

INSPECTION REPORT

NORTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Malton

LEA Area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121456

Headteacher: Mr Roy Smith

Reporting inspector: Jane Schaffer
23698

Dates of inspection: 22–25 May 2000

Inspection number: 188301

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Grove Street
Norton
Malton
North Yorkshire

Postcode: YO17 9BG

Telephone number: 01653 692104

Fax number: 01653 696284

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Stephen Douglas

Date of previous inspection: 10 June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Jane Schaffer	Registered inspector	Physical education	School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Kath Berry	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents? Pupils' attitudes values and personal development
Keith Bardon	Team inspector	Science Information and Communication Technology	The schools' use of strategic resources
Brenda Clarke	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education	Equal opportunities
Sue MacIntosh	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?
Pat Peaker	Team inspector	History Geography Art Special educational needs	
Ralph Walker	Team inspector	Music Design Technology Under fives	

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services

5 Huntsman Close
Beaumont Park
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire
HD4 7BR.

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a community primary school in a small country town where most of the working population has employment in local industries. There are 575 pupils on roll which is much larger than the majority of primary schools. Sixty-six children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The attainment on entry to the nursery for most children is just below what is generally expected for children before school age. The attainment on entry to the school when children are five is similar to that expected for children of this age. All pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. Twenty-eight per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special needs is just under one per cent, which is broadly in line with the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

For three years until 1999 the school's results in the national tests taken at ages seven and 11 were, in most instances, below or well below the national average. The school worked hard at putting this right and it has been successful. Pupils are now achieving standards at the end of each key stage which compare satisfactorily to other schools nationally. The headteacher has developed a team of staff committed to improvement. Although there are still important areas in need of attention, children make good progress in the nursery. There is good progress in science, reading and, in Year 2 and Year 6, in English and mathematics. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils achieve a good standard in reading and have learnt good basic skills in using the computer.
- Work in art is of a high standard throughout the school.
- The quality of provision in the nursery is good.
- Pupils with special education needs are given good support and make good progress towards their own targets.
- There is good financial planning to support school developments.

What could be improved

- The action taken when weaknesses in teaching are noticed.
- The headteacher's and subject managers' work in checking the quality of teaching and planning and how well policies are put into practice.
- The leadership of music and physical education in Key Stage 2, and areas of school life such as personal, social and health education.
- The school library and the way this contributes to pupils' personal development.
- The organisation of the reception and Year 1 classes.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1996 when inspectors found the standard of pupils' work to be slightly below the national average. In 1999 the school improved its results markedly in the national tests for pupils aged 11 years and standards have been maintained this year. After the last inspection the school took action to put right areas identified for improvement and, in a good number of instances, hard work has resulted in successful improvements. At the time of the last inspection the quality of teaching needed significant attention and, although individual staff have successfully

developed and improved their teaching, the school has more work to do to make sure that teaching in every class is as good as possible. Improvement has been satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	E	C	C
Mathematics	D	C	B	B
Science	D	D	C	C

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

The school's results in English, mathematics and science improved considerably last year so that in English and science the pupils' performance matched the national average and in mathematics it was above. In mathematics the school's results have always been slightly better than their results in English and science. Pupils' attainment in Year 6 matches the national average in all three subjects. The standard in mathematics is not higher than in the other subjects this year because there are more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 compared to last year. The children in the nursery make good progress, so that by the time they are five they reach most of the learning goals for this age. In Years 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science, pupils continue to make good progress. In the national tests for 7-year-olds the school's results are average. The progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good in science and satisfactory in English and mathematics. In Years 3 and 4 progress is unsatisfactory in learning about English grammar. In Year 6, there is good progress in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support and their achievements are good. In Years 3 to 6, pupils use computers well. The school exceeded its targets for mathematics and English last year and is on course to match its targets this year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show a good interest in their work and listen well to their teachers. Most are keen to start their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is generally good in and around the school. In most classes pupils are respectful to adults although, on some occasions in Years 3 to 6, pupils do not stop chattering when the teacher expects attention, and a very small minority have challenging behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils co-operate very well with each other and most have a mature understanding of the need to consider others. The headteacher develops good relationships throughout the school between adults and pupils and all staff and pupils follow this lead.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance figures are similar to most schools nationally. Most pupils arrive punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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 quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons. In 55 per cent of lessons it is good or very good with the proportion of very good at 11 per cent. The proportion of unsatisfactory lessons is eight per cent. In Years 1 and 2 teaching in English is successful so that pupils learn letter sounds and spelling rules at a good rate. In the classes from Year 3 to Year 6, 10 per cent of teaching in English was unsatisfactory. Some teachers have good knowledge and understanding of English grammar and how to teach it and they help pupils make good progress in using correct grammar and punctuation in their writing. However, in some lessons, pupils are not given sufficient guidance on how to use grammar and punctuation correctly. Teaching in mathematics is particularly effective in Year 6. In Years 3,4 and 5 in mathematics there is some good teaching but some lessons do not provide enough challenge to all groups of pupils. Science teaching is often good. The year group planning works particularly well in this subject. Computer skills are taught well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is good planning to make sure that work is set each term to take account of what pupils have learnt in previous lessons. Planning makes good use of information technology. However, planning for pupils to learn how to use the library is not in place. The activities planned in literacy in Years 3 and 4 could be better and planning for music is weak. After-school clubs do not make a significant contribution to pupils' opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers notice from an early age those pupils who need extra help. Plans for each individual pupil are set jointly by the special needs co-ordinator and the class teacher and this means that pupils receive good support that is relevant to their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Moral and social development is good. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Teachers encourage pupils to work together during lessons and this contributes significantly to their social development as they share resources and ideas with each other very well. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to take on appropriate responsibilities in the day-to-day running of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils with behavioural difficulties are supported well by the staff, the headteacher and special education needs co-ordinator and praise is used effectively. Some assessment arrangements are good but others are in need of further work.

The school works well in partnership with parents. Parents are involved in supporting their children's learning through a well organised programme of homework, and in Year 6 through their child's participation in the homework club which both parents and teachers have found very useful in

improving children's progress. The parents' forum and the association give every parent the opportunity to express their opinions and contribute to the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The school is well managed day-to-day. The headteacher has established an effective process for improving the school and gives good support to a team of staff committed to that improvement. However, some policies are not monitored as well as they should be and some subjects do not have sufficient leadership.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are organised appropriately and take adequate steps to ensure that statutory requirements are met. They are well informed about the school and take an active part in identifying priorities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school thoroughly analyses the results of the pupils' performance in national tests and its own tests. Some procedures for monitoring teaching are in place but more needs to be done so that weaknesses can be identified and put right at an early stage.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has efficient systems in place to ensure that spending levels closely reflect the school's priorities for development and sensible projections are made of future needs.

There is an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff to teach the curriculum. The permanent class assistants are well trained and support pupils' learning well. At the time of the inspection several new appointments of class assistants had been made for the younger classes and there had been insufficient time for these staff to have had training. The accommodation is satisfactory although the classrooms with Year 1 and reception children are cramped which makes it difficult for teachers to plan work for the youngest children. The new building programme identified in school planning will address this problem. The school has very good outside areas in respect of playing fields but the hard surface play areas become too overcrowded for pupils to enjoy active playtimes when the field is not in use.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is good. • Children make good progress and are expected to try to do their best. • The new computer suite and the progress that pupils are making. • Their children like coming to school. • The school is helping their child to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range and number of activities provided outside of lessons. • Information about the way their child is making progress. • The way the school involves parents. • The mixed-age classes for reception and Year 1 children.

Most parents feel that their child is receiving a good standard of education. The inspection team agreed with all the positive points raised by parents, although not all teaching was found to be good. Inspectors judged that the school was doing its best to develop a good relationship with parents. The parents' forum and association provided good opportunities for parents to make their views known,

and staff are willing to listen and respond to parents' concerns. The school has already put in place plans to provide single-age classes for reception and Year 1 pupils. Inspectors agree that there are insufficient after-school activities and that the end of year reports need more information on how well pupils are progressing and what they need to do to improve further.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

1. The school's results in the national tests for 11-year-olds in 1999 matched the national average for English and science and were above average for mathematics. Nearly all groups of pupils achieved levels which you would expect; for example, the brightest pupils in mathematics achieved the higher grade in a similar proportion to this group nationally. The main difference, and one which reflects the school's good support for lower attaining pupils, was that only 15 per cent of pupils achieved below the average grade in mathematics, a 14 per cent improvement on the national picture. At Key Stage 1, the school's results matched the national average in English and mathematics. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher grade was below the national average. In science, assessments made by teachers at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that pupils were achieving the national average.
2. The school's improved results in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 checked a downward trend which had occurred since 1996 as the school failed to keep up with the improving results being achieved by other schools. In mathematics the school's long-term record is better than in other subjects with only 1997 dipping below the national average. The performance of girls in writing in Key Stage 1 falls below that of girls nationally. The school has not analysed this result and has not identified what the reasons may be. In Key Stage 2, there is no statistical difference between the performance of boys and girls in the tests and this is an improvement on the national picture where girls significantly out-perform boys.
3. On entry to the nursery, the attainment of most of the children is just below what is generally expected of children of this age. They make good progress in English and mathematics so that by the time they are five nearly all have achieved the expected learning for this age. They can identify letters by sound and name and are recognising a small number of familiar words by sight. Most children can count to 20 and all can order numbers to 10, for example when identifying the position of clothes on the class 'washing line'. Higher attaining children have begun to add and subtract. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory in the topics they study, such as their topic on plants and small creatures but their attainment is below what is expected for children of this age in their knowledge of their environment. They can play simple computer games with confidence.
4. The school's targets for the national tests in English and mathematics were set after analysing the results of tests taken in earlier years and were set at a realistic and achievable level. Last year's targets were exceeded by a good margin. The school set similar targets for this year, even though their assessments showed that there was an increased number of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. They are on track to achieve their targets for this year as pupils have benefited from the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies and from the steps taken to boost the pupils' attainment in Year 6.
5. The pupils in Year 2 are achieving satisfactory standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening. A good number of pupils can read texts, appropriate for their age, fluently and with expression. Pupils of lower attainment know a reasonable number of words by sight. They are able to use letter sounds to help them work out an unfamiliar word and higher attaining pupils can use strategies such as 'reading on' to help them make sense of a difficult passage. They are given a good introduction to the world of books by teachers who help them recognise different authors and stories, some of which become their favourites. Pupils' spelling and handwriting is of a satisfactory standard and all pupils are able to tackle a variety of different writing tasks. Higher attaining pupils use a good choice of vocabulary in their work and have begun to use features of story writing which they have noticed in the books they read. When speaking to a class audience pupils of higher attainment can report an event in some detail, and those of lower attainment can tell the class about their week-end activities.

6. The pupils in Year 6 are achieving standards in reading which are above average. Pupils of all levels of attainment read competently. Those of higher attainment read, with interest and understanding, books which present complexities in plot and theme. They read fluently and with good expression. All pupils take a great interest in finding out about their favourite authors and can express clear opinions about the quality of the books they read. Pupils can use their reading skills to pursue research activities in history and have a good understanding of how to scan a computer screen to gather information held on CD ROM. The standard of pupils' writing is satisfactory, though not as high as in reading. Most pupils in Year 6 achieve a good understanding of how to develop their writing using different styles and techniques, such as using short sentences to increase pace, to produce an effect on the reader. They use vocabulary well; for example, when writing a piece set in a church they use words evocative of an ancient building. Standards in speaking and listening are as expected for pupils of this age. They speak with confidence to an audience such as their own class and can listen to and appreciate the ideas and opinions of others.
7. In mathematics and science, the pupils in Year 2 are reaching standards which match the national average. Most pupils understand the concept of tens and units well and can apply this knowledge when adding on or taking away using numbers such as 11, 12 or 19. They can double numbers to 20 and higher attaining pupils are achieving good speed in their mental calculations. In science they have begun to understand the importance of applying the principles of fair testing and have some scientific knowledge and awareness such as knowing that the change which occurs when ice melts can be reversed but that this is not so when a cake is baked.
8. In mathematics and science in Year 6, the standards achieved match the national average. In their work in mathematics pupils of all levels of attainment are able to make good use of a solid understanding of place value, for example, when multiplying and dividing by 10 and 100. Higher attaining pupils can use the same operations mentally using 1000 and involving decimals. Pupils have developed a good understanding of recording their findings in a variety of ways; for example, when working on probability pupils successfully constructed frequency graphs showing the most common car registration prefixes. In science lessons in Year 6 pupils investigating sound have been able to identify how sounds are created and what determines the pitch of a note. Their knowledge of scientific fact is firm because they have learnt how to think through the scientific process, for example identifying what they expect to happen in an investigation and from this make sensible decisions about how to proceed with a test.
9. By the time they are 11, pupils are confident when working with computers. Although they have too little knowledge of how to use computers to monitor events and control devices, they are very competent at using word-processing facilities, for example importing a picture they have constructed using an art program to a piece of written work. In art at the end of both key stages, pupils achieve standards above those generally expected for pupils of their age. Drawings, paintings and pieces of work using a variety of media show sensitivity to the medium used and good appreciation of how imaginative ideas are expressed visually. Pupils' attainment in music is below what is generally expected of 11-year-olds
10. In science, reading and art pupils learn at a good rate throughout the school. Their achievements are good by the time they are 11 when consideration is given to how much they knew when they started school. This is because the school has devised good programmes of work in these subjects and expects the most from pupils. In all other subjects pupils learn at a satisfactory rate, except in music in the classes from Year 3 to Year 6 where learning is unsatisfactory. In physical education pupils' progress is good in Years 1 and 2, but slows in the older classes and pupils do not achieve as well as they should by the time they are 11. This is because in lessons teachers do not encourage pupils to try as hard as they can to achieve their best. Pupils of higher attainment are generally given work which matches their ability and in Key Stage 2 the arrangements for mathematics helps to provide challenging work for these pupils. In Years 3

and 4, pupils do not always achieve at a good rate in learning to use English grammar. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage. The special education needs co-ordinator and class teachers plan well to support their individual needs and they make good progress in English and mathematics, and similar progress to their peers in other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

11. Pupils' attitudes towards school and their work are good and almost all pupils are motivated and interested in their lessons. They listen carefully, know what they have to do and settle quickly to the task. They can maintain levels of concentration throughout the lesson but if the work is not particularly challenging or is pitched at an inappropriate level, then some pupils lose interest and start to chat about their own affairs. Those pupils whose skills are well developed are happy to help others; for example, in a Year 6 lesson in the computer suite, technical knowledge on how to continue with work was happily shared. During class discussions pupils listen to each other attentively and make useful comments.
12. Behaviour is good and contributes to the progress in learning, particularly for the four to seven-year-olds. Where there is a clear expectation of good behaviour pupils respond accordingly. The younger pupils especially enjoy receiving praise and encouragement and try hard to impress their teachers. On the small number of occasions when a pupil becomes disruptive in the older classes, the behaviour of others is not maintained at the usual high standard. There have been two temporary exclusions during the last year. A pupil was excluded prior to the week of the inspection.
13. Pupils are mostly polite and courteous in and around the school and enjoy talking to visitors.
14. They take good care of school equipment and resources and are conscious of maintaining a clean and tidy environment. Very few incidents of an anti-social nature were observed during the week of inspection. As pupils move through the school they display increasingly mature attitudes and enjoy taking responsibility when asked to do so.
15. Attendance figures are similar to the national average. Pupils are generally on time in the mornings. Lessons start promptly and at the end of playtimes and lunchtimes most pupils are keen to start back to work.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons. In 55 per cent of lessons it is good or very good with the proportion of very good at 11 per cent. The proportion of unsatisfactory lessons is eight per cent. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when the percentage of unsatisfactory lessons was 22 per cent.
17. The best teaching was seen in the nursery and in Year 2 and Year 6 classes. The teaching of children under the age of five is good or very good in equal proportions in the nursery. In the classes where Year 1 and reception children are mixed it is good in just over half of the lessons. In the remaining half teaching was satisfactory except in two lessons when the difficulties of planning for this age group in small classrooms with a mix of ages resulted in teachers providing unsatisfactory activities. In Key Stage 1 teaching is good or very good in 64 per cent of lessons with the proportion of very good being 15 per cent. The remaining lessons were all satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, the proportion of good or very good lessons was 48 per cent, 42 per cent were satisfactory and 10 per cent were unsatisfactory.
18. The school has laid a great deal of emphasis on year group planning and this has been effective in ensuring that pupils are taught the same work no matter which class they are in. Teachers benefit from sharing ideas and expertise through these year group planning arrangements. They

have been useful in helping teachers plan a carefully structured lesson so that there is a balance of the type of activities and effort for pupils. For example, in a successful information technology lesson, the teacher balanced the amount of instruction with practice and individual investigation for the pupils. However, there are some drawbacks to the whole year group planning arrangements because teachers are not always able to respond sufficiently to the needs of their individual pupils and to their interests. Activities and texts planned for as many as six classes are sometimes not suited to the level of attainment or the interests of such a large number of pupils. In the classes in Years 3 and 4 in literacy, the teachers plan a “carousel” of activities which rotate through the week. Sometimes pupils work on one of the “carousel” activities some days after the instruction which the teacher gave to support the work. This leads to pupils being unsure of what they should be aiming for in their work and sometimes to a loss of interest.

19. In the nursery, the teacher’s good understanding of how young children learn results in the planning of activities which meet the children’s needs very well, not only because the activities are well matched to their level of attainment but also because they interest them and take them on further with their learning. However, in quite a significant number of lessons in Key Stage 2 and a few in Key Stage 1 lessons lacked the sparkle and challenge which comes when teachers have good subject knowledge coupled with enthusiasm. Pupils made satisfactory gains in their learning but the amount of work done and the care they took with it was not great. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 5 the teacher allowed pupils to copy down the questions from a worksheet, a common delaying tactic which puts off the moment of thinking. In literacy, texts and authors are often presented as a vehicle to teach a particular aspect of punctuation and grammar; points are made, questions asked but the text becomes lifeless. This was not so in a reception and Year 1 class. During the whole class reading session every pupils’ eyes were trained on the text and all were waiting for the word ‘Suddenly’ coming at a strategic point in the story. This interest helped most to correctly name the accompanying exclamation mark when the teacher skilfully asked the question. The school’s information technology co-ordinators have been successful in helping staff to gain good knowledge of computers so that they in turn have been able to develop pupils’ skills and pupils’ interest.
20. The need to keep pupils confident in their learning but challenged so that they will try a little bit harder was seen in a number of the most successful lessons, mainly in Year 6 and in Year 2. In these lessons teachers had identified very carefully what they wanted pupils to learn. In Year 6, in a lower attaining group the teacher challenged the pupils to play a calculator game in pairs. Not all the pupils understood the nature of the game at the start, but as the game proceeded the teacher raised the level of excitement by calling out the winners. The desire to join in and win improved pupils’ concentration so that more and more pupils were able to join in, having a go, making guesses and finally getting things right. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher skilfully kept a simple spelling session going at a good pace, allowing less able pupils to have a try but not slowing down the pace so that at the end of the session all felt a real enthusiasm for spelling. This element of well paced, realistic challenge was generally only present in a few lessons.
21. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils’ attainment over a period of time and teachers use these assessments well to judge the level of work they plan for different groups. In mathematics in both key stages there are good systems for grouping pupils according to their level of attainment. By careful day-to-day observations and checking pupils’ work, teachers are able to judge how well pupils are achieving. Assessing pupils’ understanding as work proceeds and intervening to support and encourage is often done well and good examples were seen of teachers intervening successfully to help pupils understand how to improve specific aspects of their writing. However, sometimes praise was given when what was needed was not only praise but clear guidance on how to improve. Since September, teachers have set pupils targets and a record of these is kept in pupils’ books. However, not all teachers use these effectively to help pupils improve their work and develop awareness of their own learning. Subject managers have not monitored the quality and use of these targets.

22. Time is not always used as productively as possible. This is a result of teachers not clearly identifying what they want children to learn from a given activity and what further the pupils might learn if the first objective is gained quickly. Resources also are sometimes not used to best advantage. For example, in religious education lessons, most teachers showed religious artefacts to develop pupils' awareness of a different faith, but in the best lesson the teacher achieved a very good awareness of the Jewish faith which they were studying by dressing one pupil up in some of the garments of that faith, playing music and allowing pupils to taste festival food of apple and honey. The pupils' learning increased because their imaginations were aroused. The school's new computer suite is often used well to develop learning in other subjects. This is mostly done in literacy. Use of the classroom computers is more limited but in one science lesson on animal food chains, the teacher made an effective reference to the usefulness of computers by helping one pupil to locate information about a pike from a CD-ROM which was shared with the class. However, not all teachers are using computers as effectively as this in their day-to-day classroom work. The school has recently employed a number of new classroom assistants. Some had only been in the school for a few weeks and were not yet ready to make a full contribution to pupils' learning. However, experienced classroom assistants, special needs assistants and the nursery learning assistant were employed effectively and made good contributions to pupils' learning in group work. A number of parents voluntarily help in classes and give satisfactory support to groups of pupils. The school has not drawn up guidance to develop teachers' awareness of how best to use extra help in the classroom so in some classes learning assistants are not used effectively during whole class literacy or numeracy sessions to contribute, for instance by assessing and recording the quality or frequency of pupils' responses.

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

23. The curriculum overall is satisfactory in that it meets statutory requirements. Religious education is taught according to the North Yorkshire syllabus and there is a daily act of collective worship. The balance of the curriculum is strongly weighted in favour of English. Classes have a weekly lesson to develop writing skills. This provides opportunities for pupils to write at length, building on what they learn in the daily literacy hour. There is also additional time for reading provided at the beginning of the school day and after lunchtime most days of the week which is well used to improve pupils' understanding and appreciation of what they read. However, although this time is used well to develop pupils' reading and writing, time for work in other subjects is relatively short. There is no subject leader for music and this has resulted in unsatisfactory planning for music in the classes from Year 3 to Year 6.
24. In the nursery the six areas of learning are very well addressed and all six national targets for the age group are fully met. Planning is consistent across nursery and reception and ensures that activities develop children's knowledge and understanding in an appropriate manner. However, in the reception classes, the lack of space in classrooms makes planning for the youngest reception children difficult.
25. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are drawn up by the class teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator, and teachers incorporate these in their lesson planning. Pupils who are withdrawn to work with special needs staff receive good support to enable them to develop basic skills or to understand work in other subjects such as science.
26. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are both in place throughout the school and are contributing to the recent improvement in standards. However, the planning for literacy in Years 3 and 4 relies too heavily on commercial worksheets and does not always reflect the pupils' needs. There have been some planned links with literacy in other subjects. For example, in the history project, Millennium 2000, pupils dressed up as characters from the last hundred

years and performed songs and plays appropriate to the period. Another example is in geography, where pupils make good use of their research skills, when looking for information about St. Lucia. However, these opportunities are limited, and planning needs to improve the contribution other subjects can make to pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy. Well-planned links would also improve pupils' learning in the supporting subject. For example, in religious education pupils have little time to consolidate their knowledge by writing about what they have discussed in lessons. Teachers are not able to plan work for pupils which would involve the use of a library as the school does not have one.

27. The provision for clubs operating at lunchtime or after school is unsatisfactory. Two recorder groups operate intermittently; there is a choir on occasions, and football coaching and rounders operate seasonally. The school recognises that this is an area for development and plans to involve parents more to provide pupils with more opportunities.
28. Visiting theatre groups, an African dance group and a variety of musicians and artists broaden pupils' experiences of different cultures. A range of visits out of school, including the Norton School Farm Unit, the Crucial Crew Project in Scarborough, a visit to York for geography and a visit to the London Dome in the summer, support and enrich the curriculum and the opportunities available to pupils.
29. The school provides a weekly homework club for one hour after school, for Year 6 pupils in the autumn and spring terms. These are very well attended by pupils and supported by staff, and provide an effective opportunity for pupils to learn and practise their skills in readiness for the national tests.
30. The scheme of work for personal social development includes health and sex education and drug use and misuse. These are all taught within science and other curriculum areas such as physical education, and so planning meets statutory requirements. However, there is no separate time allocated to personal and social development on the timetable. The percentage of time allocated to science is relatively short and awareness, for example, of the dangers of drug misuse is not developed as fully as is generally found in most schools. In the summer term the school nurse comes in to discuss some aspects of health and sex education with the older pupils. There is no member of staff responsible for monitoring this area of learning which means that the amount of time individual teachers spend on the subject and the quality of pupils' learning varies through the school.
31. Many links with the local community were noted at the time of the previous inspection. These have been maintained by the school with visits, and visitors to and from the local area. There are social events such as pupils entertaining the senior citizens at the local community centre, and making them 'high tea'. Pupils entertained the 'In Touch' Club of older local residents before Christmas. They sang songs from the 1930s which were very well received. When pupils are learning about this period in history, the 'In Touch' Club come into the school and tell pupils their own stories about the Second World War and local life at that time. Pupils also visit local churches and the library. All these opportunities make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and towards their personal and social development. There are also good, well-established links with local playgroups and the two secondary schools where most of the pupils go, which ease the transfer of children to the nursery, and pupils to secondary school.
32. Provision made for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Acts of collective worship fulfil requirements. Those observed emphasised the value of friendship and respect for parents. Pupils are given sufficient opportunities to reflect and to consider their own lives and the lives of others but the teaching to develop this does not fully link to spiritual awareness. In religious education lessons pupils are encouraged well to compare their own experiences and feelings with those of others and to relate this to the different faiths of our community.

33. The school's provision for moral development is good. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. The majority behave well in class. Pupils are encouraged to be honest, diligent and trustworthy through the responsibilities they are given when they help the teachers. Pupils develop their ability to make considered choices through the techniques they learn in geography and history in relation to the research skills.
34. Provision for pupils' social development is good. From beginning school, pupils are encouraged to relate well to each other, to take turns and to share willingly. There is an established system of good peer support in classrooms evident in strategic seating arrangements. Fundraising at Harvest Festival is a regular feature of the school calendar and develops pupils' awareness of the importance of giving. Older pupils suggest charities they wish to support and the school encourages them to use their own initiative in allowing them to raise funds by their own efforts. Personal achievement is recognised by merit certificates which celebrate the success of pupils. Each term a trophy is presented for improvement and sustained effort. A trophy for the greatest contribution to the life of the school is awarded annually to a Year 6 pupil. Older pupils are given some opportunities to show their initiative or take on responsibilities around the school. For example, some pupils come into the school before the morning session or at lunchtimes to help teachers organise resources. Older pupils are given opportunities to help around the school as and when the need arises. However, planned opportunities for pupils to help with the day-to-day running of the school are rather limited and some simple opportunities, such as being made responsible for the collection of tokens or having telephone or library duties, are missed.
35. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Art is celebrated widely and boldly in school displays, some of it linked to famous artists. History and geography also provide pupils with opportunities to appreciate the richness of their own culture. Pupils gain some awareness through religious education of important festivals such as Hannukah and Diwali. However, there is insufficient focus on developing pupils' awareness of other cultures and traditions. Pupils become familiar with the music of some of the world's great composers which is played as they assemble for collective worship. Pupils benefit from visiting authors and particularly from a visiting artist. They go to museums and places of interest connected with class work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. Procedures for promoting pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory overall.
37. The headteacher sets a high standard for care and attention to pupils' individual needs. Teachers know their pupils well and keep detailed records of health and welfare needs. They respond to pupils' problems or personal difficulties with appropriate care and attention.
38. Child protection, accident and medical procedures are well established and understood by all staff. During the inspection an aspect of health and safety was brought to the attention of the school.
39. There is sufficient supervision at lunch and break times. Play is enhanced by the provision of small play equipment such as skipping ropes for Years 1 and 2 and basketball nets for the older pupils. There are areas for quiet play for those who wish to choose this. However, when the school field cannot be used the playground becomes overcrowded. This results in a high level of accidents, even though play is not unduly boisterous. The school has sought different ways to resolve this but currently has no other options but to leave the playgrounds crowded as at present or offer two separate playtimes, possibly with a mix of age ranges.
40. Good behaviour is actively promoted and monitored through pupils' personal files and staff discussions at weekly meetings. The good behaviour of younger pupils is rewarded with stickers whilst the older pupils can earn merits. All staff are aware of the school's stand on oppressive behaviour and any incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly. There is good

support from outside agencies to help the very small minority of pupils who find difficulty in controlling their behaviour to an acceptable level. Those pupils with special educational needs receive good support which effectively maintains their self-esteem and gives them confidence in their abilities to cope well with the curriculum. Peer support is encouraged in class by careful seating arrangements. Weekly meetings of the special needs team helps to ensure that pupils' needs are regularly reviewed and support staff receive good training.

41. Regular attendance and punctuality are encouraged and reasons for absence actively pursued. A health and safety policy is in place and assessments on the risks of the building are completed appropriately. The safety of pupils is a high priority although an aspect of concern was noted and reported to the governing body during the inspection. The pupils enjoy a clean, pleasant environment with attractive displays of their own work.
42. Throughout the school, there are appropriate procedures in place to assess pupils' achievements for English and mathematics, including tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. A well thought-out bank of statements for English, mathematics and science enables teachers to record quickly and in detail what pupils know and can do. A piece of written work undertaken in an assessment book forms a continuous record of each pupil's writing and helps teachers to check that they are assessing work in a similar way. A good strategy to involve pupils in assessing their own achievements has been started by including a target page at the back of the pupils' workbook. The nature of these targets is variable. Not all teachers have identified targets which are attainable over a sensible period of time and some would seem attainable in a very short space of time. In consequence, they have had little effect as yet on pupils' progress. There is little assessment of work in other subjects and this is the main weakness in the school's arrangements for assessment. There is also little written evidence in teachers' planning of how well the pupils' have achieved the objectives for that lesson and whether there were any pupils who did not achieve them at all. During lessons teachers effectively assess pupils as they work and use this information when planning future work but a written reminder would be useful.
43. The school has developed a good system of tracking individual pupils' achievements in the national tests and the school's own tests from the time children enter the nursery. This system has not been in place long but it is already being used to focus attention on those pupils who fall behind the majority and those who are of higher attainment. The school meets the statutory requirements for those pupils who have statements of special need. There is a good recording system for these pupils and their achievements are assessed thoroughly against the targets set for them in their individual education plans.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents are supportive of the school and the way it promotes positive attitudes and values. They feel they are well informed through regular newsletters and general information and are particularly happy with the three opportunities a year to discuss their children's progress.
45. The annual reports are detailed and explain what pupils can do but do not give parents a clear idea of how well pupils have achieved and what they should do to improve further.
46. The school has held meetings to introduce the literacy and numeracy strategies to parents. Each teacher has a display board which informs parents of the topics and work to be covered for each half term and parents find this helpful.
47. The school has continued to develop the links with parents since the last inspection by introducing a Parents' Forum. This is a positive step and gives parents a chance to put forward their views, along with suggestions from the pupils themselves, and influence decisions made in a variety of areas. For example, the Parents' Forum suggested that information about the work planned for each half term should be displayed outside each teacher's classroom. This has been

done, and parents appreciate being able to see what work is to be covered by their children. The Parents' Association works closely with the school to organise fund raising events for much needed resources.

48. There are a number of parents who regularly give of their time to help in classrooms, around the school or on educational visits. The support given by parents during swimming lessons is particularly beneficial to the less able swimmers. Parents support their children in other ways such as ensuring they attend regularly, in uniform and ready to learn. Parents are supportive of the school's arrangements for homework and particularly appreciate the homework club for pupils in Year 6. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed and given good support.
49. The school values the help parents give. In order to offer something back to parents the school provides access to the computer suite for parents who wish to improve their skills.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The headteacher, staff and governors plan well to improve the work of the school. All teaching staff contribute to identifying areas in need of development and governors make a significant contribution to this as well. For example, governors were involved in the school's decision to improve the pupils' skills in information technology by the acquisition of up-to-date technology. The headteacher has managed the finances of the school well over a long period of time, and this has enabled school developments to be supported by sufficient funds, and plans to be made with confidence that they can be carried out.
51. Governors are well informed about most aspects of the school's work and this enables them to make a positive contribution to setting the school's targets for pupils' performance in national tests and in choosing areas for the focus of the headteachers' work. Governors have a satisfactory system in place to ensure that care is taken to comply with all statutory requirements.
52. In recent years the school has developed an appropriate system of assessing pupils' achievements at the end of each year and now uses information technology well to track individual pupils' progress, year-on-year, starting with the assessments made when pupils first become of compulsory school age. This process has been useful to governors in judging how well the school is doing. It has also raised the awareness of all staff to the importance of evaluating how well their teaching helps to raise standards. The school has used information from the national tests effectively to identify weaknesses in curriculum provision. For example, a focus of development has been how to improve pupils' ability to write at length since this element of the English test was shown to be the weakest area in the test results.
53. The line of responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school from the headteacher, through a team of senior managers and year group leaders to the class teachers is well organised which is of particular importance in a school of this size. There are representatives from each phase on the senior management team, together with the special educational needs co-ordinator and this helps all members of staff feel part of the whole school team. The school operates as one, including the nursery, rather than as separate phases. There is a good spirit of a committed staff team working together for the good of the pupils. Year group teams all have a leader who is responsible for checking that school policies are reflected in the work of all staff, for example, checking that the behaviour policy is carried out in a similar way by all staff. Where team leadership is strong, this is done well, but where leadership is not so strong, as in Years 3 and 4, it is less effective and in classes in this year group there are variations in the expectations of pupils' behaviour.

54. The headteacher carries out an adequate check of the quality of teachers' work by looking at the lessons they plan and by carrying out observations of teaching throughout the school. The literacy subject leader has also checked the quality of work in English lessons over the past year. However, although both have reviewed the standards of teaching, a clear plan of action to address weaknesses has not been undertaken. The literacy strategy was introduced two years ago and was not reviewed until this spring which reflects the school's lack of experience in checking, evaluating and then putting right teaching strategies. Only a few teachers write an evaluation of whether the learning they have planned has been achieved and by which pupils. Most teachers have this knowledge in their heads and use it to plan future work but without a simple note of this it is difficult to see how those responsible for monitoring planning and pupils' achievements can evaluate the effectiveness of teaching some weeks later.
55. The school has a good system in place for ensuring that staff receive the training they need and this has been particularly effective in developing the knowledge and expertise of subject managers. Most subjects are led by enthusiastic staff who have a clear idea of how to improve and develop their subject. Staff are organised in teams to work on the development of subjects and every member of staff contributes time and effort. Members of subject teams are responsible for monitoring the teachers' planning and pupils' achievements in their year group. However, subject leaders do not provide written evaluations to class teachers on the quality of planning so that teachers can reflect on their own practice. Because the system of having a team for each subject is not easily managed there is currently no co-ordinator for music and the co-ordinator for physical education has no team members which is reflected in the slowing of pupils' progress in Key Stage 2. Other aspects such as the library and the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education do not have a member of staff to provide leadership.
56. Financial planning and the strategic use of resources, grants and other funding are good. Spending levels closely reflect the school's priorities for development and sensible projections are made of future needs. The specific grants the school receives are used well. For example, the funding provided to 'boost' the attainment of older pupils prior to their transfer to secondary education has been used constructively and helped ensure that most 11-year-olds attain standards in English and mathematics that are similar to the national average. Similarly, the funding the school receives to meet the requirements of pupils with special educational needs is equally well spent and these pupils make good progress in their learning.
57. Particularly good use has been made of a national grant for information technology provided to raise standards in the subject and improve the quality of teaching. Careful planning plus the well-considered use of some of the school's own budget surplus have provided new computers and a good range of other equipment which are used regularly by both teachers and pupils. There were some concerns at the last inspection for the quality of teaching in information technology but these modern resources and the training that has accompanied them have given teachers far more confidence and their teaching is much improved.
58. The headteacher and governors regularly monitor the school's financial position and spending commitments. The finance committee of the governing body meets at least once each term to go through the figures and to consider the implications of the school's spending. When decisions have to be made the headteacher will often provide alternatives for the governors to discuss so that due consideration can be given to getting the best value for the money that is to be spent.
59. There are good links between staff and governors helping to ensure that the views of those most concerned with any decisions are taken into account. For example, subject leaders manage their own budgets. The amount of money they are allocated each year varies depending on what they need to buy to ensure that the subject can be taught effectively. This year, for example, the science subject leader has applied for extra money to buy new books, which after careful consideration by the governors has been allocated. This level of delegation of responsibility and corporate decision taking makes for efficient financial management.

60. A very recent audit by local authority finance officers found the systems of financial control to be good. Secure systems of financial administration are in place and up-to-date information is readily available as and when it is needed. Modern technology is used effectively to maintain the financial records but not as well used for other types of information, such as the records of pupils with special educational needs

61. Two aspects of the school's accommodation are unsatisfactory; these are the lack of access to an outside play area with the cramped conditions in the classes for reception children, and the lack of a school library. Both these aspects are to be rectified under the school's current building plans. The outside hard surface areas become too crowded at playtimes when the field is not in use and this leads to an unusually high number of accidents and limits pupils' enjoyment of outside play.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. The governors, headteacher and senior management of the school should draw up a post-inspection plan to :-
- improve the monitoring of teaching, planning and pupils' achievements by subject leaders, and the effectiveness of the school's current process for monitoring policies (Paragraphs 21, 53, 55, 86, 102, 143, 148);
 - ensure that when weaknesses in teaching are identified action is taken (Paragraphs 54, 86, 95);
 - make sure that all areas of the curriculum and, where appropriate other areas of school life, have a member of staff who takes the lead in developing it to ensure the best quality provision for pupils (Paragraphs 23, 30, 132, 137);
 - develop a library of good quality which pupils can use to support their learning and social development (Paragraph 26);
 - ensure that current plans to re-organise the reception and Year 1 classes are carried out (Paragraphs 24, 72, 73).

The report identifies other minor weaknesses which the school should consider:-

- the pupils are too crowded at playtime when the field is not in use (Paragraph 39);
- there are few opportunities for pupils to join in clubs run out of school time and opportunities for older pupils to show initiative are limited (Paragraphs 27, 34, 137,143);
- pupils' reports do not give parents a sufficiently clear idea of pupils' achievements and how parents can help their children to improve (Paragraph 46).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	103
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	44	37	8	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	43	575
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	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	0	162

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	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	32

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	39	32	71

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	35	38
	Girls	25	25	30
	Total	60	60	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85	85	96
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	38	38
	Girls	30	28	28
	Total	66	66	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93	93	93
	National	82	86	87

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	44	29	73

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	32	35	36
	Girls	25	24	24
	Total	57	59	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78(65)	81(65)	82(69)
	National	70(63)	69(62)	78(68)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	32	34	38
	Girls	37	35	34
	Total	69	69	72
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69	69	72
	National	68	69	75

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	575
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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	2	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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: R – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.4
Average class size	28.2

Education support staff: R – Y1

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	121

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	40

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	9440434
Total expenditure	977896
Expenditure per pupil	1464
Balance brought forward from previous year	-33862
Balance carried forward to next year	38514

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	483
Number of questionnaires returned	286

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	44	50	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	59	3	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	56	7	3	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	54	13	3	9
The teaching is good.	41	50	3	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	34	48	14	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	39	9	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	50	1	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	31	45	15	3	5
The school is well led and managed.	38	44	7	5	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	51	7	1	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	32	27	9	15

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

63. Provision for children under five is in a nursery and in five mixed-age classes of reception and year one children. Currently in the nursery there are 66 children who attend part-time and in the reception classes 83 children who attend full-time. Children enter the nursery in the term when they are four and the reception class in the term in which they are five; there are therefore three intakes a year to both the nursery and reception classes.
64. Many children entering the nursery have limitations in personal and social, language and mathematical skills. Attainment overall is below what one would expect of three-year-olds. However, children progress well in the nursery, and with the additional time in the reception class by the age of five are achieving the national targets in language and literacy, in mathematical development, in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative development. Pupils exceed the targets in physical development and in the development of personal and social skills. Overall achievement is good for children under the age of five.
65. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Pupils are achieving the national targets for five-year-olds, and exceeding them in personal and social education and in physical development. The school has satisfactorily addressed the critical comments in the last report on the use of computers, and on teaching children to learn to write.
66. Children's personal and social development is good. In the nursery and reception classes teachers and other staff establish an orderly and caring environment where children know the classroom rules very well, relate positively to adults and other children, and behave sensibly when working independently or when seated quietly listening and responding to the teacher. Minor incidents are quickly and sensitively dealt with. Children are taught to care for others and be helpful and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. In both nursery and reception children are able to choose activities and resources sensibly and sustain attention well on a single activity. Nursery children behave very well for their age, persevere with a chosen activity and work well with or alongside other children.
67. Children's progress in language and literacy is good in the nursery. Great attention is given to developing children's speaking and listening skills and developing confidence in communication. A good foundation in reading and writing skills is also established with a firm emphasis on learning letter sounds. Teachers plan and assess work in English very well, and support the children's developing language thoroughly and sensitively. Reception teachers build on this satisfactorily, but children's progress is affected by the organisation of the reception classes with Year 1. Difficulties are encountered in how best to organise the literacy hour to accommodate the needs of both age groups and to take account of the very youngest children. Tasks for reception children are not always sufficiently challenging and time focused on their learning is at times insufficient. Consequently the pace of learning slackens. Teaching assistants are not used to best advantage to support language work. A small proportion of the teaching was unsatisfactory because the learning activity was unclear and inappropriate, like having to make words with playdough or the task too simple. In these instances children did not improve their knowledge and understanding of words and letters. However, by five, children listen attentively and with understanding and enjoyment to a story, and can express their ideas simply to individuals or the whole class. They identify letters by sound and name and can read a small number of words. High attainers can read simple books with accuracy and confidence. Average and low attainers can tell the story well in a picture book, making use of pictorial clues and memory. Pupils understand the concept 'letter' and can accurately count the number of

letters in a word. Most children can write their name correctly and can copy writing, though with varying degrees of skill in letter formation.

68. In mathematical development most children attain standards in line with those expected of their age. Teaching in both the nursery and reception is good. Basic skills of counting and number work are well taught with a variety of strategies to consolidate and extend learning. All can count to 10 easily and a good number up to 20. High attainers can record the three numbers of three dice they have rolled and carry out simple addition to find the sum. Children can organise objects into sets according to size and whether they are thick or thin. They can order numbers up to 10 on a washing line and can sort and recognise a range of three-dimensional shapes.
69. Children have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the world with regard to the experiences and topics they have covered in the nursery and reception classes but they have gaps in their knowledge and in the vocabulary they use to describe their environment or the wider world. Children in the nursery have a good understanding about small creatures and use their knowledge to good effect in their artwork when they use observational skills well when drawing and painting. Many children use the computer mouse with confidence to dress and undress Teddy, and with some support are able to program a floor robot. Five-year-olds had a satisfactory understanding of various parts of plants they had collected and of the process of growth. In a reception lesson on plants, high attaining and average pupils were able to note similarities and differences and record these in their drawings. Newer reception children had some difficulty in understanding the process from seed to plant, and the worksheet task was unhelpful. Both nursery and reception children explore materials and can cut, join and fold satisfactorily. Teaching is good. Teachers plan carefully and organise their classrooms well to develop pupils' understanding of their environment and of present and past events in their lives.
70. By the age of five pupils' creative development is at a satisfactory level. They can mix colours effectively, and paint with confidence and attention to detail and composition. Reception children have good drawing skills for their age in representing flowers and plants. In one lesson the teacher effectively encouraged a group of reception children to paint a flower in the Impressionist style of Monet. The teaching of English is effective. The teacher in one lesson used a variety of strategies well that were very appropriate for the age group, to develop their understanding of loud and quiet. Children understand how sounds can change in different ways and can play percussion instruments with control to create the appropriate dynamic, and high attainers understand that a louder sound is made by hitting or shaking the instrument harder.
71. Children make good progress in their physical development. Nursery children develop balance and control well as they explore the outdoor play equipment. They develop their manipulative skills well in construction activities, where they handle objects and materials with good levels of control. In physical education lessons reception children move confidently and with good levels of control. In one lesson seen they learnt to control a ball using both hands and feet. The teaching was good, because the planned activities provided a sufficient level of challenge to all levels of ability. The teacher gave opportunities for children to think about what they were doing, asking questions like, 'Which was harder?' and 'Did you do that well?' The teacher kept the activities going at a good pace whilst allowing sufficient time for pupils to develop their skills.
72. Teaching in the nursery is predominantly good for all areas of the curriculum, and on occasions very good. The planning and organisation of children's learning is very good indeed. There is also a very good working relationship between the teacher, the nursery nurse and non-teaching assistant. They structure and support learning well, both in activities with direct teaching and those when children are engaged in structured play. In the reception classes teaching is mostly good. In a minority of instances it was unsatisfactory in relation to provision for reception age children. The current organisational arrangements of mixed reception and Year 1 classes makes it difficult for teachers to always provide satisfactory learning experiences for children under the

age of five. Dealing with very young children joining the existing class at three points during the year is a demanding task. This has been recognised by the school and separate classes are planned for next year. Assessment and recording procedures in both nursery and reception are good, and are used well to track progress and to plan to children's needs.

73. Leadership and management of the Early Years curriculum are good. There is good liaison between nursery and reception staff, who meet regularly. Good assessment and recording systems are in place and used well across both nursery and reception classes. There are good arrangements to introduce parents and children to the nursery, and regular contact is maintained with parents through nursery and reception classes. A particularly good feature is the involvement of the majority of parents in discussion of assessment on entry and how they may best support their own child's learning and development. Accommodation and resources are good for the nursery and adequate for the reception classes. However, the small size of some reception/Year 1 classrooms sets limitations on the range of activities which can be offered.

ENGLISH

74. The standard of pupils' work in Year 2 and Year 6 confirms that the increase in standards indicated by last year's national tests has been maintained this year. Pupils' attainment is in line with the national average at the end of both key stages, with reading being above average at the end of Key Stage 2. The previous inspection report said that pupils were achieving slightly above expected levels by the age of seven, and a little below expected levels by the age of 11. More specifically, the quality of written work was unsatisfactory overall in junior classes. The school has put this right in that the standard of work in most classes is now satisfactory. In the national tests in 1999, the school's results at the end of Key Stage 2 matched the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level was close to the national average. These results were the highest over the last four years and register a big increase over the 1997 and 1998 results which were both well below the national average.
75. As standards in the national tests were lower in writing than reading, the school had put a number of initiatives in place to raise standards in writing, as well as operating a homework club for Year 6 pupils and 'booster' classes. The subsequent results would suggest that these initiatives were successful and the school wisely continued them this year. In addition classes now have a lesson a week developing pupils' writing skills on the computer. The school's target for this year is for 75 per cent of Year 6 pupils to achieve the average level or above and this should be met by the current Year 6 pupils or nearly so.
76. By the age of 11 standards in reading are good. Pupils are achieving well in reading. By Year 6 most pupils read fluently, with understanding and good expression, as indeed do many pupils in Year 5. Most pupils are confident readers. They are attentive in lessons and are keen to learn. They enjoy talking about their reading habits, discuss preferred authors and books, explain their preferences and draw inferences from what they read, reading between the lines. Pupils have a good understanding of how to write a book review. In reading time, pupils regularly talk about what they read in class and recommend books to the class or not, explaining their reasons, from Year 3 upwards. In a Year 5 and 6 class there is a rush on for the popular 'Harry Potter' series by J.K. Rowling, particularly after the teacher has been reading one of the series with the class. Pupils know how to find and interpret information in non-fiction books. They make good use of different information sources to gather facts and form opinions. However, the school library is small and inadequate for the purpose of supporting pupils' learning across different subjects and it was not possible to judge how well pupils understood the organisation of a library.
77. By the age of seven standards in reading are satisfactory, although pupils' knowledge, understanding and interest in books are higher than that usually found at this age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. For example, a much larger proportion of pupils are attaining the

expected level or above than their assessments at the age of five predicted and this indicates good progress over two years. By the end of Year 2, pupils of above average attainment read books fluently and can retell the main events in their book. Many read with appropriate expression, taking note of full stops in their reading and becoming confident. All pupils can combine letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words and can use 'contents' and 'index' pages in non-fiction books. They predict what a book is going to be about, using the 'blurb' on the back of the book and any background information they might already have. For example, when predicting what a story by the author Mairi Hedderwick might be about, they draw on their knowledge of other books they have read by her, and what they know about the author. Pupils are attentive during whole class reading times. They enjoy reading and many read to someone at home.

78. Standards in writing are close to the national average by the time pupils are eleven. Their achievements in the older classes are satisfactory but they make more progress in Years 5 and 6 than they do in Years 3 and 4 when too much work is done on commercially produced worksheets which do not give pupils enough opportunities to organise their own work. Pupils are attentive and work hard in most lessons but in a few lessons pupils wasted time chattering. By Year 6 pupils write in a variety of styles and formats. For example, they write newspaper articles, poems and letters of complaint. They write well in science recording the work done in their investigations. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are beginning to use computers effectively to help them draft and redraft their writing to improve the quality. For example, they can use a thesaurus to select a suitable word. Year 6 have written 'detective' stories using all the features common to the kind of stories which are full of action. They use short sentences to move the story along at a fast pace and often end on a humorous note. Higher attaining pupils in Years 6 generally have good ideas which they express in a lively way using spelling and punctuation accurately. However, some pupils of average and lower attainment have difficulty in expressing their creative ideas well because they spell quite common words incorrectly and they do not have a sufficiently good grounding in the use of punctuation. Some pupils in Year 4 are not at the expected level in understanding the correct use of English grammar and in their use of punctuation.
79. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards in writing are close to the national average, but with fewer pupils attaining the higher level. In Years 1 and 2 pupils' achievements are good. Many in these year groups did not achieve levels expected by the time they were five and have had to work hard to achieve their current standard. In Year 2 above average pupils formulate their own questions, using question words, to ask others in the class. Their standard of writing is good. Their interesting questions are accurately spelt, with neat handwriting, correct punctuation, including question marks. Working with the teacher, pupils of above average ability can draw up a job description for a caretaker, using bullet points rather than full sentences. They develop joined handwriting and it becomes smaller and the letters more regular in size. Pupils of average ability are beginning to join their handwriting. Many can use features of a traditional story in their own writing, for instance about the adventures of a group of animals, such as repeating a question to each animal as the story proceeds. Their use of full stops and capital letters is becoming more consistent, as is spelling of common words. The pupils of below average attainment can spell some common words correctly and write short pieces, sometimes using full stops and capital letters correctly, and with reminders from adults at others.
80. By the ages of seven and 11 pupils are achieving a satisfactory standard in speaking and listening. Pupils make satisfactory progress through both key stages. However, in those classes in Years 3 and 4 where teachers do not expect a good level of attention from all the class, pupils' achievements in listening are lower. For example in a Year 3 science lesson, the teacher asked repeatedly for pupils to offer answers to questions but only a few pupils bothered to respond. In Years 6, pupils achieve well. They develop their critical awareness by giving their opinion of each other's writing. They listen to the opinions of others and confidently share their own. From Year 3 to Year 6, pupils regularly give and justify their opinion about the book they

are reading to the whole class, and ask other pupils about their books, or comment on the book if it's one they have also read. Above average pupils in Year 2 can explain exactly what they have been doing earlier in the lesson and show very good understanding. Below average pupils can also explain to the class what their activity has been and how they carried it out, with support from the teacher. When other pupils or the teacher is talking, pupils listen very well.

81. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 88 per cent of lessons with 42 per cent of lessons good or better. Twelve per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. There were good and very good lessons in all year groups but the teaching in Year 6 and Year 2 was of a higher standard than in other year groups. The unsatisfactory teaching was in the classes from Years 3 to Years 6. The varying quality of teaching reflects the need for the school to monitor and evaluate teachers' planning and the quality of teaching more effectively. Pupils acquire new skills and knowledge at a good rate in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 they acquire knowledge at a good rate in some classes, but in others pupils do not make enough progress in learning grammar and punctuation. In the lessons which give pupils the opportunity to write at length pupils make good progress in expressing their ideas and developing their vocabulary in all year groups.
82. In the best lessons, teachers' enthusiasm and very good subject knowledge created high expectations which challenged the pupils and they learnt well. In some lessons, particularly in Year 2, the teachers planned thoroughly for different parts of the lesson. Their good subject knowledge and confident interesting delivery, allied to good use of questioning, provided many opportunities for pupils to learn and achieve the lesson objectives. Group activities were closely related to the work done together in the first half of the lesson. The teachers expected and encouraged pupils to share what they had learnt with the rest of the class. This provided good opportunities for pupils to clarify their thinking, and for the teacher to assess how much the pupils had learnt. In these lessons pupils knew what they were learning and why and so made good progress. In some classes, with older pupils, teachers established a very good working atmosphere where pupils felt free to contribute their ideas and as a consequence they learnt well. Pupils were interested and involved in the lesson and enjoyed it. In one lesson pupils extended their vocabulary when identifying words and phrases which added to the atmosphere of the story they were reading together. In most classes teachers managed pupils well. Relationships were good. Pupils generally worked well when working without a teacher in groups, and collaborated well on joint projects, such as reading a play or book together. In a few lessons teachers did not make their expectations of good behaviour clear and in consequence pupils did not pay sufficient attention to instructions.
83. Pupils make little gains in their learning when teachers do not fully understand some of the aspects of language or grammar that they are teaching. This was the case when mistakes were made on a flipchart and unclear explanations were given, leading to confusion on the part of pupils about what they were meant to do and learn. In some classes teachers depend too heavily on commercially produced worksheets. Whilst these can be helpful at times, they often lead to pupils having support when they do not need it, and because they are not being sufficiently challenged their standard of presentation deteriorates and their concentration lessens. Some lessons provide pupils with appropriate activities to keep them busy but fail to stimulate or develop interest so that they work with real enthusiasm.
84. All the classes follow the structure of the literacy hour appropriately. The guided reading sessions are effective in supporting pupils' learning in some classes, but in others teachers have not identified what they want pupils to learn during this time and in consequence pupils make little progress. Most teachers offer good support to pupils as they write but not all teachers assess pupils' work well and this is usually because they have not identified clearly what they want pupils to achieve. In Year 2 classes teachers use a planning form for their guided reading session with the pupils, and assess the pupils' progress during the lesson but this is not done throughout the school.

85. The school has developed a good system for encouraging pupils to assess their own achievements by individual or group targets written in the front of pupils' books. However, not all teachers use these targets effectively. A few teachers refer to the group targets during the lesson, where the focus of the lesson coincides with pupils' group targets, for example when thinking of some interesting connectives and others refer to the targets when they mark pupils' books. Many pupils were not aware of their targets and one pupil could not read the word 'connectives' in her target, and did not know what it meant. Marking is also inconsistent. Some teachers' comments offer encouragement and good support to pupils to help them improve, particularly at the younger end of the school. However, some marking is in the form of a tick or brief comment and does not make it clear what could be done to improve. The achievements of pupils with special educational needs is assessed very carefully by the special needs co-ordinator, together with the class teachers and individual targets are set. Good support is planned, including working with the co-ordinator or a teaching assistant and working in class and because of this pupils with special educational needs make good progress in all classes.
86. The English subject leader has worked hard to implement the literacy hour and support and guide colleagues. In March this year, time was allocated for observations of teaching in each class during literacy hour with a particular focus on the time that pupils spend working in groups. Whilst the monitoring was done adequately, there was insufficient time to take action to address weaknesses in the current year. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy was some 18 months prior to that and some system of monitoring both teaching and planning, and pupils' achievements should have been in place much sooner.
87. The school has sufficient sets of fiction and poetry books. However, there are insufficient resources in the school to support the teaching of non-fiction forms of writing, particularly of sets of group readers for classes from Year 3 to Year 6. The stock in the school library is not adequate to support pupils' learning and development of research skills. There are not many resources which reflect a variety of cultures or show people from a variety of backgrounds so as to contribute to pupils' personal and social development. Some classrooms have no carpeted area and some have no blinds for effective use of the overhead projector in the literacy hour. The use of computers is effective and a valuable resource.

MATHEMATICS

88. By the ages of seven and 11, standards match with the national averages and are similar to those described in the previous inspection. The pupils are learning at a good rate in Years 1 and 2 because of an effective introduction of the numeracy strategy. In Key Stage 2, pupils make mostly satisfactory progress in lessons with some good progress in Year 6. The pupils' achievements by the end of both key stages are satisfactory.
89. In the national tests in 1999 for seven-year-olds the school's results were in line with national averages, and also with those of similar schools. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels was below the national average. In the 1999 national tests for 11-year-olds the school's results were above the national average and better than in previous two years. The attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is lower than in 1999 because of the greater number of pupils with special educational needs. There has also been some inconsistent teaching in the earlier part of the key stage. Year 6 pupils make good progress because of the consistently good teaching they receive. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at both key stages. The setting arrangement at Key Stage 2, which includes smaller classes for pupils with special educational needs, is making a significant contribution to their progress.
90. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established, and is enabling pupils in Years 1 and 2 to build up mathematical knowledge and understanding systematically. Pupils enjoy mathematics and show interest and enthusiasm in lessons. Most of the younger pupils understand the operations of addition and subtraction. They successfully add three numbers together, making

totals up to 20. Many pupils can count up to 100. High achieving pupils competently count up and down in tens. Year 2 pupils quickly add numbers to 10 mentally. They double numbers to 20 and count in multiples of two, three and five to 30. Most are developing effective mental strategies when working with higher numbers. For example, when calculating cost and change in money problems, some counted down from the highest number whilst others used their knowledge of 10's to speed calculations. They gave good descriptions of the methods they used. Throughout the classes, pupils make good progress in most aspects of mathematics, and are developing confidence and enthusiasm for the subject. They name and identify the properties of simple two-dimensional shapes and construct and interpret simple bar graphs. For instance, Year 1 pupils took handfuls of coloured cubes and then charted the colours pictorially. However, pupils have too few opportunities to carry out simple mathematical investigations requiring them to select their own mathematical equipment to solve a problem. They rely mostly on the materials provided by the teacher and so they do not gain sufficient confidence in this aspect of mathematics.

91. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are making satisfactory progress when using the four operations of number. In calculations, they add and subtract numbers over 100, using standard pencil and paper methods. They use multiplication tables relevant to their age in early multiplication and division work. Many have good mental recall of multiplication tables using twos, fives and tens. They add simple fractions, and identify half and quarter of a regular shape. By the time they are 11, most pupils use the four operations competently and choose the correct operation when calculating two-part answers. However, pupils rarely check the reasonableness of their answers. They add, subtract and multiply decimals to one place. A significant minority of pupils do not learn multiplication tables, and their mental recall is too slow. Pupils' knowledge of fractional parts is good, and many can correctly change fractions to decimals and percentages. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of metric and imperial measures. High achieving pupils use brackets and organise number statements in a methodical way. They use both jottings and calculators to solve complex problems. For example, Year 6 pupils calculated the amounts of various minerals produced by a factory in one week and successfully used the memory keypad to store individual parts of the calculation. Throughout the key stage, pupils make satisfactory progress in data handling, and have begun to use a computer-generated programme to produce a variety of graphs. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to construct individual graphs using information specific to them, or where the symbol represents a group of units.
92. Pupils have too few opportunities to use their number skills in other subjects such as measuring in design and technology, science and geography. The use of computers to support learning in mathematics is developing well. For example, Year 6 pupils completed computer-generated mental agility exercises using multiplication tables. They used positive and negative numbers, and decimals to two places in a problem-solving exercise.
93. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2, and consistently good in Year 6. Where teaching was good, planning was based securely on what pupils need to learn. The teacher outlined the task clearly and used small ordered steps which built on pupils' prior learning. For example, in a Year 5 lesson the teacher used the overhead projector very effectively to guide pupils through the stages of a complex calculation. The problem was read and understood, and the correct number operations were identified. The answer was checked for its plausibility. This enabled pupils to approach the problem systematically, and most were able to proceed confidently. In the teaching of good quality there was an effective match of work to pupils' attainments, resulting in a good rate of challenge which enabled pupils to maintain interest and make good progress. Appropriate time scales were set and expectations of pupils' work and behaviour were high. Nearly all teachers focus well on the part of the lesson concerned with mental calculations so that pupils improve their ability to explain mathematical processes. All teachers have introduced the numeracy strategy satisfactorily and have achieved a good balance between class, group and individual work. Concluding sessions are used well to assess pupils' learning and to consolidate what pupils have

learnt. In the classes of younger pupils, number songs such as 'Five Speckled Frogs' give an enjoyable ending to lessons. The grouping of pupils in the oldest classes has been effective in raising standards, especially of 11-year-olds.

94. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, as was the case in one fifth of the lessons in Years 3 and 4, or has elements that were less successful, pupils were not sufficiently challenged, either by the content of the work or the pace of the lesson and as a result pupils did not try their best to work hard. On occasions, in a few classes in these year groups, expectations of behaviour and concentration were not high enough and this resulted in pupils chattering rather than paying attention to their work. In some lessons, pupils were given work at the same level of difficulty despite variations in their understanding and attainment. Teachers gave good praise and encouragement to pupils, but not all are skilful in asking questions that provide an extra stimulus to pupils' thinking. A comparative weakness in the otherwise good quality teaching of the six and seven-year-olds is in the planning. Corporate planning stems from good team work but it is not always adapted to take account of individual pupils in each class. Pupils have recently been set targets but their use throughout the school is inconsistent. Generally the targets are too broad and in some cases the language used is too complex, and so target setting is not making a significant contribution to pupils' awareness of their own learning and their progress. Though pupils' work is generally marked and dated by every teacher, pointers for improvement are rarely given.
95. The subject is well led in most areas, although there are some aspects in need of improvement. The school's results are analysed and an effective tracking system enables senior managers to evaluate pupils' progress and to identify those pupils who are under-achieving. This has contributed to the rise in standards in previous years. In conjunction with an adviser from the local education authority, the subject manager has monitored the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms. Areas of weakness have been identified, but as yet senior managers have not sufficiently addressed these issues. Individual pupil records enable teachers to identify the next area of learning. Teachers use assessment to check progress but in some classes there is too little use of day-to-day assessment to inform their lesson planning.

SCIENCE

96. By the ages of seven and 11 pupils attain standards in science that are very similar to the national average. Teachers' assessments indicate that a much larger proportion of pupils are achieving the expected level or above than predicated at an earlier age, indicating that pupils make good progress. The oldest pupils are well prepared for the science they will study at secondary school. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds, standards were average and much the same as those attained by schools with a similar pupil intake to Norton. These results were a significant improvement over the previous two years when the school's performance had been below average. The school checked a trend of falling attainment and for the first time since 1996 it was able to reflect the rise in standards that had occurred nationally. The improvement was not only evident in the number of pupils attaining the nationally expected level but also in the number who went on to attain the higher level and at both levels results matched the national average.
97. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given a wide range of opportunities to investigate the world around them and in all areas of science most seven-year-olds have the knowledge and understanding expected of the age group. The majority of pupils can name the exterior features of the body and explain what they do, such as the elbow allowing the arm to bend. They can link familiar common animals to their habitat and suggest simple ways in which they can be classified, such as those that have wings and those that do not. As well as gaining knowledge, pupils also acquire basic skills in scientific investigation. Pupils in Year 1 carry out simple tests and are able to relate what they have observed to what they were trying to find out. When testing slopes to find out how far a toy vehicle will run, Year 2 pupils apply the principles of fair testing well,

use hand spans to measure accurately and record their findings clearly. Higher attaining pupils put forward thoughtful explanations for the outcomes of their investigations, such as one seven-year-old suggesting that the highest slope made the vehicle go further because 'the higher ramp gave the car more force behind it'.

98. Better teaching, helped by the purchase of better reference books for teachers to use when lesson planning, raised standards in 1999. The changes involved expense for the school and extra work for the teachers, particularly the subject manager, but the benefits are very apparent and the improved standards have been maintained this year. Pupils currently in Year 6 attain standards that match the national average in all the different aspects of the subject. In Years 3 to 6 pupils have a good balance of scientific knowledge and skills. Teachers encourage pupils to show independence when carrying out investigations. Higher attaining 11-year-olds use their knowledge well to make sense of their findings and to draw conclusions from them. The broad curriculum that teachers provide helps pupils to develop clear ideas about living things, materials and physical processes. For example, experiments about dissolving in Years 3 and 4 provide pupils with secure ideas about how mixtures and solutions are formed. These ideas are built upon in Years 5 and 6 and pupils acquire a good understanding of how different mixtures can be separated using processes such as evaporation and filtration. Year 6 pupils have recently been investigating quite complex ideas about sound. Pupils have worked hard to grasp the ideas and despite the complexities have developed a clear understanding of how sounds are created and what determines the pitch of a note. The high levels of interest shown by these pupils and the way that they applied themselves to the tasks in hand are typical of the good attitudes pupils of all ages show to science.
99. In all year groups the teaching was of a very satisfactory standard and a significant proportion of lessons have good features. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers often plan their lessons in year group teams; an approach that works well. It provides a high level of consistency between the different classes and helps to ensure that pupils are given similar opportunities to learn. However, some lessons made insufficient provision for the minority of lower attaining pupils who find scientific ideas and vocabulary difficult to grasp. When this occurred lower attaining pupils did not make as much progress as they should.
100. In general teachers have a good understanding of science and their confidence when teaching the subject is transmitted to the pupils. The result is lively lessons with good levels of interaction between teachers and pupils. On occasions teachers talked too much and did not give pupils enough opportunities to put forward their own ideas but more often teachers questioned pupils skilfully and gave careful consideration to their answers. The value that the teachers placed on all contributions encouraged pupils and they readily shared their ideas with the rest of the class. The most productive lessons were characterised by a good level of challenge which required pupils to think and make decisions for themselves. Most pupils thought hard about what they needed to do and the best way of obtaining the information they required. In both key stages pupils with special educational needs receive effective support from teachers and classroom assistants and also from other pupils. As a consequence they learn well and make good progress in science.
101. Teachers generally make effective use of the opportunities science presents to extend pupils' reading and writing. Pupils read for information and write in different styles when recording information, answering questions or constructing reports of what they have done and found out. However, pupils are not taught a consistent style of report writing and this adversely affects their understanding of how to present their ideas and findings. Pupils' use of numbers is occasionally promoted through science. Again there are inconsistencies in approach and no clear plan of how numeracy should be developed through science. Insufficient use is made of information technology in science and in the main pupils are unaware of how the computer can aid their work in the subject.

102. The subject is well led. The subject leader has a clear vision for the future that is firmly based on the raising of standards. She is also responsible for two other subjects. This is a heavy management role in a school of this size and places limitations on the amount of monitoring of teaching and planning carried out. A decision has been taken to involve another teacher who has a science background in the management of the subject but it is not clear how this will operate within the overall system of monitoring teaching and pupils' achievements.

ART

103. The quality of pupils' work is high and pupils exceed standards generally expected of seven and 11-year-olds. The high standards seen in the previous inspection have been maintained.
104. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in the acquisition of skills and in their understanding of art as an expressive medium. This includes pupils with special educational needs. Pupils have good opportunities to use a variety of techniques and media, working in a variety of scales and including work in three-dimensional media.
105. Observational drawing is well developed throughout the school. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 had sketched musical instruments with some pupils beginning to pay attention to tone in their shading. Pupils have made well-observed drawings of trees and plants found around the school, using magnifiers to examine closely the details in order to sketch accurately what they see. In the junior classes, clear progression can be seen in the confident use of pencil line and shading in the trainers pupils have drawn. Clay models of trainers complement the observational drawings using three-dimensional work to good effect.
106. Throughout the key stages, pupils experience a wide range of media including drawing, painting, printing and collage. Pupils in Year 1 and reception have successfully used thick paint to depict sunflowers, trying to capture texture in their paintings in the same way as Van Gogh. They learn to apply a wash, appreciating the different consistency of paint required. Others experiment with aqua pastels and with printing to produce their sunflowers. They use water colour to experiment with the Impressionist method of painting. They look carefully at Monet's impression of flowers and are encouraged to paint form rather than a detailed representation. The work of the Victorian artist, Atkinson Grimshaw, inspires pupils to paint South Bay, Scarborough in his style. Art from different cultures and times is used to help pupils understand their own and other cultures. Linked to their geographical study of an Indian village, Years 3 and 4 have looked carefully at pattern in tiles. They have studied Mendhi designs and decorated hand shapes to display this technique. Textiles have been used creatively to fashion Indian dress on small cut-out models. In Year 5, linked to a study of Ancient Greece, pupils have drawn carefully the designs in Ionic, Doric and Corinthian columns.
107. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge which helps them to prepare well-focused lessons. Lessons are carefully planned for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. There is a good balance of instruction by the teacher and sufficient practical time in which the pupils can develop and refine their technique. Teachers build successfully on previous learning. They encourage pupils to develop good work habits, using sketchbooks to try out ideas. In consequence, pupils try hard to create pleasing pieces of art. Teachers intervene effectively with individuals, discussing their work and helping them to consider possibilities and improvements. They make good use of selected pieces of pupils' work to draw attention to particularly good features. They use praise and encouragement well.
108. Resources are presented well and available to pupils so that they learn how to work together and to use and take care of equipment while they are creative. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 class pupils shared resources while making careful choices about colour and texture to build up a joint

collage. Teachers use artists such as Van Gogh and Henri Rousseau to develop pupils' cultural awareness.

109. The subject is well led. The subject leader has developed a comprehensive curriculum plan covering a spread of knowledge, techniques and materials appropriate to the year groups. Planning for progression in knowledge, skills and understanding is secure. There is emphasis on the importance of display as a vehicle for learning, assessment and the celebration of pupils' efforts. Displays in the classrooms and around the school are well presented, stimulating and colourful. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural education.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. By the time they are seven and 11, most pupils reach the standard expected for pupils of these ages and make satisfactory progress in their learning in the majority of the aspects of this subject. It was not possible on this inspection to judge the quality of making skills as no relevant lessons; products or photographs of products were available to evaluate. Children with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress because of the carefully considered help they receive from teachers and classroom support assistants.
111. By the time they are 11 pupils have satisfactory skills in designing and in evaluating the success of what they have made. They use different sources of information to help develop their ideas and are able to make sensible suggestions for how their design or proto-type model might be improved. They can investigate, disassemble and evaluate simple products. They have, for instance, explored different kinds of biscuits, considering shape, colour, texture, kinds of ingredients, and how the biscuits are made and packaged. This information helped them in turn to design, make and evaluate a particular kind of biscuit themselves. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson on fairground mechanisms, pupils knew a good deal about simple control mechanisms and were able to offer a variety of sensible suggestions for how different fairground rides worked. They were aware of different forces like 'push' and 'gravity', and knew the functions of wheels, cogs and winches. Some high attainers recalled 'cams' and 'followers' from work carried out earlier in the year.
112. Although it was not possible to see any lessons in Years 1 and 2, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion of it with a small group of Year 2 pupils demonstrated that levels of knowledge and skills are satisfactory. Pupils have created clear, practical designs for a winding toy and for a 'box' car. They draw carefully and explain well the materials they are going to use and how they intend making it. Pupils explained well how they had set about the work, the range of choice they had been given, and how they had evaluated and modified their models.
113. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Lessons are well planned with good resources assembled. Questioning and explanations are clearly focused. Pupils' existing knowledge is challenged and good opportunities are given for pupils to consider new information through group discussion. Pupils concentrate and work hard because they are intellectually stimulated and because they are clear about the purpose of the activities. They are also given responsibility to explore and develop ideas of their own and in consequence they behave well
114. The subject leader has a good grasp of current provision. The curriculum is satisfactory but to make sure that pupils have a really stimulating range of opportunities further development is needed. Strategies for curriculum development are already in place. For example, the use of technology workbooks for pupils is currently being tried out in Years 5 and 6. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection, and the key issue relating to staff knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject has been well addressed.

GEOGRAPHY

115. There were few opportunities to observe teaching in Years 1 and 2 during the week of the inspection. Evidence from the lesson seen, pupils' work and talking to pupils shows that pupils have a balanced programme of work. Their attainment is in line with the average levels expected from pupils at age seven. They make good progress in the quality of work they produce and in their understanding.
116. Pupils in Year 2 consider the differences between living in Norton and on the Hebridean island of Coll. They can express opinions and explain the differences and similarities between town and country, for example the lack of shops on the Hebridean island. They can successfully identify physical features, such as mountains and rivers and human features such as roads and houses. They have studied aspects of the weather. Pupils, including lower attaining ones, can explain and interpret the weather bar graph they had done on the computer.
117. Pupils achieve well in the work they do in Years 3 to 6, but time for work in geography has been curtailed to allow for the time needed for English and mathematics so that there are often long gaps between geography topics so their overall achievements are satisfactory. By the time pupils are 11, their attainment is similar to what might be expected for pupils of this age. In the previous inspection, under-use of enquiry skills was noted. Research skills are now well developed and geographical tasks present pupils with an appropriate challenge. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 draw on a variety of information sources to research a contrasting area, St. Lucia in the Caribbean. Working co-operatively in groups, pupils can interpret rainfall and temperature graphs, identify some physical and man-made features from photographs and locate well-known countries on a world map. They are beginning to understand ways in which the position on the globe affects climate. They make deductions from their data and know when the data is inadequate to make a firm judgement.
118. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different physical features develop well through Years 3 and 4. For example, they study estuaries and rivers at first hand when making visits to the source of the river Esk and to Whitby where the Esk enters the North Sea. In Year 4, pupils compare two contrasting localities through their topic on Chembakoli, a village in India, and Norton. This topic builds effectively on their understanding of this aspect of geography begun in Year 2. Learning about the importance and use of field study in geography is continued well in Years 5 and 6 when pupils go on a residential visit to Cloughton when they consider the effects of erosion on the coastline. They also make a good start in understanding the effect man has had on the environment through this field study work. Pupils are interested in geography and so they work well together and listen attentively to the opinions of their peers, sharing information confidently.
119. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers' planning gives pupils good opportunities to develop a range of geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. Their lessons have clearly defined objectives and the intended learning outcomes are shared with the pupils. Carefully structured sessions at the end of lessons provide not only opportunities for the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills but also for teacher assessment. There are some links with literacy through the opportunities for pupils to talk about their work and to make written accounts of field study work. Links with numeracy occur on an ad hoc basis but have not yet been fully developed. The subject leader has good plans to develop greater environmental awareness amongst the pupils and make greater use of information technology.

HISTORY

120. There were no opportunities to observe teaching in Years 1 and 2. Evidence from talking to pupils and looking at their work shows that by the time they are seven, pupils' attainment is in line with what is expected for seven-year-olds. They are developing an increased understanding

of historical time. Pupils in Year 2 can identify the first man on the moon as the recent past, the time of the dinosaurs as a very long time ago and the First World War at the beginning of the last century. They are able to compare aspects of life today with life between 1960 and 1970. They make satisfactory progress.

121. Standards of attainment are broadly in line with what is expected for pupils at age 11. Pupils' personal and historical timelines, particularly those developed in relation to their Millennium Project in the autumn term, give pupils a sense of chronology. Since the previous inspection, pupils' research skills have developed well. They have a capacity for independent enquiry. For example, they can use photographs and other sources to identify change in the lives of ordinary people. Year 6 pupils have looked at photographs of the Malton and Norton County Bridge in 1930, comparing its surroundings with those of the present day. They develop enquiry skills by forming questions about the past which they ask elderly visitors invited to the school. Pupils in Year 4 have looked into the effects of war on people's lives, considering rationing and evacuees. The study of the Tudors in Years 3 and 4 gives pupils opportunities to evaluate evidence from different sources and to draw conclusions about life in the past. They learn to use a range of historical evidence to confirm their judgements. These developing research skills are a strength of the subject.
122. Two lessons in the older classes were seen, one good and one satisfactory. Teachers planned stimulating tasks. They encouraged pupils to select information from a range of sources and share and evaluate their evidence. Because pupils were given opportunities to be independent and to pursue their own lines of enquiry they worked hard and were well motivated. Sessions at the end of lessons were used well by teachers to assess what had been learnt and to draw together pupils' findings. Pupils listened to each other well and offered their own comments confidently. Visits to museums and other places of interest are used by teachers to enhance pupils' learning. They visit Eden Camp, Jorvik and the Railway Museum.
123. The subject impacts favourably on art and contributes well to pupils' moral, social and cultural development. The subject leader has a good interest in history and promotes the subject well but as yet there has been little planning to incorporate the subject into the planning for literacy or to monitor and evaluate the standard of pupils' work.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

124. By the age of 11 pupils attain standards in information technology that are above what is generally expected for this age in using computers to communicate information and ideas, and in operating a variety of associated equipment. However, they have too little knowledge in other aspects such as how to use computers to control and monitor events. The reason for gaps in pupils' knowledge is that the school has only had sufficient equipment to provide pupils with opportunities to learn at a good rate for a short while. Pupils have achieved well in acquiring computer skills, especially when consideration is given to the fact that only a limited number have computers at home. However, in some lessons the progress of pupils with the most knowledge is not as good as it could be because teachers have not assessed their level of attainment and provided work to help them move on at a faster rate.
125. Seven-year-olds attain standards that are broadly similar to what is expected for pupils of this age. They learn a good range of basic skills so that by the end of Year 2 most are able to call up programs which the teacher identifies and operate them effectively. For example, pupils can call a painting program from the file menu and use it to draw shapes of different colours. They use both keyboard and mouse efficiently and with understanding and know how to print and save their work when it is complete. Pupils in Year 1 can write on the computer and insert capital letters when appropriate. They use these skills well to label clearly the parts of a plant that the computer has pictured on the screen. A minority of higher attaining Year 2 pupils can switch on the computer themselves, move rapidly through the filing system to find what they want and

type at a good speed. Lower attaining pupils are still rather tentative when working at the computer and are a little unsure of the actions that are needed, such as whether to give the mouse a single or a double click. Most pupils know that a floor robot needs instructions before it will work but are not clear about how to make it do what they want. However, the majority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are becoming confident users of the technology with a sound appreciation of the different things the computer can do.

126. Teachers correctly place emphasis on teaching the basic skills of computer use and this has enabled pupils to make good gains in their knowledge, understanding and competency in using computers. This is proving effective and from Year 3 to Year 6 pupils operate the computers well and with a good level of confidence. By the age of 11 most pupils are able to store and retrieve their own work either on the computer or a floppy disk, know how to select alternative printers and can extract information from computerised reference books. They can make informed choices about which programs or devices to use and the best way to communicate information. In all classes pupils use the computer's word-processing facilities effectively to write stories, accounts and poems that are well presented and correctly punctuated. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, know how to correct errors with the spell checker and how find alternative words with the thesaurus. Older pupils are able to use programs in tandem, constructing illustrations with an art program and then adding their pictures to what they have already written to add interest for the reader. They have started to use spreadsheets with understanding and most know how to enter a formula to tell the computer what calculation to make. Lower attaining pupils have some difficulty identifying what formula to use and how to enter it. Most pupils know that the computer can convert numerical data into graphs and how to select different options. In contrast to pupils' secure understanding of how to use the computer to help them communicate, their appreciation of how electronic devices are controlled by computer-based programs is weak. The school has not yet addressed this part of the curriculum as fully as it needs to.
127. Throughout the school the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and on occasions it is good. At the time of the last inspection teachers' subject knowledge was unsatisfactory and their confidence low. This is no longer the case. Although there are still some areas in which further training is needed, particularly in control technology, teachers' subject knowledge and confidence are much higher. Teachers generally give clear instructions and answer pupils' questions competently. This enables pupils to quickly get down to work and to maintain a good pace. Occasionally teachers give different individuals the same advice or instructions when a whole class discussion would have been more efficient. In the best lessons, teachers strike a good balance between instruction and practice, stopping the whole class periodically to discuss what pupils have done so far and to give them a new piece of information. This enables pupils to build their understanding and techniques in a systematic and secure way. Teachers' very positive attitudes to the subject transmit to the pupils who are enthusiastic users of the technology. Teachers give considerable thought to which pupils will sit together at the computer. Productive partnerships result with pupils supporting and learning from each other well. Pupils are very keen to learn. They use the equipment with care and behave well in all lessons.
128. The use of information technology to help pupils' learning in reading and writing is good and in number work it is satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6 some of the literacy and numeracy lessons are specifically combined with information technology to give pupils an extra dimension to their learning. These effectively extend pupils' basic skills. The use of information technology to aid pupils' learning in other subjects is under-developed. For example, pupils are generally unaware of how the computer can be used to handle the data from science investigations or how music programs can make composing easier and more fun.
129. Procedures for assessing what pupils know and can do in information technology are unsatisfactory. There is insufficient guidance for teachers on what they should be looking for

and assessment records often refer to the experiences pupils have been given rather than what they have learnt. As a result, teachers are not as clear as they should be about pupils' attainments. At times teachers pay too little attention to the needs of specific groups of pupils, particularly the higher attainers, when planning lessons and this results in these pupils consolidating their skills and knowledge too frequently and not moving on at as fast a rate as they could.

130. The standards pupils are attaining are due in no small part to the rapid subject development that has taken place over the past year or so and which is continuing to happen. The school's resources have been significantly improved. There are older computers in Years 1 and 2 which the school plans to replace later this year. The equipment in the information technology classroom is of a high standard. The school is fortunate in having two teachers with particularly good subject knowledge. These two teachers have managed the improvements well and the work they have done is having a significant impact on pupils' achievements. Improvements to the curriculum have still to be made but the school is fully aware of this and is planning accordingly.

MUSIC

131. Standards of attainment are very variable in Years 3 to 6 and pupils do not achieve what is expected of them by the age of 11. Progress is unsatisfactory. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are attaining sound standards and progress is satisfactory.
132. Since the last inspection standards in Years 1 and 2 have been maintained satisfactorily, but in Years 3 to 6 the weaknesses identified in the previous report still persist and have not been tackled. The fact that there has been no subject leader for the last four years has clearly contributed to the lack of progress.
133. By the age of 11, pupils can sing tunefully and rhythmically, and play percussion instruments to illustrate a rhythmic pattern or to accompany singing. They know a little about the lives of a number of composers, like Brahms, Beethoven, and Vivaldi, and can describe the various instruments that make up the families in the symphony orchestra. Skills in listening and appraising and in composition are significantly under-developed.
134. By the age of seven, pupils can listen carefully, and clap and sing to a steady beat. They understand simple changes of sound in music like high/low, loud/quiet and slow/fast. They can play percussion instruments appropriately and control sounds according to the teacher's instructions.
135. Teaching overall in Years 1 and 2 is sound, and some good lessons were seen in Year 1. There is a good level of challenge both in questioning and tasks. Because of this pupils learn well and make good progress. In the best teaching there is a carefully devised sequence of learning where children first practise skills and then apply them. The teacher has a sound knowledge of the subject and teaches confidently and flexibly. Pupils' interest and attention is well held and they know clearly what they are doing. Where subject knowledge is insecure there are weaknesses in the choice of tasks and methods and in the development of learning.
136. Teaching overall in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory, although some lessons were sound. The weaknesses lie in insecure subject knowledge or failure to apply skills and knowledge satisfactorily, in planning and choice of activities, and in over-reliance on commercial materials and, in instances, rigid use of them. There is a failure to ensure a proper balance of activities, and lessons are narrow in scope. In some lessons, learning purposes are clear and adequate opportunity is given to practise and improve performance. Learning in Key Stage 2 is often unsatisfactory, with limited progress being made in some lessons.

137. Standards are suffering from a lack of leadership and management. There has been no subject leader for the last four years and the subject has been allowed to drift. The lack of a clear scheme of work based on programmes of study of the National Curriculum and of satisfactory guidance and support of staff has led to a piecemeal approach to planning and the unfocused and uncritical adoption of a diverse range of commercial resources. Initiatives have been taken by some members of staff to trial new materials and to increase the musical content in Key Stage 2 assemblies. A choir is formed from time to time, as for instance in the school Millennium concert where songs from different decades of the twentieth century were sung. There are two recorder groups, though only a small number of children attend at present.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. During the inspection it was not possible to make a judgement about all aspects of physical education as dance and gymnastics are taught at a different time of the year. By the time they are seven pupils are achieving standards higher than are usually expected for seven-year-olds in the elements of physical activities involved in playing games. By the age of 11, pupils' attainment is similar to what would be expected of pupils of this age in games. Swimming was seen in Years 3 and 4 and these pupils were achieving standards above what is generally expected for this age range. The good standards built up in Years 1 and 2 in games are not maintained through the older classes because teachers are not sufficiently focused on the need to challenge pupils to do better and to achieve at a high level.
139. In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the way exercise can affect their bodies. They can, for instance, take their pulse rate before and after vigorous exercise and explain why the difference has occurred. In a lesson on circuit training all understood the need to exercise at a good pace for brief intervals and were able to do so, but few achieved a good standard. When performing simple jumps, such as an extended jump in the shape of a star, a number of pupils landed heavily and some failed to give any precision or quality to their movements. Some pupils are able to judge their own capacity and ability to maintain a steady rhythm through one minute of exercise, but a minority found this difficult. In Year 2, pupils have good control of their feet and bodies when running in a confined space and avoid other runners well. They have good understanding of running lightly at different speeds. In ball and bat activities they aim and control balls of different sizes well. They work quickly and with purpose with a partner.
140. Physical education in both key stages is used well to contribute to pupils' skills in speaking and listening as teachers ask pupils to make comments on the quality of their own and others work. In some lessons teachers contribute to mathematical understanding by, for instance, allowing pupils to make a connection between a quarter-turn jump and a 90 degree angle. In a class with the oldest pupils the teacher used a stop-watch to time exercises but did not develop pupils' skills by allowing a pupil to operate the stop-watch.
141. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. In the older classes, lessons were never less than satisfactory with a third of lessons good. Teaching in swimming was good. In Years 1 and 2, lessons were raised to a good level because teachers communicated to pupils their high expectations with regard to attention, behaviour and most importantly effort. Pupils were praised appropriately but encouraged to improve the quality of their work. Pupils in a Year 1 class were given the challenging task of stopping the ball they had rolled with their foot. This they managed much to their own satisfaction. Lessons were planned well and identified clearly what were the objectives for each separate section of the lesson. In one lesson a small section was less successful and it was clear that the teacher evaluated the cause of this and how to improve it in future lessons. The good planning enabled teachers to move swiftly on to further work. Pupils responded to the teachers' challenges by improving their concentration and quality of movement.

142. In lessons in Years 3 to 6 teachers planned satisfactory and sometimes good activities but did not assess pupils' achievements sufficiently or challenge them to improve their skills and the quality of their work. This is the major factor in limiting the achievements of older pupils. For example, in an outdoor games lesson pupils learnt the need to field the ball but did not gain a good appreciation of the need to field with speed and urgency. In one good outdoor games lesson, the teacher laid good foundations for pupils to understand the need to assess their own achievements by asking them how well they had done and whether they could do better. In this lesson the pupils who could not, for one reason or another, participate were given a clipboard and sheet to note down good achievements of others, a good strategy for developing awareness of recording and evaluating the sporting achievements of others.
143. Physical education is led by an enthusiastic subject leader who has developed a well-balanced programme of work. She provides good guidance and encouragement to teachers in Years 1 and 2 but does not have the opportunity to do the same in the other classes. There is no guidance on assessing pupils' achievements and this together with the lack of monitoring of standards has contributed to the fact that the good levels of achievement in Years 1 and 2 are not sufficiently maintained. There are a few after school clubs which offer some pupils the opportunity to improve their skills in sport such as football and rounders. However, these are not sufficient to cater for the many pupils who would wish to join. The school also takes part in sporting competitions in the local area but because it is in a locality where most of the nearest schools are small it has little opportunity to take a large proportion of its pupils to these events.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. Pupils' standards of attainment in religious education are satisfactory. They meet the requirements of the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus by the time pupils are seven and 11. Progress is accordingly satisfactory and pupils are achieving appropriately. This indicates satisfactory improvement since the last inspection when the standards achieved by pupils of seven were judged to be just below the requirements of the agreed syllabus.
145. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Christian Faith. They retell some of the stories about Jesus and know why the celebrations of Christmas and Easter are important to Christians. They have a detailed knowledge of the Christmas story, and retell favourite bible stories such as 'Noah's Ark'. Pupils visit Saint Peter's church and can name and describe the things they have seen there. They show a developing understanding of the special times and artefacts of Judaism. For example, they can say when the Jewish Sabbath starts and ends and name some of the foods eaten at this time.
146. Pupils increase their knowledge of Christianity and other faiths as they move through the classes from Year 3 to Year 6. By the age of 11 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the old and new testaments, and of the major events in the life of Jesus. Their learning is enriched by visits to a variety of local Anglican churches, and also York Minster. For instance, the Year 3/4 pupils re-enacted a baptism service at the Methodist church. The Methodist minister officiated, and the pupils chose Godparents and were members of the congregation. Through this experience, they developed a very good knowledge about the significance of this ceremony; for example, the cleansing nature of water, and the importance of the baptismal candle. They made good connections between becoming a member of the Christian community and organisations such as brownies and cubs, using words such as 'promise', 'enrolment' and 'friendship'. Through their studies of other faiths pupils know that Muslims fast, and make pilgrimages. Pupils effectively used their own experiences of New Year, parties and resolutions as they studied the Jewish festivals of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. They were enthralled by the symbolism of the Jewish custom of dipping apples in honey, and showed a maturing respect when listening to words spoken and sung in Hebrew. Pupils in Year 6 know that all religions have key figures, and special books and artefacts. Their knowledge about the special places of worship used by other faiths is limited.

147. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the one lesson seen in Year 1, the quality of teaching and learning was judged to be good. Of the six lessons observed in Years 3 to 6 one lesson was unsatisfactory, and the remainder were satisfactory or better. Two lessons were very good. Teachers planned their lessons appropriately and indicated clear learning intentions. They provided a good range of artefacts to give support and interest to pupils' learning, and because pupils' interest was captured they behaved well and were attentive. In the very good lessons, the teachers showed great enthusiasm and had very good subject knowledge. This enabled pupils to make good gains in learning the correct vocabulary to describe a range of artefacts and religious celebrations. The teachers effectively recapped on prior learning by revising work in pupils' books and relating learning to recent visits. This enabled pupils to build on previous knowledge in a consistent way. Pupils enjoyed the discussions in lessons and because teachers made relevant links with pupils' own experiences they were able to understand concepts such as the similarities found in different faiths. Good resources brought lessons alive. For instance, in one very good lesson, the teacher re-enforced learning through the use of effective questioning when examining a baptismal candle, certificates and a christening gown brought in by pupils. Generally, too little time is given to teaching religious education. Pupils have insufficient time to consolidate their learning through written work and many have to complete this in spare moments. This reduces the amount of progress that pupils make, and means that although teaching is good, progress is satisfactory overall. Limited time also results in teachers sometimes missing opportunities for pupils to handle artefacts or taste the foods provided. With the exception of Christianity, pupils have too few opportunities to visit places of worship or to question visitors from other faiths.
148. The school appropriately relies upon the local authority's Agreed Syllabus to provide guidance as to the topics to be covered. The co-ordinator has developed a cohesive scheme of work that enables pupils' knowledge and skills to build in an appropriate manner. There are no arrangements for assessment. A good range of resources has been purchased to support the learning of world religions. However, the use of information technology is under-developed. The subject leader gives good support to colleagues but is unable to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in this subject.