and shape. Staff count with the children when the register is being called. When children go across to the main school, staff encourage them to walk behind one another in a line. Children often sit in a circle for stories and games. As a result of the wide range of experiences which are very well planned and taught, children gain early mathematical ideas and skills at a good rate.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73 By the end of the reception year, standards are below national expectations for the age group. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world effectively through well-organised activities. However, the lack of ability to express their ideas and the lack of outside experiences inhibits the faster progress of most children. As they care for the rabbit and the guinea pigs, children gain a deeper understanding of how living things grow and how they need food and shelter in order to thrive. On a visit to an aquatic centre, children learned how creatures live in different environments. They consider their own growth as they look at photographs of themselves as babies and talk about how their parents bathed and cared for them. Visitors to the school help children to learn more about the services in the community, such as the police and fire services. Although children find it difficult to express their understanding orally, they clearly understand aspects of the many opportunities provided to help them learn. In role-play activities, they demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of what happens in a hospital. They know about appointments, caring for patients and the importance of health. Children in the reception year talked about secure buildings as they surrounded themselves with a structure of wooden bricks. They make models of vehicles from construction kits and know about different kinds of vehicles used for different purposes. On nature walks in the school grounds and during visits to a garden centre, children learn about plant growth. They become increasingly observant as they identify features of the school environment. They look at the buildings in the school neighbourhood and talk about the bollards to curb traffic and the post boxes. Children have very positive attitudes to learning. They are curious and want to explore the world around them. Children use the computer with confidence, and know that it responds to their signals. In the school's suite of computers, younger children were not always successful in completing simple tasks in a drawing program which was new to them, but they kept trying and wanted to succeed. In the classroom, older children worked happily in pairs to achieve success. The school's very good use of photographs to reinforce children's learning ensures that they are reminded of things they have done.

74 The quality of teaching is very good. Staff encourage children to use their senses to learn about the world around them. The teacher's planning is detailed and helpful, so that all staff are clear about what is being taught and how activities are to be prepared to reinforce and extend children's learning. Teaching is based firmly on first hand experience and children achieve well because of this. Children with special educational needs benefit from this practical approach. Because of the high quality of planning throughout the school, staff know what children will be learning in Year 1, when subjects such as science, geography and history will be introduced. Staff

encourage children to record their experiences and, although their drawings and writing are often weak, children get better at recording what they have seen and done. Staff prepare valuable experiences of other cultures so that children understand and value them. For example, the teacher dressed in a sari to show children how it was wound around the body, and a person from a Black-Caribbean heritage talked to the children about aspects of her culture and history.

Physical development

75 In most aspects of physical development, children are on course to achieve the goals for the end of the reception year. They run, jump, crawl, climb and ride tricycles with confidence and effective control. However, most children do not have the control necessary for writing at the level expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Children use tools satisfactorily to dig and pour as they play in the sand and water trays, and they use brushes and scissors with increasing confidence. The high level of staff support in practical activities helps children to achieve well and experience success. Children benefit from physical education lessons. Most children move along the apparatus confidently and they respond well to the teacher's instructions. They made good progress in a lesson in which the teacher taught them how to bend their knees as they landed after jumping. Children enjoy physical activities and most are keen to get out in the fresh air.

76 The teaching is very good. Children enjoy physical activity as they roll in the grass, climb over tyres and play happily together. Staff plan activities well and the good range of outdoor equipment is organised attractively to motivate children and encourage them to have plenty of exercise. They stimulate children's imagination with role-play activities linked to the model buildings which are arranged as a 'street'. Because staff plan and work so well as a team, they share information about children's progress and watch out for children who need support and encouragement with physical activities. Staff provide many opportunities for children to develop finer skills; for example, in activities such as threading beads, making simple models, dressing dolls and a wide range of writing and mark-making experiences. Children are expected to try to fasten buttons and zips on their own coats. Issues concerned with health are taught well. Children are encouraged to use equipment safely.

Creative development

77 Children are on course to achieve the goals for the end of the reception year in most aspects of creative development. They create pictures from paint, fabric and natural materials and form three-dimensional shapes from dough and clay. Observational drawing and painting, though often immature, reflect first hand experiences; for example, when children painted flowers and drew leaves. They create bright patterns as they print with a range of objects, and share their ideas through simple drawings and paintings of people and events in their own lives. The teacher's planning includes opportunities for children to explore the work of well-known artists such as Monet. The quality of children's work is raised when experts come into school to work with them; for example, when they drew very good, detailed portraits. Children in the reception year begin to illustrate their written work with lively drawings. Again, these are often immature, but they are lively and represent the children's feelings about things they have done and seen. Children gradually develop their skills in ICT as they explore a drawing package. Many have difficulty in using the computer mouse to select and use tools in the program, but children enjoy the experience and make good progress. Children develop a growing repertoire of number and action songs and become more aware of the sounds they can make on a range of percussion instruments. Staff ensure that children are given time to explore sound and sound patterns so that listening skills develop well. In the role-play area, children create situations and imagine themselves as parents, patients, doctors and nurses. Boys and girls play well together and take turns in the roles.

78 The teaching is very good. Staff are enthusiastic and they value children's creative ideas. When children are painting, a member of staff is always nearby to encourage them and help them to sort out their ideas and talk about what they are doing. Children with special educational needs gain from this approach. When children dress up and pretend to be grown-ups, staff join in the

game and use the experience to extend children's imagination and develop their speaking skills. The school's strong teaching of art and design begins in the nursery and reception class, when children are encouraged to respond to their senses and use their imagination. Because of the very good quality of the teaching, children learn to observe the world around them and use their observations to create pictures and collages from a range of drawing and painting materials, natural objects and fabrics. Staff also set up computer programs so that children can experiment with drawing lines and filling in patches of colour. The range of activities to develop children's creative development is enhanced by the staff's imaginative approach, enthusiasm and very good planning.

ENGLISH

79 Standards of attainment have risen since the last inspection, because the teaching is very good and the school has used the National Literacy Strategy very well to quicken pupils' progress in reading and writing. The most obvious improvement is for seven-year-olds, where the trend in the school's results has been an upward one for the last three years. The pattern of improvement in standards attained by 11-year-olds changes from year to year. It is affected by the variation in the number of pupils who have special educational needs. The school uses a very good range of strategies to raise expectations and standards in English. These include:

- meticulous analysis of data from tests to find areas of weakness;
- very good use of this information to amend planning;
- additional time for handwriting, spelling and reading each day;
- making pupils aware of targets and the use of these in all subjects;
- support and advice from the local education authority;
- introduction of very carefully planned reading activities involving parents and midday supervisors;
- emphasis on the development of speaking and listening in all lessons and the involvement of skilled classroom assistants in recording pupils' oral contributions in lessons; and
- very good leadership from the school's co-ordinator for English.

80 In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6, the school's results were very low in comparison with the national average. The results were better than those in 2000, because in 2001 lower attaining pupils achieved very well for their abilities. This was due to the very good teaching they received. Results were well below those of similar schools and there were variations in the achievement of boys and girls. Currently, pupils' attainment in Year 6 in writing is closer to the levels expected of 11-year-olds. This is because of the smaller number of pupils with special educational needs in this particular year group. A small number of pupils are on course to exceed the level expected for this age group. There was no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. Standards in reading, speaking and listening are below average, but a small number of pupils achieve above average standards. The school's emphasis on the spoken word as an essential starting point for work in English and the provision of frequent opportunities for reading is beginning to have an impact on these standards. It also supports the school's focus on the teaching of writing.

81 In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2, the school's results were in line with national averages in reading and writing. Most pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are below average in reading and writing overall because of several unavoidable changes of teacher during the autumn term. However, higher-attaining pupils are achieving at levels close to the average for their age and more stable teaching is helping all pupils to make faster progress.

82 From a low start, pupils achieve well by the age of 11. Overall, boys and girls achieve similarly throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs work extremely hard, gain confidence and achieve very well because of the high quality of the teaching and help they receive. Staff are sensitive to their needs and set them challenging but achievable tasks. Higher attaining

pupils are usually well challenged because teachers have high expectations and they make sure that pupils achieve in line with their capabilities.

83 By the end of Year 2, most pupils listen properly. Teachers usually ensure pupils' full concentration and speak very clearly. As a result, pupils make an effort to listen to all that is said. When pupils do not listen closely enough, they miss part of the instructions and sometimes this prevents them from making as much progress as they should. Pupils frequently respond to questions with very short answers because they have a very limited vocabulary. Their confidence grows as teachers choose questions carefully and use sensitive and skilful strategies to help them to extend their answers. At the end of lessons, pupils gain confidence as they tell other pupils about their work. Pupils in Year 6 formulated relevant questions about the introduction to 'A Christmas Carol' and extracted a good level of meaning from the text. They enjoy talking to visitors and ask and answer questions thoughtfully. Most pupils still have a very limited vocabulary. When building up their own story about 'How the elephant got his trunk,' lower attaining pupils in Year 5 enthusiastically contributed ideas but were frequently unable to find the words they needed to explain their ideas.

84 By the end of Year 2, systematic teaching of letter sounds and patterns enables pupils of all abilities to read simple texts by themselves. Pupils respond well to the teaching of strategies they can use to work out words. This helps pupils to read independently, enjoy books, gain information and to follow stories with increasing appreciation of the plot, characters and humour. Pupils in Year 1 know vowels. Higher attaining pupils also know consonants. This knowledge helps them to build up words. They enjoy reading and more than half the group are achieving standards above average for their age. Following the good model of expressive reading by the teacher, pupils in Year 1 and 2 join in the reading of enlarged texts with good expression and intonation. They know how to use alphabetical order correctly to find spellings and meanings in dictionaries. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading is below average although a number of pupils read well. In the shared reading sessions of the literacy hour, pupils use good levels of intonation and expression. Higher attaining pupils read fluently, accurately and expressively, especially when there is dialogue in the text. The school has ensured that there is a good range of fiction and non-fiction books which appeal to both boys and girls. Pupils are well supported by adults who listen to them reading in lessons and at lunchtimes. When pupils read together in groups, the activities are well organised and enjoyable for pupils of all abilities. These sessions have a very clear focus and are especially useful in reinforcing many of the terms such as 'blurb', 'index' and 'contents'. Reading records, which are maintained accurately, include helpful comments from parents about their children's reading at home.

85 By the time they are seven and 11 years old, pupils attain standards in writing which are currently below those expected nationally. Standards are improving, especially with regard to handwriting, spelling and presentation of pupils' work. Pupils in Year 1 make particularly good progress in writing because of the high quality of the teaching. The use of individual targets and the consistent teaching of spelling and letter formation are helping pupils to develop confidence in their own ability to spell correctly. Some pupils in Year 1 use a joined script in their writing very successfully. Pupils are aware that their handwriting is targeted for improvement and they try hard to think about their handwriting in lessons such as history and science. Well-planned teaching ensures that pupils improve the formation of letters and write legibly. By the end of Year 2, most pupils use capital letters and full stops accurately. Higher attaining pupils use capital letters for emphasis and enjoy using speech and exclamation marks in their stories. By the end of Year 6, pupils write for a wide range of purposes. They write letters and stories with increasingly interesting vocabulary and imaginative ideas, and they use the passive voice and future tense of verbs. Pupils consistently produce well written work with a good level of spelling accuracy in subjects such as history, geography and science.

86 Pupils' attitudes in English are very good. They are keen to contribute to lessons and are able to work without direct supervision. They work well in pairs and settle to work very quickly because teachers use very good strategies, such as time limits, and organise pupils into groups swiftly and with clear instructions. The very good relationships between all adults and pupils create a pleasant

atmosphere. Pupils grow in confidence and develop their skills and understanding because they are clear about what they are expected to learn in lessons. The school's success in improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes has had a significant effect on how boys approach their learning and want to do well. Teachers use an imaginative range of resources very effectively to motivate and interest pupils.

87 Teaching is good and frequently very good or excellent for older pupils. Pupils learn well and sometimes very well. At its best, the teaching is characterised by the complete involvement of all pupils in well paced, exciting work which inspires them to learn. Very good planning makes sure that lessons build well on previous learning and the management and organisation of lessons are very good. Lessons are planned very thoughtfully to provide specific opportunities for pupils to take turns in speaking and to listen to each other. Teachers work very hard to encourage pupils to respond to questions and are skilled in getting pupils to extend their simple answers. All staff promote very good relationships and a supportive atmosphere, which enables pupils to make progress and develop their confidence. In Year 1, staff quickly pick up on pupils' interest in reading, which has been promoted in the Foundation Stage, and there is a lively interest in literature in all classes. Very good teaching in Year 6 helps pupils to become familiar with the work of established authors and to know what is special about them. Teachers plan activities which are interesting, challenging and enjoyable and which reinforce many reading and writing skills. They ensure that pupils have achievable tasks and plan very good levels of support and guidance so that all pupils are successful. As a result, pupils make good gains in their learning in most literacy lessons. The marking of work is prompt. It usually reinforces teachers' expectations of pupils and makes clear how well they are doing against their targets.

88 The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy very well. Pupils use the library confidently and by Year 6, pupils search for information on the Internet as well as in books. ICT is included in the planning for some lessons and incidental use of numeracy occurs regularly; for example, when pupils count the number of lines and verses in poems or when sequencing stories. The school and class councils provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening.

89 Co-ordination of the subject is very good and the school has made very good use of information from classroom monitoring. Information obtained from assessments of pupils' attainment and progress is also used very well to identify areas for improvement and to raise standards. Opportunities for drama are used well in English, history and in personal and social education. Pupils benefit greatly from these. A love of literature from a range of cultures is promoted regularly throughout the school and this supports pupils' cultural development very well.

MATHEMATICS

90 Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. It has been very good in Years 3 to 6 and standards in Year 6 have risen from below average to average. Pupils in all classes are making greater progress, and concerns about a lack of challenge for older higher attaining pupils and insufficient opportunities to apply mathematical knowledge in practical situations, have been addressed successfully. The improvement is the result of good teaching, very good co-ordination of the subject, the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and pupils' own positive approach to learning.

91 Pupils' results at the age of 11 in the 2001 National Curriculum tests were well below average in comparison with all schools, and below average when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. However, the results were a remarkable improvement, because approximately three times as many pupils reached the expected standard than in the previous year. Current standards in Year 6 are in line with national averages, and the school is well set to achieve its ambitious target for this year's tests. Boys and girls achieve similarly and both are keen to succeed. The proportion of pupils reaching a higher level is also rising and is in line with the

national average. The school's results in the 2001 national test for seven-year-olds showed a continuing improvement over previous years. Although the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was close to the national average, the proportion reaching a higher level was well below average. Overall therefore, results were well below average in comparison with schools nationally. Current standards in Year 2 are also below the national average. The school's 2001 test results were above average when compared with similar schools.

92 Current attainment by seven-year-olds is below national expectations. Pupils have a basic understanding of place value, addition and subtraction. They measure accurately in centimetres, know their basic multiplication tables and work out the change in shopping tasks. However, their knowledge is not really secure and they need a great deal of reassurance about their work. Progress is satisfactory but many pupils in the current Year 2 do not have the language or vocabulary to explain what they are doing. This shortcoming limits their ability to talk about and apply the factual knowledge they have gained. Their progress has also been affected by unavoidable staff changes. Attainment by the age of 11 is in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 6 have made very good progress over time; as seven-year-olds they attained at well below average levels. Achievement is very good because the pupils themselves are very motivated and want to do well, and the standard of teaching is high. Pupils have a secure understanding of numeracy and shape, work accurately with decimals and can explain the use of co-ordinates and negative numbers.

93 Boys and girls achieve similar results and have equally positive attitudes towards their work. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all lessons. They make good progress overall. Teachers and classroom assistants help them to contribute to class discussions and succeed with their individual work. For example, in a Year 5 lesson on 'brackets', the classroom assistant checked that a pupil with particular difficulties understood the class questions and encouraged her to volunteer answers. The pupil enjoyed her success when she was chosen to go to the front of the class to explain her ideas. Higher attaining pupils are given challenging tasks in all lessons. However, not all teachers are equally skilled in making sure that more able pupils are sufficiently tested by challenging questions during discussions. Older pupils with a particular mathematical expertise make good progress when they are given regular opportunities to work intensively with a senior member of staff.

94 Teachers make good use of numeracy in other subjects. Pupils in Year 1 were given an opportunity to apply their mathematical understanding in every day situations in a physical education lesson. They were reminded that teams should be 'no more than four'. Work in art reflects pupils' mathematical understanding of symmetry. Pupils use their understanding of measurement for accurate work in science and design and technology lessons. They understand how to collect data and present it as a graph for analysis or illustration. Examples from geography and science lessons include comparing amounts of rainfall and measuring how much water different types of rock can absorb. Results are often presented as block graphs, using a computer program. Computers are used well in some classes, and ICT is introduced increasingly in mathematics lessons.

95 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in mathematics lessons are very good. This has a direct impact on their progress because they get on with their work quickly and try hard. They enjoy mathematics and feel proud that they are making good progress. Exercise books, especially in the older classes, are neat and well presented.

96 The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good, and it is very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy very well to plan lessons. The plans are shared with the classroom assistants. Lessons have a clear structure that gives pupils a good balance of mental work, instruction and opportunities to work in groups at different levels of difficulty. Teachers expect their pupils to work hard and behave well. They teach basic mathematical skills effectively, and have very good relationships with pupils. Although good overall, the quality of teaching for younger pupils is not quite as effective as that for older pupils. Occasionally the introductory part of a lesson is too long and some pupils become restless and do not progress as well as they could.

The quality of learning is very good overall because pupils of all abilities are given an intellectual challenge. They learn because they understand, not just because they have been taught a mathematical drill. Learning is also very good because teachers are particularly good at assessing how well their pupils are doing. They make appropriate adjustments to their teaching plans as soon as they realise that the pupils need more time to be absolutely sure of a particular teaching point. Learning is also good because pupils respond positively to teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and standard of their work. Learning is not as good when, on rare occasions, the pace of the lesson slows and pupils start to lose concentration. Pupils with special educational needs learn successfully because teachers and classroom support staff involve them productively in the main part of the lesson and make sure that they have interesting but challenging work in their group activities.

97 Teachers make very good use of information from assessments of pupils' attainment and progress. The results of national and other tests are analysed very carefully, and the results are used thoughtfully to plan future work. Teachers record the progress of each pupil carefully. This gives them a very good basis on which to predict future attainment. The current challenging targets for Year 6 are well founded on assessments and are achievable with effort. Older pupils make regular written self-assessments to record how well they are doing and what they should do to improve. This is a very good incentive to higher attainment. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and pupils' benefit from helpful comments. Despite the management's concerted efforts, marking in Year 2 did not follow the school's marking policy during a period of short-term temporary staffing. This had an adverse effect on the standard of pupils' work in the autumn term.

98 The co-ordinator has worked very hard to raise standards and has a good understanding of pupils' attainment through analysis of test results and direct observations of lessons. The outcomes have been used productively to identify an appropriate set of priorities, including the increased use of a mathematical vocabulary. Teachers follow this through and put recommendations into practice in lessons; for example, when pupils in Year 6 were encouraged to use the words 'factor' and 'prime number' accurately.

SCIENCE

99 Standards have improved consistently over the past four years for 11-year-olds, and over the past three years, standards have risen well for seven-year-olds. The school has been resolute in adopting the revised National Curriculum for science, organising schemes of work and implementing assessment procedures which give a clear picture of attainment and progress of all pupils. These improvements reflect the hard work of the staff and pupils, particularly in raising expectations and changing attitudes.

100 Results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were well below average compared with all schools nationally and below average compared with schools in similar contexts. However, 66 per cent of pupils achieved the expected level and 14 per cent achieved the higher level. This was a big improvement on the previous year, when only 36 per cent achieved the expected level and none achieved the higher level. Standards continue to improve and most pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve in line with national expectations. Their understanding is firmly based on well-organised practical work and teaching of good quality. Girls and boys make good progress because of the school's enthusiastic approach to scientific investigations.

101 Compared with all schools nationally, teachers' assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2001 showed that Fieldhead's performance was above average at the expected level and very high at the higher level. Compared with similar schools, it was well above average at the expected level and very high at the higher level. Pupils in the current Year 2 achieve well, but because of a significant number of pupils with special educational needs who have problems with language, fewer pupils are on course to reach the standards expected for their age in this year's assessments. The majority will reach expected levels and all pupils make good progress. More

stable staffing is enabling pupils to develop scientific skills, knowledge and understanding in a step-by-step, systematic way.

102 By the age of seven, most pupils understand that plants and animals need food, water and air in order to survive and know that different living things are found in different places. Most pupils can explain the main characteristics of a healthy diet. In Year 1, pupils know that there are many sources of light. They made very good progress and achieved very well as they identified sources of light around the school. They also explored natural sources of light, and remembered the light from candles and bonfires. Pupils classify materials in terms of texture, rigidity and colour and know that some materials can be stretched. In Year 2, higher attaining pupils are able to make sensible predictions; for example, when they consider whether certain items stretch. However, many pupils need a great deal of help to express their scientific ideas. The school is working hard to support these pupils with intensive adult support for groups during lessons. As a result, pupils are increasingly confident in putting forward suggestions. Their ideas can be teased out in order to increase their understanding. This has a very positive effect on the pupils' good progress. Examination of pupils' previous work shows that they have carried out interesting and appropriate investigations. These were organised effectively so that pupils of all abilities developed a deeper understanding of topics such as the changes in materials caused by heating or cooling, and how pushes and pulls affect objects.

103 By the time they are 11 years old, pupils use scientific vocabulary with greater confidence. In experiments with parachutes, they discuss 'upthrust' and are able to explain what it means. They investigate materials and described 'reversible' and 'irreversible' changes. When they test electrical circuits, pupils are able to give correct reasons why bulbs will or will not light. Their work is presented well. Results of experiments are clearly set out. In work on forces, pupils show clear understanding of the difference between mass and weight. Skills for accurate scientific investigation develop well; for example when pupils filter mixtures to separate their components. In Year 4, the high quality of the teacher's questioning encourages pupils to be reflective and to consider alternatives. In an experiment on heating and cooling, pupils were challenged to predict the comparative temperatures of three bowls of water after a period of time. To begin with, the bowls contained water which was hot, warm or at room temperature. The pupils' predictions changed as time went by, but the teacher would not tell them the answer. They had to find out for themselves!

104 Girls and boys work well together and achieve at similar rates. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the school's methodical assessment procedures ensure that work is pitched at the right level and staff support activities well.

105 Because the presentation of work in all subjects has been a major feature of school improvement, pupils plan and record investigations in an organised way which reinforces what they are learning. Teachers provide simple recording sheets for pupils who need them, and higher attaining pupils increasingly organise their own work. Older pupils use a variety of tables, charts and graphs. Throughout the school, pupils use their mathematical skills to measure and record their findings. After investigating a range of items, including Victorian and modern coins, pupils in Year 3 made diagrams to record whether objects were magnetic or non-magnetic. The use of ICT is increasing at a very good rate. Pupils organise their findings in interesting ways. Older pupils use electronic probes to record temperature.

106 Pupils enjoy science because of the school's thoughtful, practical and relevant approach. In Year 4, pupils' interest and sense of curiosity is clear in their work on bones. They investigate the similarities and differences between the bones of humans and other animals and ask questions such as, 'Do our bones grow longer as we grow older?' In Year 5, pupils show a purposeful and systematic approach as they measure their pulse rate before and after exercise and record their results neatly. Behaviour is good overall, and it was excellent in the lessons seen in Years 5 and 6. Relationships are very good and pupils work together happily and productively, regardless of gender or ethnicity.

107 Overall, teaching is of good quality. The best teaching is characterised by the teachers' enthusiasm, lots of practical work and very good questioning which draws well on pupils' ideas and stimulates their imagination. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 5, the teacher followed up pupils' answers on how sounds might be recorded graphically. She then worked very effectively with a group of pupils, using a range of musical instruments to make different sounds, which were recorded as graphical symbols. All pupils were absorbed in their work and those not in the teacher's group worked very well independently. The work was well linked to investigations in ICT, when average and higher attaining pupils were challenged to find out how the ear receives and processes sound. All teachers manage the pupils very well and make sure that pupils know what they are to learn and do in each lesson. Because of this, most lessons move along at a brisk pace and the rate of learning is good, and often very good. Occasionally, when the teacher's explanations are too complicated or questions do not demand enough thought from the pupils, the pace of the lesson slackens and some pupils begin to fidget.

108 Teachers plan and prepare lessons very well so that pupils spend the maximum amount of time possible on investigative work. They base new learning very clearly on what pupils already know and understand, and provide challenge for all pupils, including higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The high level of teamwork between staff is at the heart of the school's success in science. When there is a classroom assistant in the lesson, teachers are able to focus intently on a particular group of pupils, knowing that the assistant will monitor the class and collect useful information which can be used to plan future lessons. For example, they record who has, or has not, answered in class, who has worked particularly diligently or who has had difficulty with particular work.

109 Teachers have a clear picture of the attainment of each pupil because they make regular assessments and record them well. Expectations are high, and teachers set targets for each pupil, and the school sets targets for each class. In this way, pupils' progress is monitored and promoted throughout the school. Information is used very effectively to address weaknesses in particular aspects of science. The National Curriculum requirement for pupils to participate in practical investigations has been a priority in the development of teaching and learning in the school, and there is clear evidence of success with this. In addition, work in science is linked well to the school's very good programme of health education, in areas such as sex education and substance abuse.

110 The subject is led very well. The revision of the school's curriculum for science and the co-ordinator's helpful professional guidance have improved teachers' confidence, enhanced the profile of the subject in the school and raised pupils' attainment. Resources are adequate and they are used very well. Pupils also benefit from first hand experience in the school grounds and during visits to urban and rural sites and outdoor education centres. Visitors also enhance pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding; for example when members of the dental department talked about the care of teeth and when an environmental officer described the local recycling systems.

ART AND DESIGN

111 By the time they are seven and 11 years old, pupils produce work that is above national expectations because of the very good teaching they receive. Pupils use a wide range of media and techniques and develop their skills systematically as they grow older. Good work reported in the last inspection has continued. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because the activities are planned thoughtfully and pupils are encouraged to develop their own ideas.

112 By the time they are seven pupils use paint, collage, pens and pencils to create an interesting range of imaginative and illustrative work of high quality. For example, pupils in Year 1 created

abstract patterns using shapes and lines. They looked carefully at checks, stripes and blocks of colour in textiles so that their patterns were well organised and showed a good understanding of how to balance light and dark colours in a design. They were fascinated by the results when they use materials such as beetroot, tea, grass and leaves to make natural dyes for their fabric dyeing. Pupils create portraits in many different ways. They draw features on paper very skilfully and carefully, cut up the paper, and assemble the features to make a face, 'just like Picasso made them'. The high quality exploration of shape and shade is extended in Year 2 when pupils consolidate their drawing and observational skills. Pupils look at axles on vehicles in design technology lessons and experiment with a variety of media before using charcoal and pastels to create shades and tones of grey, black and white in unusual and delightfully abstract designs.

113 Pupils in the junior classes are taught very well and learn very effectively, making good use of their sketchbooks. These contain interesting planning ideas and preparation for using certain techniques. Pupils in Year 3 explored the language of colour through the works of Terry Frost and Van Gogh. They created different effects with colour and exploding shapes, using bold, bright paints and delicate pastels. Higher attaining pupils produced work of high quality. Pupils practised their drawing skills by studying pictures of the sculptures of Henry Moore and the hauntingly powerful figures of Giacometti. This encouraged them to make emotive sculptures in clay, depicting relationships between people. Pupils in Year 4 responded to a very good demonstration of a range of chairs by making quick, but accurate, observational drawings of one of the chairs. Pupils' observational drawing work shows an increasing understanding of the use of pencils to give added form and depth to their line drawings. This was shown very effectively in Year 5, when pupils drew a series of very detailed drawings of leaves and musical instruments. They made very good use of colour and blended pastels very subtly and effectively to add interest and life to their work. Pupils in Year 6 added texture effectively to their drawings; for example, when they showed the woven texture of a straw sun hat. Pupils shared ideas and equipment well and the teacher intervened sensitively to suggest to pupils how they could develop their work. At the end of the lesson, pupils discussed their work confidently and expressed differing opinions about each other's work. Pupils with special educational needs work productively and benefit from being able to express themselves in ways other than in writing.

114 Pupils look forward to art and design lessons. They develop a very good perception of how artists use colour and shape effectively and this gives them the confidence to attempt their own designs in a similar manner. Pupils' confidence grows in the lesson, especially for those pupils with special educational needs or those who have a low opinion of their own ability to draw, because of the warm relationships between adults and pupils and the encouragement they receive from each other. All are absorbed in their tasks, improving their work as the teacher skilfully questions them, encouraging them to extend their answers further when they have difficulty in expressing their opinions or response to the activities.

115 Teaching and learning in art are very good, so pupils enjoy their lessons. Teachers promote the use of sketchbooks well and this helps pupils to rehearse their ideas and skills. Art is used extensively in subjects such as religious education, history and English. For example, pupils in Year 3 use skills learned in art to illustrate their writing. Pupils in Year 6 design headwear for a Greek tragedy, which will be performed in a drama lesson. Pupils use a range of programs in ICT to draw pictures and patterns. The digital camera is used imaginatively to create interesting images. Teachers' helpful suggestions encourage pupils to reflect on their work and to try to improve it.

116 The subject is effectively co-ordinated and the specially organised room for creative arts is a valuable resource for pupils and staff. There is an enthusiasm for raising standards and ensuring that pupils improve and extend their skills and understanding year by year. Artistic experiences, including workshops with the London Mozart Players and visits to museums, provide valuable opportunities for learning new techniques and working together. Pupils' work is displayed very effectively around the school and classes have interesting displays of two- and three-dimensional work that enhance the environment. Art and design make a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117 There have been improvements in the curriculum since the last inspection. There is now a clear sequence of teaching and learning so that pupils make good progress in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding and become increasingly aware of how things are designed, made and used. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and standards are rising.

118 By the end of Year 2, pupils' designing and making skills are satisfactory. As they made simple vehicles, pupils fixed components together, applying a variety of techniques. They made corners secure by using cardboard triangles for stability, and investigated the way wheels could be fixed to axles. When considering how to make puppets, pupils discussed how the pieces were to be fixed together. They looked at how a variety of puppets had been made and considered sewing, gluing and nailing. In their designs, pupils label the parts of products well and make lists of the materials needed. In good links with literacy, they write simple instructions, showing a clear sequence of what needs to be done to achieve success.

119 By the end of Year 6, 11-year-olds make products and test them with a range of materials and tools, including those used in the preparation of food. They consider the preferences of users, the availability of materials and the cost. Because of the school's practical approach, pupils are involved in considering their own preferences. For example, when they made bread, using recipes from different cultures and countries, they asked, 'Which one do you think tastes best?' The project included research into different kinds of flour and baking processes. Pupils apply knowledge gathered from initial research to design and make products. For example, in a lesson about headgear, pupils made a thorough investigation of materials and construction processes used to make a variety of hats, from cycle helmets and straw sunhats to 'fun' hats such as Santa Claus caps. They noted whether the hats were suitable for the purpose for which they were designed, how well they stayed on and why, and how much they cost. They then go on to plan their own hats, with this information in mind. The school's emphasis on the design and evaluation processes ensures that pupils approach new projects in a systematic way.

120 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers ask probing questions which get pupils to think hard. For example, in Year 2, the teacher persisted with questions about how puppets were controlled. Because of this, pupils made good progress in the lesson as they explored different ways to make puppets move. Teachers plan very well and use national guidance effectively. Ideas for products are chosen to link with other subjects in order to bring relevance to pupils' learning. Work on packaging in Year 3 links with the study of shape in mathematics. In Year 4, the making of books follows work in English on writing for different audiences. Pupils in Year 5 follow up work on making musical instruments with a detailed scientific study of sound waves and how sound travels. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs are well supported and have time to talk through what they are doing. Teachers encourage pupils to ask, 'How does it work?' As pupils in Year 4 explored how to make a greetings card which would surprise the receiver, they made paper spirals and fixed them inside cards so that they popped open. At first, some pupils couldn't get the spring to work, but they watched, listened and experimented until they were successful. The teacher was careful to allow pupils to make mistakes and learn from them. Materials are prepared well so that pupils can get on promptly with their work. At the end of lessons, pupils are expected to help with clearing up materials and tools.

121 Because of the high quality of adult support, all pupils participate fully in lessons and learn at a good rate. Girls, boys, pupils of different ethnic backgrounds and those who have special educational needs achieve success and are encouraged to explore ideas and contribute to discussions. All make good progress.

122 Literacy and numeracy are developed effectively as pupils prepare plans, label diagrams,

write lists and instructions and evaluate their work. Pupils throughout the school present their work well. Mathematical skills are developed effectively as pupils measure materials, consider shapes and organise their investigations into how things are made. ICT is used increasingly to support and enhance pupils' learning. Younger pupils word process some of their planning and, as older pupils become more proficient with the control and monitoring aspects of ICT, they make plans and manipulate shapes; for example, when pupils in Year 5 drew plans of the classroom

123 Pupils enjoy design and technology. They behave well in lessons because of the interesting projects and also because teachers ensure that the pupils follow the clear, firm and fair class rules. Most pupils listen attentively, work hard and are productive. They want to succeed and do well. In Year 2, a few who strayed from the rules responded quickly to the teacher's gentle but firm reprimands. Pupils use tools safely and play an active part in clearing up at the end of lessons.

124 The well-organised scheme of work helps teachers to plan simple, effective assessments at the end of each unit of work. Good records are kept of pupils' attainment and progress and these are shared with parents in pupils' end-of-year reports. Teachers use information from assessments to plan later work and to organise support for any pupils who have difficulty with particular skills, such as measuring or cutting.

125 The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has provided helpful advice for teachers on a range of interesting projects which stimulate pupils' interest and ensure success. As a result, staff are confident in their teaching and lessons are enjoyable, with a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere. Pupils develop skills of co-operation, concentration and discrimination which contribute well to their personal development. Resources are adequate and well organised.

GEOGRAPHY & HISTORY

126 Overall standards in history and geography are below nationally expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 are working at levels in history that are close to those expected nationally. The standard of oral work in all classes is higher than the written work and pupils' limited skills in reading and writing restrict their ability to use books for research or to write in any depth. The progress made by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory but they are responding well to the good teaching in individual lessons and benefit from the newly revised curriculum. Both subjects are taught on a regular basis. Standards have been affected by the emphasis on time given to English, mathematics and science that has reduced the time available for other subjects.

127 Pupils in Year 2 have a limited knowledge in history. Although pupils' overall standards in geography are currently below those expected, Year 2 reached a satisfactory standard in the actual lesson observed. They understood the difference between human and physical geography, and placed the various features in a picture of a Scottish island, such as 'mountains' or 'tractor,' into the correct categories.

128 Pupils in Year 6 talked about what they had learned in their lessons. They had some knowledge of the Victorians but had little recollection of the period as one of great social and industrial change. They all had vivid memories of pretending to be pupils in a Victorian school and drew apt comparisons between 'then and now'. They had just started a new topic on the Ancient Greeks and made links to their work in geography. Pupils have a basic sense of chronology and could arrange major historical periods in the correct order.

129 Pupils in Year 6 have limited understanding of basic geographical facts when compared to most children of their age. They have a very basic understanding of the water cycle, although they had studied rivers during the previous term. They had used their understanding of numeracy effectively to measure the speed of a stream during their visit to the Cliffe House Field Study Centre. Their difficulties in expressing themselves orally were very evident when they struggled to

explain what is meant by the word 'map'. Their knowledge of the difference between human and physical geography is secure and they have an appropriate understanding of the impact of humans on the environment. Good use had been made of the Internet to gather additional information about Greece and its history, so that pupils learn in different ways and maintain interest.

130 No overall judgement on teaching can be given for history because only one lesson was seen. Current teaching in geography is good and, as a result, pupils are making faster progress, but they have some way to go to reach expected standards. Teachers manage the pupils well so that classes are well behaved and pupils get on with their work sensibly. Teachers provide an interesting range of materials to stimulate the pupils. The standard of planning is good and ensures that lessons go forward at a brisk pace. Pupils are taught appropriate research skills. Pupils in Year 1, for example, are learning about the past by using their Victorian 'kitchen,' one pupil explaining why the flat iron was so heavy. Pupils in Year 6 have learned about the past by comparing photographs of modern and Victorian Birstall. Teachers make very good use of visitors and walks in the local area. In Year 5, pupils' concerns about traffic speeds resulted in a discussion about traffic calming with a local official. Pupils in Year 6 had explored Birstall with a resident, and Year 4 drew on the memories of a visitor who had lived through the Second World War. Good links are made between subjects; for example, when pupils in Year 3 used their knowledge of maps to compare past and current use of local places.

131 Although the co-ordinator is relatively new to the post she is already providing good overall leadership. Her enthusiasm has brought life to the subjects and they are increasingly linked to other work. She works closely with colleagues and is developing the subjects by writing a revised policy for geography to complement the new document for history. The school's monitoring programme includes allocated time later in the school year for monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching and learning. The library contains an appropriate range of reference books for both subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

132 Pupils' performance has improved in the past year because of enhanced resources and effective staff training and support. By the time they are in Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations, and they achieve well.

133 By the end of Year 2, pupils operate the computer mouse confidently. They follow instructions, move images effectively and recognise the importance of giving precise instructions. In a number of subjects, pupils write simple text to the screen and save and print their work. Interesting work linked to art was done by pupils in Year 1, when they distorted digital photographs of themselves. Pupils in Year 2 extended their use of a graphics program when they created attractive pictures by selecting tools, colours and shapes from boxes on the screen. They altered and twisted the shapes and then filled in selected parts with blocks of colour. Higher attaining pupils did this well, and all were successful. Lively programs stimulate pupils' interest so that they learn at a good rate and achieve well. Pupils gain appropriate decision-making skills to explore adventure programs. They make choices such as which way to go or which door to open. Pupils gain increasing skills with programmable toys. This links well with work on direction and measurement in geography and mathematics. In mathematics, pupils create simple graphs and in literacy, they write instructions and lists. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, benefit as they practise their spelling and try to improve on their times for learning and writing new words.

134 By the end of Year 6, pupils use ICT increasingly as a tool for learning. Writing is word-processed in many subjects, and pupils recognise that there is a wealth of information to be gained from CD ROMs and the Internet. Most pupils search for information confidently, following the school's clear and strict rules for access. Pupils show satisfactory levels of competence in drafting and editing their written work. They use appropriate punctuation and check their spelling. In addition to presenting work attractively, with a range of borders and different fonts, pupils learn more

about the techniques of publishing and how to present newspaper reports and columns. Work is well linked to design and technology and mathematics as pupils in Year 6 design three-dimensional drawings of geometrical shapes. In Year 5, pupils select and transport pictures effectively to illustrate their work on a traffic survey in geography. Throughout the school, pupils are adept at using tape recorders and they know how to use video machines. Although teachers use overhead projectors to support learning in a range of subjects, there was no evidence of pupils using them to consolidate and extend their learning by explaining their ideas to the rest of the class.

135 ICT is used increasingly in all subjects, but there is still some way to go, and the school recognises that planning for its use in more lessons is an area for development. Bearing in mind the school's priorities in raising standards in basic subjects, teachers have done very well to bring standards in ICT to their present level. In addition to adopting the revised National Curriculum and adapting to new equipment and programs, teachers have brought a sense of enthusiasm and fun to the subject. This enthusiasm adds pace to the pupils' learning.

136 Teaching is good and teachers manage the pupils very well. Lessons often involve moving the class to the computer room or reorganising the classroom so that everyone can see the computer screen. Teachers do this apparently effortlessly because of well-rehearsed routines and high expectations of how pupils should behave. The planning of lessons is very good, and teachers ensure that pupils experience all the nationally required aspects of the subject as they grow older. For example, they plan the use of thermal sensors in science and provide opportunities for older pupils to use scanners to record the return of library books.

137 Teachers allow time for the practice of new skills and time for pupils to explore programs by themselves. This is especially helpful for those who do not have computers at home and gives them confidence in using the machines. Older pupils are encouraged to choose a website, note the address and devise questions to test what other pupils can find out from the site. In the computer room, teachers use an enlarged screen to review earlier learning and introduce new ideas. In a lesson in Year 2, the teacher did this very well so that the teaching points were clear and pupils knew what they should be able to do by the end of the lesson. In Year 4, the teacher brought relevance to an exercise on using different fonts by getting the pupils to write arresting articles on the danger of fireworks, the excitement of the approaching school fair and the announcement of a new dance club in the area. Pupils learn as individuals, in groups of two or three or as a class. In all situations, teachers ensure that all pupils are attentive and that all respect the machines and recognise the importance of following instructions.

138 A significant influence on the standards achieved by pupils is the very good leadership of the subject. The co-ordinator has an extremely wide knowledge of ICT and she is committed to improving pupils' attainment. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have ensured that resources have been brought up-to-date and technical support is available when required. Staff have received good training and their confidence in the subject is high. They use the suite of computers efficiently so that pupils learn skills which they can then practise in everyday work on classroom machines. There is a computer club and the co-ordinator organises courses for parents to enhance their skills and help them to become more involved in their children's learning. These activities contribute well to the pupils' good progress.

MUSIC

139 By the age of seven, pupils attain the standards expected for their age. Pupils build on the skills and knowledge gained so that by the age of 11 they attain the standards expected for their age and show maturity in performance and an enjoyment of music making activities. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because of the clear explanations and practical approach used in most music lessons.

140 In lessons and assemblies, pupils in Year 1 and 2 build up a good repertoire of songs and switch their singing to different speeds and other moods because the songs are interesting and well

chosen. This is particularly evident in recordings of the concert at Christmas, when pupils sang complex songs very competently. Pupils sing rhythmically and tunefully. Their diction is clear and they listen carefully to the music that comes between the lines and verses. Pupils concentrate well so that they learn melodies and words quickly. Pupils in Year 1 distinguished well between long and short sounds. They worked out sounds for each line of 'Hickory, Dickory, Dock', before recording their work on tape. They greatly enjoyed hearing themselves. As they moved around the hall, pupils tried to think of movements to represent some of the sounds in other nursery rhymes. Most pupils found it difficult to do this, but they were very enthusiastic about the activity.

141 In a lesson in Year 4, pupils built well on previous learning and the teacher's correct use of musical terms. Pupils watched the 'conductor' very carefully to ensure that they come in at the correct time with their instruments. They built up an interesting piece of music about the weather and were very clear about the different sounds that instruments produce. When looking at the painting of 'The Fighting Temeraire' by Turner, pupils reflected upon the many sounds that they would hear if they were there. 'Crackles as ships burn', suggested one pupil and 'Explosions from the guns' was another idea. Working in small groups, pupils explored and discussed various instruments used to make different sounds. They were very confident that they had chosen the right instruments and their playing indicated that they had made very thoughtful choices and were thinking carefully about the visual images that can be related to various sounds.

142 Pupils enjoy their music making activities, especially when playing instruments. They work very sensibly together and share instruments well. Levels of concentration are very good and pupils listen well, although some often find it difficult to express opinions and ideas about their work. Some, however, are very clear about what they have achieved in the lesson. When asked if she had been composing in her music lesson, a pupil in Year 5 responded immediately, 'Oh no. We were working on pitch and intervals.'

143 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers provide a wide range of interesting opportunities and musical experiences that enable pupils to learn how to listen to music and improve their skills in playing instruments and composing. Teachers plan lessons effectively to include appropriate practice and extension of what pupils know and can do. Staff encourage pupils to participate with enthusiasm so that learning is enjoyable and pupils look forward to lessons.

144 The selection of music for assemblies is helpful in creating a spiritual atmosphere and providing pupils with opportunities to listen and reflect. Music for dance is selected very carefully. Parents give praise for the enjoyable productions, which provide opportunities for pupils to perform to a large audience. The productions include pupils' high quality singing as soloists, in duets and groups, or as a choir, and the playing of musical instruments. Pupils from Year 5 performed confidently with the London Mozart Players. The school's enthusiastic co-ordinator for music provides good support for other teachers, particularly in the teaching of singing. The curriculum has been developed effectively so that all elements are taught over the year. Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145 Standards in Year 6 are above national expectations for the age group. In Year 2, standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils work hard and make good progress in all classes. Pupils in Year 2 have a good range of basic gymnastic skills and know that they can be improved quickly with effort, concentration and good behaviour. Even the youngest pupils understand that exercise has an effect on their heart rates and that 'cold muscles' must be warmed up before vigorous exercise. In one lesson, pupils in Year 2 developed a series of creative and physically testing ways in which to travel across the hall in a sequence of gymnastic movements. Progress was very good as they learned through experimentation and encouragement to link the movements together, often based on the teacher's personal example. Pupils in Year 6 work confidently, with full control of their actions and have developed a precision in movement resulting in higher standards in

gymnastic and games skills. Pupils have swimming lessons in Year 4 and most achieve the expected standard and go on to higher levels.

146 Every pupil, including those with special educational needs, takes part in physical education lessons and their attitudes are consistently positive. They get changed quickly, listen to instructions carefully and try hard to improve. They respect the very high standard of discipline and self-control expected and achieved in every class. Pupils in Year 6 who had forgotten their kit remained part of the 'class team'. Their task was to draw out a plan of the floor apparatus and analyse how pupils were using it, in order to make suggestions for an improved layout. Several pupils in Year 5 who have considerable behavioural difficulties were made to feel so confident that they produced some of the best dance sequences in the class. One pupil, moving as a leaf blown in a storm, strained and tugged at the floor as the wind strengthened and then spun and rolled round the hall when his 'leaf' was torn from the ground. His work was very good because he was always in control and never came too near to other pupils; in his mind and in his dance, he was that leaf. Girls and boys are given the same opportunities and are equally welcomed, for example, as members of the after-school rugby and majorette clubs. Great care is taken in games lessons to make sure that left-handed players are taught the skills of how to hold a bat, for example, with the same rigour as their right-handed friends.

147 The overall quality of teaching is good because staff insist on very good behaviour, have a high expectations of what the pupils can achieve, and set a very good example in their own performance. Basic gymnastics, games and dance skills are taught systematically, making appropriate use of a commercial scheme. Teachers are confident in their own skills and give the pupils confidence in themselves so that they learn quickly. Pupils know how to improve and have time to practise, but good teaching makes sure that they are moved on to a new activity quite quickly so that their interest is maintained throughout the lesson. Pupils are highly motivated and keen to try out the teachers' ideas. Safe practice is taught rigorously. Pupils in Year 1 are taught how to carry a bench correctly and pupils in Year 6 are closely supervised as they work as a team to set up the large fixed wall apparatus. Classroom support assistants are used effectively, monitoring the use of a piece of apparatus or quietly supporting pupils who find the lesson very challenging. Teaching is less effective on the rare occasions when the teacher relies too much on the commercial scheme and does not take enough account of pupils' current skills. Occasionally, the detailed teaching of a new technique results in pupils spending too much time watching rather than doing.

148 The co-ordinator has appropriate plans for developing the subject and clarifying the system for assessing and recording pupils' progress so that it is simple for teachers to use. The school is able to use the halls in both the infant and junior buildings for physical education. This is an advantage as all pupils can change in their own classrooms and teachers have been able to build up separate sets of apparatus for the different age groups. Pupils enjoy a good range of after-school activities, open to boys and girls from all classes; these include athletics, team games and majorettes.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

149 Standards in Year 2 are currently below those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus but good progress in older classes has resulted in standards at expected levels in Year 6.

150 Standards in Year 2 have been affected by unavoidable teacher absence and changes during recent months. Many pupils have difficulty in speaking and writing. This limits the amount of factual knowledge they can record in their books. They have written and thought about celebrations, including Christmas and the importance of Remembrance Sunday. Standards in Year 6 are just in line with expected levels. Pupils have an appropriate knowledge of the principal beliefs and teaching of Judaism and Christianity, and can reflect on the moral issues that surround them in their daily lives. They have a basic factual knowledge of the life of St Paul and know what it means

to be a Christian. Many have difficulty in recalling factual detail, but when questioned, knew for example, why it was remarkable that it was a Samaritan who stopped to help the wounded man. They know why Easter is the most important Christian festival.

151 Progress is good and is evident in most pupils' positive attitudes. Pupils in Year 4 spoke enthusiastically about their visit to the parish church. They said that they had felt safe and recognised that the church is a place of worship rather than just an old building. History came to life when they were shown John Wesley's chair. Pupils are encouraged to think more deeply about their lessons through questioning or skilful story telling. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 1, for example, understood that the most important thing about the story of Joseph was his unshakeable belief in God, not his remarkable coat. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all lessons. They enjoy listening to stories and talking about them, but find the writing tasks very difficult without assistance.

152 Religious education and daily acts of worship make an important contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils have learned tolerance through the study of different faiths. In a class assembly in Year 4, for example, pupils included the names of Allah and God in their prayers and reflections as a sign of respect for the class member who is a Moslem. Pupils in Year 5 knew how the Qur'an should be treated with respect, and were extremely sensible and mature when learning and demonstrating the Moslem rituals for prayer.

153 The quality of teaching is good. Planning is thorough, and although lessons move along briskly, they contain plenty of opportunities for pupils to think and talk about what they have learned. Good use is made of artefacts, the Qur'an in Year 5 and 'special objects' in Year 1, as a focus for pupils' interest. Teachers understand what they have to teach and very good classroom management makes sure that pupils are respectful and attentive. Pupils are encouraged to use the literacy skills they have learned in English lessons. Teachers paste the literacy targets into pupils' books to remind them of the standards they are trying to achieve, and the teacher in Year 3 reminded pupils to use their new skill of paragraphing. Good links are made to other subjects. During a visit to the church, pupils did observational drawings and imitated the script in a Bible. In design and technology pupils looked at a Jewish skullcap as they designed a variety of hats. In several classes, pupils of different abilities are often set the same task, and the marking is limited to ticks or very brief comments. This makes it harder for pupils, especially those capable of higher attainment, to deepen their understanding or to know how to improve.

154 The co-ordinator works hard to support teaching throughout the school. The new policy is linked to the locally Agreed Syllabus and appropriate plans for the development of systems of assessment.