

INSPECTION REPORT

CARCROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Carcroft

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106757

Headteacher: Mr I M Heavisides

Reporting inspector: Mrs C A Field
9479

Dates of inspection: 10th to 13th April 2000

Inspection number: 190717

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Owston Road Carcroft Doncaster South Yorkshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Gabbitas
Date of previous inspection:	October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs C A Field	Registered inspector		The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Pupils' welfare, health and safety
Mrs J Butler	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Quality and range of opportunities for learning Partnership with parents and carers
Mr D R Carrington	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Art Design and technology	Leadership and management
Mr G Warner	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage English Religious education Music	
Mr D Whalley	Team inspector	Science Geography History Physical education Equal opportunities Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated at Carcroft, a community situated to the north of Doncaster. Carcroft has been designated to receive specific grant aid from the Social Regeneration Budget (SRB) due to the high incidence of social and economic deprivation. There are 222 pupils on roll: 122 boys and 100 girls aged between four and eleven years. The number of pupils on roll has fallen over recent years. The school makes additional nursery provision, mornings only, for 27 children: 18 boys and 9 girls. The profile of children's attainment on entry to the reception class is well below average. Forty per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is above the national average. Seventy-six pupils have special educational needs (34%): a proportion above the national average. Six of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs in place. There are no pupils currently in the school who come from homes where English is not spoken as a first language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Carcroft Primary is an effective school where a positive ethos encourages successful learning within a caring environment. Children start school with well below average achievement and, through good teaching most are enabled to maximise their potential by the time they leave. Much of the school's success is due to the hard work and effectiveness of teachers and other adults. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils underpin the good quality of education provided. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and most try hard and work with good application. The emphasis placed on the teaching and learning of basic skills is very beneficial, though it is at the expense of pupils learning in depth in foundation subjects. The headteacher gives satisfactory direction to the work of the school and there has been improvement in the quality of management systems within the last twelve months, although more development is needed. Monitoring lacks rigour and insufficient attention is given to evaluating what works best in school and why. In recent years the results in national tests have been rising and the school is on course to attain the challenging targets set this year. The school provides sound and improving value for money.

What the school does well

- Through good quality teaching and highly effective strategies for developing literacy and numeracy skills, enables pupils to make good progress in English and mathematics throughout the school.
- Enables pupils to make at least satisfactory progress over their time in school in the core subjects of science, religious education and information technology and the foundation subjects of art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.
- Provides well for children under five who get off to a flying start in building firm foundations for later learning.
- Makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress in learning and achieve well, especially in their basic skills.
- Makes good provision for pupils' social and moral development that encourages them to develop a good understanding of the impact their actions have on others.
- Successfully promotes a friendly, caring atmosphere based on positive relationships in classes that underpin the good climate for learning.

What could be improved

- School planning, assessment and evaluation are not underpinned sufficiently well by systematic and rigorous ways of finding out what is not good enough and what is done well to support improvement.
- Pupils' cultural development is given insufficient attention and they have limited opportunities to explore the cultural diversity of British society.
- Attendance levels although improving are currently unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since 1996 the school has made limited progress in responding to the specific issues raised at the time of the previous inspection, although in general the school has made good improvement in raising standards of achievement. Good attention has been paid to implementing successful strategies for teaching basic skills. New strategies for the grouping of pupils are proving successful. Monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place infrequently and on an adhoc basis and there has been no systematic evaluation of findings. There is insufficient sharing of the very best teaching practice. Too little attention has been given to extending the opportunities for pupils' cultural development. Subject management roles have been re-distributed and clarified. However, the role of co-ordinator still requires development. School development planning processes are consultative and more focused on improvement, but still require refinement and have yet to involve governors to the extent seen in many schools. The continued involvement of the local education authority in supporting strategic management and governance is a positive feature. A useful start has been made in collecting data to help in forecasting how well pupils are likely to achieve. This information is usefully supporting the challenging targets set for English and mathematics between now and 2002. The school has sound capacity to sustain continuous improvement.

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	D	D	B
Mathematics	E	E*	E	D
Science	D	E	D	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

very low E*

Similar schools are those with between 35-50 per cent of the pupils on roll eligible for free school meals

The above table shows that standards compared to all schools in 1999 were below average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. Standards compared more favourably against similar schools. Standards have improved over the last three years in all three tested subjects but have improved more in English than in the other two subjects. Standards in mathematics have lagged behind the improvement in the other two until recently. Inspection findings judge standards currently to be average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. From a well below average starting point pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time, with accelerated learning in Year 6. The effective learning is resulting from consistently good teaching, especially in basic skills. Successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is having a positive impact on both teaching and learning. This is particularly the case in mathematics where more speedy and accurate problem solving is helping pupils develop sharper skills in mathematics. The involvement of many parents in supporting reading is adding considerable value to the importance of literacy within the community. The emphasis at the end of the school on enabling the oldest pupils to take responsibility for appropriate aspects of their own learning and targeting self-improvement are key reasons why standards are rising. The school has set challenging but achievable targets for the next few years.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils show good enthusiasm for learning and try hard to do their very best work for their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils generally get on well together and follow the well-understood code of conduct. Behaviour frays a little in some classes when pupils are asked to sit for too long without activity.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The quality of relationships between pupils is a strength of the school, and is successfully underpinning the good learning taking place. Pupils show confidence in taking responsibility when given the opportunity.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The school has made good progress in improving the attendance and punctuality of Year 6 pupils though a reward scheme that is soon to be extended to other years. Overall attendance is below the national average, mostly due to genuine illness, although too many parents take pupils out of school for holidays.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The strengths in teaching have been sustained since the time of the previous inspection. In 96 per cent of lessons observed during this inspection, teaching quality was of satisfactory or better quality. In 49 per cent of lessons teaching was of good quality and in 11 per cent of very good quality. Four per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. Teaching is judged to be good overall but there is potential for it to be better focused on ensuring that all pupils make the maximum amount of progress over their time at school, especially in mixed-age classes at Key Stage 1. Teaching of the under-fives and of pupils with special needs is good and leads to these pupils making good progress. The very best teaching observed during the inspection was in early years and Year 6. Here pupils are very keen to learn because lessons are exciting and interesting and challenge them to achieve well. Skills of literacy are consistently well taught and all pupils gain in consequence. The teaching of numeracy is good and the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is leading to raised standards. Teachers tend to know what is happening in those classes in close proximity to their own and within the same key stage but not much beyond this. The features of the very best teaching practice in the school have yet to be sufficiently shared to aid further school improvement.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The pupils benefit from interesting and exciting experiences although the organisation of the curriculum is not set up to deliver to best advantage all of the subjects planned. In some lessons the objectives set are not sufficiently geared to enabling all pupils to achieve to the full.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Early assessment is thorough and there is good team effort to ensure that individual needs are responded to well, especially in basic skills. Occasionally, when some pupils are withdrawn for additional support they miss out on what others are doing in the class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. The school is secure, friendly and caring and attends very well to pupils' moral development. Good provision is made for pupils' social development and sound attention paid to their spiritual growth. The provision for pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school is caring and supportive and responds well to individual needs. Procedures for child protection are adequate but lack rigour and formality. Good attention is paid to assessing pupils' performance at the end of each year but less effective attention is paid to using assessment to inform curricular planning.

Most parents hold positive views about the school's provision. The high number of parents who start each school day reading with their children in classes is an excellent feature.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. In recent years senior management's energies have gone into building a united team. The headteacher has clear views about the direction in which future priorities lie, but has not yet developed rigorous systems that ensure staff can share fully in their realisation. The role of subject co-ordinator still requires developing in terms of monitoring and its impact on improving quality and raising standards. Some policies are not consistently applied and others are in need of review.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and have a sound understanding of the issues facing the school. They have established useful committees to structure their work and enable proper conduct to business. They have yet to play a full role in shaping the direction of the school and in school evaluation matters.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The school development plan is now a more useful tool for setting out and guiding the priorities of the school, though it lacks deadlines for action and gives insufficient attention to what the impact of proposed action will be. More people need to be involved in its production and in monitoring how successful developments are in terms of the impact they have on improving teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Good use is made of specific grants to support the raising of academic standards. There is adequate staffing and resources and good accommodation. The school is making satisfactory progress in its pursuit of Best Value principles.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school.• Children make good progress.• Teachers hold high expectations of what pupils can achieve and as result teaching is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More detailed and frequent information about individual progress.• Extended range of extracurricular activities.• Better management.

Parents hold generally positive views about the school and the high number who give support to reading every morning demonstrates the very good response to one of the school's strategies to involve parents more in the life of the school. The inspection team endorses the statements above that are examples of what parents find pleasing about the school and agrees that more information about progress would be beneficial. Although it may be useful for the school to consider how extracurricular provision could be extended, the team judges the current situation to be adequate. The negative views of a few parents about management were made in recognition that things are improving and the team agrees that this is apparent.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. At the time of the last inspection in 1996, standards in most subjects were reported as broadly in line with national expectations at both key stages. Results in National Curriculum tests showed a different picture. In the year after the 1996 inspection, standards in National Curriculum tests at both key stages in English and mathematics were well below average and below average in science. In the intervening years there has been steady improvement in English and science results, although never rising to average levels. Mathematics results have remained fairly static at a below average level at Key Stage 1, and well below average level at Key Stage 2. Results in 1999 were the best yet.
2. On entry, the profile of children under five years old is well below average. By the time they reach their fifth birthday, most have made good progress, and in some cases very good progress in learning, although standards are below average in all six areas of learning for children of this age.
3. Results of the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1999 show that standards compared to all schools were average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, standards were well above average in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics. Results in all three tested subjects show a below average, but improving trend over the last three years, with no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
4. Results of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 1999 show that standards compared to all schools were below average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. Standards compared more favourably against similar schools. Standards have improved over the last three years in all three tested subjects but have been better in English than in the other two subjects. Standards in mathematics have lagged behind the improvement in the other two until recently.
5. Inspection findings judge standards currently to be average in English, mathematics and information technology at the end of both key stages. Standards in science are below average at Key Stage 1 and average at Key Stage 2. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected at aged seven and eleven years in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress over their time in school across all the work covered in core subjects and the foundation subjects of art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.
6. Since pupils start school with well below average standards in all areas of experience, this pattern marks good progress by pupils as they move through the school. The effective learning results from consistently good teaching in basic skills. There is a positive impact on both teaching and learning from the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This is particularly the case in mathematics where greater emphasis on more speedy and accurate problem solving is helping pupils develop sharper skills which they use confidently.
7. The current Year 6 class has a higher proportion of pupils working at the expected level than in the past, and there is an above average proportion who are on track to gain level 5 in the forthcoming national tests. Similarly, in Year 2, the level of attainment is substantially as expected for this age group and some pupils are working above level 2 in English and mathematics. The style of teaching in science and limited curricular time available restrict the practical, investigative elements of science and this is impeding learning. The organisation of the curriculum is biased towards English and mathematics, and although this is judged to be meeting pupils' needs and of significant relevance, the school will need to give careful consideration to the skills and concepts it wants pupils to develop when planning for *Curriculum 2000*.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of specified individual learning targets and the effective support provided by the learning support assistants and voluntary workers in helping pupils meet these targets. Pupils with special educational needs generally achieve well. The school's commitment to these pupils is considerable and has a beneficial impact on pupils' progress and attainment across the curriculum.
9. Literacy skills are showing a definite improvement. Useful monitoring of literacy hours by the co-ordinator and others has helped inform teachers' planning and the purchase of good resources. In English lessons, pupils develop appropriate skills in reading, and the overall level of attainment in reading is average at the end of both key stages. Pupils make out unfamiliar words by using clues from the text and they use phonic skills appropriately. They read fluently and with expression, but few are able to get below the surface of the text to gain greater understanding beyond the literal. Reading practice is being supported exceptionally well by the large number of parents who come into school every morning to start the day sharing books with children.
10. Writing skills are below average throughout the school. Pupils do not all have the key skills of planning and structuring their work coherently. The development of extended writing is unsatisfactory. The school has not yet planned to develop writing skills in other subjects. There is insufficient use of information technology in classrooms to support writing skills.
11. Pupils have satisfactory speaking and listening skills. They are confident to speak in class, as in a discussion in reception about why the little pigs felt 'nervous, afraid and scared' when they heard the big bad wolf come by their houses. The accurate use of standard English is a weakness, however, and often pupils use only limited vocabulary when putting forward their ideas. In Years 1 and 2 pupils sometimes shout out in their urgency to answer questions when they feel they have listened long enough to the teacher talking. The literacy hour has been introduced successfully and benefit is beginning to be seen in standards of reading and writing.
12. Standards in numeracy are average at the end of both key stages. Good attention is paid to developing pupils' counting, number and arithmetical competence but older pupils are often still too slow to work out the answer. In the best lessons the teacher sets a brisk pace to learning and starts the session with a game to get pupils' mental cogs in gear. There is good use of numeracy to support work in other subjects such as information technology for example. The co-ordinator has good insights into what improvements are needed in mathematics. To date there has been limited time and opportunity available for her to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Although there are signs that the school is moving in the direction of good educational provision in mathematics, the pace of change needs to be quickened if standards are to get the required boost.
13. Standards in science are below average at Key Stage 1 and average at Key Stage 2. This reflects steady progress over time. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of the pupils recognise the difference between living and non-living things. The majority of the pupils are able to describe materials using correct terms from a list supplied by their teacher. When carrying out experiments they are unsure of scientific processes. They describe what they see but are less secure in making simple scientific suggestions of their own. This lack of curiosity and ability to reflect on what they already know limits their attainment in science. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of the pupils use their scientific knowledge to make generalisations. For example they are able to apply what they have learnt about conductors and insulators to other contexts. They are able to use correct terms for the major organs of the human body and have an understanding of how blood circulates around the body. Most pupils have developed a sound understanding of science as an experimentally based subject. They make accurate records of the results from their experiments and present these in a variety of appropriate formats such as graphs and charts.
14. Pupils achieve average standards in information technology (IT) at both key stages. Pupils use computers with confidence to process simple text and to produce pictures using the paint program.

Younger pupils handle the programmable toy 'Roamer' with good control and application. Older pupils were observed to access the 'Success-maker' program for themselves to support learning in mathematics to good effect. The school has added to its computer hardware stock, and opened a new information technology suite since the time of the previous inspection, although there has been hiccoughs with the installation program that have slowed down full usage. The expertise of the co-ordinator has introduced new and very good software to support basic skills development but has yet to extend the use of information technology across the curriculum or put in place a system to monitor classroom use and its impact on learning. The school has a secure platform on which to build future improvement at a steady rate.

15. Pupils' attainment in religious education at the end of both key stages meets that expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have secure knowledge and understanding about aspects of religion and apply learning well to their own lives. Pupils learn about Christianity together with other major world faiths such as Hinduism and Judaism. They can discuss, with thoughtfulness, some of the views people from different religions hold, and consider similarities between them. Good use is made of pupils' own experiences to support learning in religious education. Younger pupils have good knowledge about stories from the Bible. For example, in a lesson in a Year 1/2 class about the Christian Easter story, they thought hard about Judas' kiss of betrayal and described how Jesus may have felt. They said he would be "hurt, sad, upset and alone", and as one boy said "I should think he cried...". Pupils show respect and tolerance for the beliefs of others.
16. The school has published targets for end of Key Stage 2 results in English and mathematics national tests. Approaches to analysing data and using information to project likely achievements are developing well. Both targets are challenging, but within reach, if the quality of teaching and learning is at least maintained at the level observed during the week of inspection. The school is aware that monitoring and evaluation have not been given the concerted attention required and that development planning, whilst successful on a broad front, has lacked clarity in identifying what action is needed specifically to raise standards. Management has been successful in making improvements to a number of aspects of school life and is well placed to carry on with the necessary action to enable sustained improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. Strengths identified in pupils' responses reported at the time of the previous inspection have been sustained. The number of exclusions has fallen. The lynchpin to the effective learning taking place is the very good quality of relationships between teachers and children. Pupils want to do well for their teachers and vice versa and this shows in the good ethos in classes. Pupils get off to a good start in nursery and the reception class in developing positive attitudes to one another and their work. They learn how to share and play together nicely and to listen to the views of one another. The sensitive encouragement by teachers for children under five to have a go at doing things for themselves inspires self-confidence and self-esteem, both of which underpin the successful learning as they get older.
18. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is good. Most are eager to come to school, keen to learn and try hard in lessons. They respond well to the shared reading activity set up to involve as many parents and carers as possible each morning. Pupils show pride when talking about their school and their teachers. In lessons, pupils generally listen well, show sustained interest and become quite engrossed in their work. Some pupils in reception were too absorbed with writing little booklets about their mothers to want to get ready for playtime, and in older classes pupils often seemed to regret the end of the lesson. Occasionally, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' interest wanes and they become fidgety if asked to sit for too long listening to the teacher. At these times the behaviour of some demands too much of the teacher's attention and the learning of others becomes interrupted. There is a good response to homework tasks, especially reading, and independent learning skills are developing well in Year 6, although opportunities for this are rather limited elsewhere.
19. Behaviour is good throughout the school, both at work and at play, a feature much valued by parents. Pupils are involved in establishing their class rules at the start of each year, and most respect and follow

these. There was a small amount of disruptive behaviour during the inspection, and this was usually associated with lessons in which the pupils were expected to sit for too long without activity. When inappropriate behaviour or lack of self-control is demonstrated, pupils are usually quick to apologise and are clearly very aware of the effect of their actions. There is no evidence of mistreatment of property, and pupils are trustworthy and sensible. This was clearly apparent during the inspection, when a series of wet play and lunchtimes meant that pupils had to occupy themselves indoors with minimum supervision.

20. On the whole, relationships in the school are very good and a strength of the school. The positive and supportive ways in which teachers and other adults relate to pupils, and the ways in which pupils get on with each other, underpin the good learning which takes place. There was no oppressive or bullying behaviour observed during the inspection and pupils say they feel secure. When incidents have occurred in the past, they were dealt with swiftly and effectively, and the school has used fixed-term exclusion very occasionally to underline its intolerance of any action which undermines the very good relationships.
21. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory and they show increasing levels of confidence, tolerance and understanding as they grow older. In the nursery and in reception, pupils become increasingly independent and learn to make appropriate choices. In religious education they demonstrated their sensitivity to, and respect for, the values and beliefs of others. In lessons about Martin Luther King, pupils were able to articulate their feelings about racial inequality. They show increasing levels of responsibility that culminate in the very good role models provided by the prefects in Year 6. However in areas of personal development younger pupils do not always have sufficient opportunity to take responsibility for, or to reflect on and moderate, their own behaviour. Pupils' social skills are developed appropriately through opportunities to mix with the elderly, with visitors to the school and for many pupils in Year 6 with infant pupils whom they help.
22. Attendance is currently unsatisfactory although there are strong signs of improvement in Year 6 that should benefit the whole school when the newly introduced incentive scheme is more widely applied. At present, attendance is well below the national average and unauthorised absence is above the national figure. Most pupils arrive punctually for school. There is evidence of some condoned absence that the school believes reflects a lack of value for regular education in some families. Analysis of the attendance data reveals that the problem of poor attendance is worst in Key Stage 1 and that it involves boys more than girls. The school is seeking to improve its attendance figures and the recent initiative to challenge pupils in Year 6 to improve their attendance, punctuality and other personal standards has been very successful.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the previous inspection and, as a result, standards are rising. The teaching of children under five continues to be a strength, although staff have to work very hard to rise above the fact that the classes that provide for children in their early years are situated a long way apart. Good emphasis has been given to meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress and achieve well considering the low base from which many start. The school is challenging successfully potentially high achievers and has established fast-track groups that are given specific support at both key stages to good effect. Well-targeted teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 is giving rise to accelerated learning for all pupils. Areas for improvement underlying the reporting of teaching at Key Stage 1 in 1996 are still in evidence today in the mixed age classes. Teachers in this key stage tend to over-direct learning at the expense of pupils' developing independent research skills. The school has not given sufficient focus to evaluating rigorously the quality of teaching and learning through direct observation of work in classes. In a few classes and particularly Year 6, pupils are given appropriate opportunities to manage elements of their own learning and this has a good impact on the progress they make and standards achieved. The school has yet to evaluate where the best learning takes place to enable more consistent practice to create the very best climate for learning.

24. Teaching is good overall and results in pupils learning effectively, and making good progress in most subjects by the time they leave at eleven years. Children under five benefit from good teaching and get off to a flying start in their education as a result. The staff work together well as a team. They understand the needs of young children well and provide a rich range of learning experiences that help children develop a good all round education. The very best quality teaching is in children's early years and at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils accelerate their learning in these years because of the good opportunities given to them to manage appropriate aspects of lessons, and in so doing to gain good self-knowledge that helps them strive for greater personal success. The quality of relationships in the school is successfully underpinning the good standards being achieved. Teachers enjoy being with the pupils, and vice versa, and this shows.
25. During the week of inspection in 96 per cent of the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory or better. In 11 per cent of lessons the teaching was very good. In four per cent of lessons observed the teaching was unsatisfactory. The three unsatisfactory lessons were in English, history and mathematics in Year 1/2, and characterised by two key aspects: the teacher spent too long talking and pupils were not given sufficient time to do things, there were limited strategies for managing behaviour that resulted in the teachers' attention being diverted from ensuring a good pace to learning.
26. Teaching is mostly good because teachers ensure that pupils at the school have good quality learning opportunities that provide a rich and stimulating diet. They hold high expectations of what pupils can do, and are supported by detailed long and medium-term planning. Teachers generally plan lessons well, maintain a productive and purposeful ethos, manage behaviour well, use a good range of interesting materials and largely structure lessons effectively to make best use of time, resources and the accommodation. There are problems associated with the arrangements in place to deliver some foundation subjects and religious education, and too much is expected to be done with insufficient time available. Teachers tend to use too many work-sheets to help cover the ground planned. This limits the development of pupils' research skills and is impeding potentially very high quality teaching and learning.
27. The teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is good overall and often is very good in one to one and in small group situations. This high quality reflects the good work of support staff and the well-written individual education plans with the next steps in learning clearly set down. Because targets are specific and measurable, and planning and assessment are effective, good progress in learning results. In some lessons, more active involvement by supporting adults could aid the pace of learning in the first component of literacy and numeracy hours.
28. Features of the best teaching in the school include good subject knowledge, skilful questioning and very good attention to promoting pupils' basic skills. For example, in every class and across most subjects, teachers are promoting the correct vocabulary. In the reception class pupils are taught to use the word 'sets' when sorting in mathematics; in Year 1, 'author and illustrator' when looking at big books and in Year 6 'genre', a term to describe their favourite type of literature. Teachers are generally at their most confident when teaching literacy and numeracy and, through the successful implementation of national strategies, are enabling pupils to develop good literacy and numeracy skills that will serve them well in later life.
29. Teachers show generally high levels of expectation about how well pupils should be doing and most set demanding and challenging work for the range of pupils as a consequence. This was observed to work very successfully in an English lesson in Year 6. Pupils were exploring the adjectives used in their study text 'Marianne's Dream' before writing a dream-like story themselves. Through good use of dictionaries and thesauruses, pupils located key words such as 'looming' and 'blackly' to help describe a nightmare. In structuring quite complicated sentences pupils used rich and interesting vocabulary as in the case of one boy who wrote, '...a puzzled expression crossed Alex's face as he boarded the plane...'. Very good teaching captured pupils' attention for the whole of the lesson with challenging work that became progressively harder for all. The teacher expected pupils to organise themselves

effectively with care being taken not to over-direct the lesson at the expense of pupils' own contributions. In the plenary session good timing enabled all pupils to share what they had learned, and then reflect upon what they needed to do next.

30. Most teachers know full well what they want pupils to achieve but written lesson plans are not always specific enough to ensure that pupils' learning is as well targeted as it could be. There is variable use of time targets to aid the pace of individuals' learning when the teacher's attention is elsewhere. In some marking the teacher sets clear goals for the pupils to aim for but in others there is too much emphasis on effort expended at the expense of targeting improvements. This means that pupils' knowledge of their own learning is insufficiently developed.

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

31. Since the time of the previous inspection curricular provision has continued to be given good emphasis to meet both school community and statutory requirements. Through a range of worthwhile experiences pupils are being prepared well for the next stage of education and later life. Satisfactory provision overall is made for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development but too few planned opportunities are made to promote pupils' cultural development. Pupils have limited awareness about the richness and cultural diversity of Britain's multicultural society.
32. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum is good, with an appropriate bias towards the teaching and learning of basic skills in literacy and numeracy to enable pupils to explore fully the other subjects on offer. There is good provision for the under-fives, and the quality of the curricular content is good in English, mathematics, religious education and design and technology. Pupils are given good equality of opportunity to succeed in learning.
33. The school is justly proud of the way it has implemented the literacy hour and used this curriculum time to improve standards. Strategies for teaching literacy skills are very good, with effective input from cross-curricular teaching to reading, as well as in English lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2. There is less emphasis on extended writing opportunities however. Additional strategies in literacy and numeracy to support those who are assessed to be under-performing are proving beneficial. There are effective strategies for teaching numeracy skills and a more coherent approach to making teaching and learning more consistent via the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy.
34. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for because of well-planned provision and through regular reviews of the progress individuals are making against their specific targets. That these pupils are benefiting from the school's response to their needs is clear and most are making at least good progress in the acquisition of basic skills. However, there is no systematic checking of what the net loss of pupils being withdrawn from lessons amounts to in terms of missed work in foundation subjects.
35. The practice of planning and delivering science and many of the foundation subjects on a two-year cycle gives rise to some concern regarding the full development of topics for the older children involved. In some cases, notably science, history and geography, the lesson content for the older children is not significantly different from that for those a year younger. In contrast the teaching of a theme in religious education to Year 5 and Year 6 showed a marked extension of the tasks for older children. There has been no systematic monitoring of the curriculum by school managers that would throw up this issue for the school to consider.
36. The personal, social and health education of pupils is good, with a variety of approaches including direct provision in certain lessons, notably science and religious education, as well as specialist input from the school nurse. The drugs education programme has been redefined recently and includes health awareness issues, but does not yet fully develop pupils' self-awareness and assertiveness skills. The limited but positive use of circle time by external support professionals has been identified by the special needs co-ordinator as an area for staff development that would help address this aspect. Pupils in the early years benefit from good opportunities to guide and develop their independent and social

skills, resulting in good progress. Within Key Stage 1 there are limited opportunities for pupils to show initiative or develop self-study skills as learning tends to be directed by teachers. Towards the end of Key Stage 2, pupils also enjoy the opportunities for improving their citizenship skills when taking part in the Crucial Crew initiative run by the emergency services.

37. The provision for extracurricular activities is adequate. Parents are aware that in recent months the range of after-school clubs has been reduced through a staff change and lack of availability of the school playing fields due to broken glass and other rubbish. However, there is a popular and enjoyable country dancing club, music clubs, and a variety of visits to places of interest. The school also hosts an after-school club for the children of working parents. In the recent past, a visiting theatre company and a tribal dance specialist from South Africa have further enriched the curriculum.
38. Further first-hand learning opportunities have resulted from the good links with the local community. Pupils have been able to improve their understanding and practice of design and technology on visits to a local training institution, and younger pupils have increased their understanding of retail stores when visiting a local supermarket. The curriculum business partner in the Social Regeneration Budget project has also been a major contributor to the award scheme designed to improve the personal standards and attitudes of members of Year 6. In this regard the interest of the mayor also played a part in giving the scheme a higher profile.
39. There are good links with local schools, both through the pyramid cluster, which confers benefits through shared teacher expertise, and through the facilities made available to Year 5 and 6 pupils by the local secondary school. Pupils also have the opportunity to represent their school teams in matches and galas with other schools.
40. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory with some good features. In the nursery, a magical atmosphere of awe and wonder accompanied the recent preparations for Easter in which the children eagerly anticipated the arrival of the Easter bunny. A more solemn sense of awe pervaded the discussion of Judas' betrayal in Year 3 pupils' study of the Easter story. The daily acts of collective worship meet requirements and make a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual awareness, with times for reflection on their part in the greater order of things. A class assembly was well used to illustrate the value of each individual and the gifts and talents that each has been given. Generally, pupils are given the chance to explore their own reaction to beauty in art and literature, and to appreciate the variety of feelings and emotions that surround them, but these opportunities are not sufficiently well planned on a regular or systematic basis.
41. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. The ethos is consistently supported by a philosophy of 'do as you would be done by' and pupils are well aware of the difference between right and wrong. The teaching and non-teaching staff provide very good role models for honesty, fairness and patience, and uphold the class rules which the pupils helped to write. Positive behaviour and good work are rewarded by praise and stickers or merits, according to the pupils' ages. The headteacher's merits are also given for good deeds, and the regular awards for 'star worker' and 'best trier' ensure that all pupils have access to the rewards. Pupils who fail to abide by class rules, or who display unacceptable behaviour, may be required to make amends by performing a community service like helping clear away after lunch, which is an effective sanction.
42. The pupils' good social development is a result of the good provision made by a variety of sometimes quite imaginative events. For example the St. Valentine's Day dinner to which pupils could invite someone they loved, mainly grandparents, was a very special and successful social occasion. The school community is friendly and harmonious, and pupils say they like the way everyone helps each other. Year 6 pupils are given the opportunity to assist younger pupils with their reading, spelling and lunchtime activities, and there are also occasions when pupils visit elderly folk in residential care. The school bank provides a chance for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 to perform another community service. Pupils are also chosen to act as classroom monitors and to carry out occasional duties to help the staff. The provision for social awareness beyond their own community is rather more limited, but they are

involved in charitable events for the disadvantaged both at home and abroad.

43. Overall provision for pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory. The last inspection found that the pupils' awareness of the wider multicultural society of Britain was insufficiently developed, and there is little evidence that this has been addressed. Although the school provides a satisfactory experience of pupils' own cultural heritage, through geography and history studies, music and country-dance, for example, there is insufficient attention paid to the rich cultural diversity of Britain, Europe and the rest of the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. Since the time of the previous inspection, the school has maintained the good features of this aspect of school life and improved the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Health and safety risks are taken seriously and responded to appropriately. Child protection matters have a very high profile in the school and are overseen by the headteacher who wastes no time in bringing in specialist support as necessary. This is effective in the short term and ensures that pupils will not be left at risk, but is not helping staff or pupils build up systems of support to enable them to develop strategies to help them keep safe. There has been no recent staff training in child protection matters and although most appear to be aware of the procedures in place, agreed policy is not consistently implemented. The school is given good input from a range of services including the Educational Psychologist who offers a far wider range of training services than the school is currently tapping into.
45. Through the hard work of the teachers and other adults the school cares well for its pupils, ensuring that they have a secure and supportive environment in which they are able to learn effectively. In this the school successfully meets its aims. Most parents agree that the school provides a caring environment. They find class teachers friendly and approachable.
46. The class teachers and all support staff know their pupils well. They notice when they are upset or unwell and respond with concern and consideration. The headteacher works very closely with external agencies such as the local education support services and the social services department. There are appropriate policies in place to ensure the safety of all pupils, for example a child protection policy was reviewed last year. However, such policies do not reflect the practice which is much more informal and neither teachers nor managers abide by the written expectations in keeping accurate records of concerns. In practice there are not sufficiently rigorous policies in place to ensure the safety of all pupils. Too much relies upon the knowledge of the headteacher. Although he takes a very active part in the process, much information is not in a format where others can be enabled to play a more active role. Fortunately the teaching staff is very experienced and stable and the informal systems are largely successful.
47. The buildings and grounds are generally well maintained and areas of concern dealt with effectively. For example, the school field had to be out of use for several months because broken glass was found in a number of places.
48. The school is developing effective procedures to encourage regular attendance and punctuality. Attendance figures are entered onto the school's administration computer and are enabling clerical staff more effectively to identify areas of absence. A recent scheme developed as part of the school's involvement in the Social Regeneration Budget project has encouraged Year 6 pupils to improve their attendance and punctuality. This has been particularly successful and is now being extended to include other Key Stage 2 pupils. However, the school has not yet developed any strategies to improve the attendance in Key Stage 1 where the rates of absence are higher.
49. There are good procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour. Teachers are expected to make effective use of 'good books' and 'let-down books' to encourage good behaviour but in practice most log good effort on charts displayed on class walls. They work closely with parents to improve the behaviour of pupils where this is necessary. During the inspection there was direct evidence of parents and teachers working closely together to monitor and improve the behaviour of individual pupils. The

development of class rules that pupils know and understand has also had a positive impact on behaviour, encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Some of the systems are informal and do not reflect the school's stated policies. For example, the policy states that pupils will be sent to the headteacher following three misdemeanours. However, pupils are often sent to the headteacher before this happens. Although the involvement of the headteacher is sometimes positive, the effect is sometimes to dis-empower teachers in their attempts to improve behaviour in their class. Some teachers use positive reinforcement of good behaviour to help pupils become aware of the consequence of their actions but this practice is not widespread.

50. There was no evidence of any bullying during the inspection. Pupils did not complain of any bullying and most cited the warm and friendly relationships as one of the most positive things about the school. Those pupils who have been bullied in the past are happy with the way in which the school dealt with the matter.
51. Good attention is paid to the welfare and educational needs of pupils with particular problems. Teachers are very aware of some of the difficulties families face and are caring and supportive. Good use is made of specialist support agencies such as the teaching support service, to help assess and provide direct input to assisting the academic and social development of pupils with special needs. The educational psychologist is a regular visitor who undertook some very effective work on raising pupils' self-esteem through a circle time observed during the inspection.
52. The school has a wealth of procedures for assessing pupils' attainment, especially in English and mathematics. In addition to national tests at the end of each key stage the school administers national tests at the end of each year in Key Stage 2 and a range of other useful standardised tests. Teachers also give pupils tests that they devise themselves to find out what pupils have learnt either at the end of a project or as part of other work. At Key Stage 2 individual teachers are making detailed analyses of the data from tests to set targets in English and mathematics that are shared with pupils. Much of this is good and has already had a positive impact on standards. However, procedures have not been formalised and made manageable for all teachers. For example, the format of the analysis is not consistent and teachers have been given insufficient guidance about how to interpret data. A quick analysis of pupils' progress over time indicates a small minority who are not making as much progress as would be expected. There are no procedures to alert teachers to this or to investigate the reasons for this relative lack of progress.
53. The procedures to inform teachers about pupils' progress during the course of a unit of work are less well developed. Over the past few years the school has dabbled with numerous systems but not provided the support or training to allow any to become firmly embedded into the school routine. Consequently, teachers use many different procedures. They expend much energy and time in conscientiously administering many tests that merely confirm what they already know about pupils' attainment and progress. This diverts their attention from considering how best to use the information they have. In English and mathematics the teachers use planning formats that enable them to assess what pupils learn in each lesson and to use this information to guide their planning. There are no such whole-school agreed systems to help them in other subjects and this has a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
54. There are limited procedures to ensure consistency of judgements made by teachers. A start was made to moderate samples of pupils' work but this stopped because samples of work were published nationally. However, there was not an understanding of the advantages for teachers to be gained through regular, shared analysis of pupils' work and the system fell into dis-use. The use of assessment has diminished since the last inspection and is now failing to make a sufficiently positive impact on supporting pupils' development across the curriculum and year on year. There are two reasons for this. Firstly the leadership and co-ordination of assessment is confused. Two teachers appear to have some responsibility but neither is completely sure of the extent of their responsibilities. For example, no teacher perceives it as their responsibility to update the policy, which is now obsolete. The responsibilities appear to focus upon the arrangements for the end of key stage tests that inform school

targets. Secondly there has been no joined-up thinking to ensure that assessment record keeping and planning are effective and simple. At present the heavy workload and repetitive nature of some work reduces the effectiveness of this aspect of teachers' work. For example, teachers' lesson planning for subjects other than English and mathematics is sometimes a repetition of what they have already planned before. A more objective analysis of the effect of assessment and planning are necessary and is a key issue for the school to address.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. Since the time of the previous inspection the school has reviewed the quality of information to parents. The current prospectus now includes the school aims for parents to see. Newsletters are written in a friendly and accessible way that encourages them to be read; though this is not true of all school documentation. There is a wide variation in the appeal and readability of other school information. While the regular newsletters and the reading-support leaflets are friendly, attractive and encouraging in style, the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are very formal and dry, with little attempt to share or celebrate pupils' activities and successes. The annual report on individual pupils' progress does not currently meet statutory requirements in the reporting of information technology. A parent teacher association has become moribund although a few parents did tell inspectors that they would like a similar group to be re-started.
56. The school is successful in nurturing mutually supportive links with parents. It has made it a priority to enable parents to be effective in support of their children's learning and promotes the acquisition of literacy skills, information technology competency and parent craft through the classes which it hosts. An excellent feature is the shared reading session at the start of each morning, during which a large number of parents actively promote their children's love of books. The contribution parents make to their children's learning at home and at school is good. The shared reading sessions, together with the voluntary help in classrooms by several parents, and the support for reading and other homework tasks at home are all successful in raising a sense of value for education, and in helping to raise standards of achievement. Parents of Year 6 pupils also encouraged them in pursuit of the challenging personal standards required by the recent award scheme.
57. Parents think highly of the school, and the great majority of responses to the questionnaire indicate parents feel their children are making good progress. Most parents agree with the school policies and values, actively supporting special events and initiatives. Areas in which the parents feel that there is room for improvement include the range of extracurricular activities, which is just satisfactory, and the quality of information they receive about progress. A significant minority of parents also raised concerns about the style of management and feel that ideas they have are not valued or listened to. Parents generally feel that the new senior management team is having a positive impact and things are improving.
58. The quality of information provided by the school to encourage parents in partnership is generally satisfactory, with some strength and some areas for improvement. Information about progress is easily available through the daily opportunities to talk to teachers, and the termly parents' evenings. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are well aware of their levels of attainment in core subjects, and of how to improve. However annual written progress reports are not sufficiently clear about attainment in all subjects, and rarely give specific targets for improvement in which parents could support their children.
59. Overall, the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. There is support for occasional fund-raisers organised by the school. Most parents support the school's attendance policy, but there is still a level of condoned or unauthorised absence which has a detrimental effect on the progress achieved by some pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The school is giving a good all-round education to pupils, and is enabling them to achieve well in

National Curriculum tests when compared to others of similar backgrounds. Much of the school's success is down to good teaching and the commitment and hard work that goes into providing for these pupils, some of whom place challenging demands on staff because of their very special needs. Tensions in the school in the past within management and governance have been overcome but there has been a cost in terms of the limited development of rigorous systems that positively support whole-school working practices. This is a key issue for the school to address.

61. The four key issues identified in the 1996 inspection report related to aspects of management:
 - Governors were required to become more involved in school development planning.
 - The monitoring and analysis of teaching, including classroom management and organisation needed making more systematic.
 - More opportunities were needed for co-ordinators to monitor their subjects in classrooms.
 - The organisation of year groups into classes wanted reviewing to best meet needs and contribute to raising standards.
62. In the two years following that report the school went through a period of considerable stress, culminating in major changes in the work of governors and key managers. The local education authority has been involved since December 1998 in supporting key managers and governors to establish procedures to ensure that the school is run effectively and efficiently. There has been a general overhaul of management structures, procedures and intentions, some of which are still to be refined. The local education authority's support is likely to continue for some time yet in supporting governors' development.
63. Overall, limited progress can be seen in implementing the requirements of the listed key issues, however, there has been considerable impact in raising academic standards through the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Good attention has been given to organising year groups to enable better progress, especially for pupils who require additional help with basic skills. The school shows good determination and team spirit to develop individual roles still further and many co-ordinators are ready for the challenge that monitoring work will give them. Much work remains to be done in ensuring that management establishes rigorous whole-school systems that support teachers' development and ensure pupils make the best rates of progress year on year. The school appears ready to move forward in this aspect and build for further improvement on a well-cemented foundation.
64. The headteacher gives appropriate direction to the work of the school and is working to develop the staff and governors as a team focused on the chief priority of continued improvements in standards. Individually, all staff and the governors are committed to raising standards and it is very much due to the hard work of all staff that improvement in attainment, teaching and learning is evident. Staff play a satisfactory role in determining what priorities should be pursued when, though this is often by informal agreement or the result of mutual understanding. There are too few rigorous and formal systems in place to identify which priority ranks first, to set completion dates, to identify the people responsible, to cost the necessary action or state what impact is required. These are omissions from the school development plan that detract from its usefulness as the main tool for promoting improvement.
65. Senior managers are being developed satisfactorily as key players in taking the school forward. The deputy headteacher brings valuable and successful experience to her role and has good ideas to help bring improvement. These ideas and her experience are being used increasingly to inform management tasks. Senior teachers also have a widening role in the management of the whole school, rather than solely in relation to their specific responsibilities, although the expectations of who does what, for example in co-ordinating assessment throughout the school, still requires clarification.
66. Co-ordinators work hard to manage their subjects and aspects. They have had good success in boosting the level of resources and have made useful contributions to the improvement of planning and the curriculum. Job descriptions have been revised in the light of the ongoing appraisal cycle and all teachers now have identified management roles and responsibilities. Co-ordinators do not, however, have many opportunities to monitor teaching, the curriculum and standards directly, in a bid to identify

what is working well and what requires improvement. Because of this, managers have only imperfect knowledge of what is happening in school and do not always know, for example, whether policy and practice are consistent in each class. Co-ordinators are keen to take on a widened role in school management and there is every indication that they would be successful in their new tasks.

67. The management of pupils with special educational needs is very effective and results in good quality provision for these pupils. The co-ordinator is committed and hard working and has good insights into what improvement are needed. Her next priority is to look at promoting positive behaviour management and to explore how target setting might support some pupils' behavioural problems. She has ensured that colleagues are well informed about individual education plans and has provided good quality training to ensure that effective teaching and support is given to the pupils. The result of this good management and leadership is the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.
68. A number of governors have only recently joined the governing body, but they have made a sound start in getting to grips with the core priorities of the school and undertaking training to gain deeper understanding of the job they have taken on. The chair of governors visits the school regularly and a number of other governors also have cause to be in school quite often. Governors have growing knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they are starting to give firm support to the headteacher and key managers in shaping the direction to be taken. They are still very much reliant on the headteacher to provide the information they need and are not yet the "critical friends" that the role demands. The governors continue to be supported by the local education authority in developing systems and procedures to check and weigh the progress made towards priorities, the outcome and in establishing the cost effectiveness of their decisions.
69. On the whole, the governing body oversees that statutory requirements are met and that the necessary information for parents is made available as required. However during the week of inspection a set of governors' minutes which should have been on public deposit in the school had to be provided by the local education authority. Through a useful committee structure they are set up to fulfil all legal requirements and conduct the business of governance effectively. Most sub-committees have been set up to run to a cycle that enables feedback to the full governing body. The curriculum sub-committee has a history of sporadic meeting and has not yet met this year. The monitoring of the curriculum is one of the aspects of governor's work that will need continued support.
70. From all this, it is evident that there is now a better sense of team work in school management. Staff and governors are now ready for the next step, which is to undertake regular, continuous, rigorous and formal ways to identify, assess and evaluate the performance of the school, particularly the quality of curriculum, teaching and learning and the standards that result. People have *ideas* about these things, but there is a lack of hard evidence, effective analysis of practice and concerted whole-school action to bring improvement.
71. In seeking to develop the process of school self-evaluation and improvement, there are a number of effective things for managers to draw on. On the whole, the school meets its aims and values well. Governors uphold the principles of Best Value competently in their financial decision-making. Standards have risen well over the past few years and the school is on target to meet its challenging targets for achievement this year and realistic ones in the coming years. The school works as a caring and happy place of learning, and relationships between pupils are very good.

72. Matters relating to finance are supported effectively. Financial planning is sound, additional money to support pupils with special educational needs and that provided through the regeneration budget is spent well in the interests of the pupils involved and day to day financial administration is good. The school is increasing its use of new technology, not just in lessons, but also to support the work of managers and administrators. The use of computers to maintain and update essential records, financial information and assessment data is satisfactory overall.
73. The school has enough qualified teachers and support staff for the number of pupils and demands of the curriculum. The buildings are spacious and very well maintained and kept in spotless condition. There are also enough learning resources for each subject, though the library would benefit from a wider range of materials. Because there are no shortages in these things, and because all forms of resources are put to effective use, teaching and learning benefit.
74. It is evident that there has been improvement in management systems, particularly since December 1998, and the school is in a sound position to maintain advancement across all spheres. The keys for further success are the sustaining of a united management team, the introduction of shared monitoring and school development planning systems and rigorous and consistent implementation of procedures and policies to ensure all pupils receive and achieve the best.
75. The school currently spends much more than most primary schools in providing a good quality of education that enables pupils to leave school much better equipped than when they started. Even though standards have been below average and management is still requiring support, because value is unquestionably added to pupils' learning the school is judged to provide sound value with the potential for this to become good value in the future.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

76. The school has worked hard to put behind it problems associated with a difficult amalgamation some years ago. In recent times, the tensions within management have delayed unification but this is not apparent today. The school shows good determination and team spirit to develop individual roles that are supported by rigorous, whole-school systems that ensure pupils make the best rates of progress in every year at school. The school is giving pupils a good education but, in order that the school capitalises on the best of its provision and continues to raise standards still further, school managers and governors should:

a. **Extend monitoring and evaluation practices to ensure that:**

- more staff have the necessary skills, time and opportunity to undertake classroom observations to check on quality and standards in the subjects they co-ordinate, so that they can play a full part in school improvement planning and action;
- the best teaching practice that results in accelerated learning is shared and exchanged;
- agreed written policies are implemented consistently across the school.

(Paragraphs 14, 16, 23, 35, 49, 52, 53, 60, 63, 64, 66, 69, 106, 115, 116, 122, 133, 138, 146, 152, 164))

b. **Improve the consistency of lesson planning and assessment by:**

- ensuring that all lesson plans have clear and detailed objectives for the range of pupils in the class;
- setting clear targets for pupils and clear outcomes for lessons based on accurate assessment of prior learning;
- ensuring that marking not only recognises effort but shows clearly how work may be improved;
- reviewing the quality and impact of planning and assessment through regular and systematic monitoring.

(Paragraphs 23, 30, 54, 103, 114, 120, 127, 131, 132, 137)

c. **Extend the opportunities for pupils' cultural, including multicultural development so that pupils gain a better knowledge and understanding of the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society.**

(Paragraphs 31, 43)

d. **Continue to improve rates of attendance in all years but with particular focus on Key Stage 1.**

(Paragraphs 22, 48)

Although not identified as separate issues, in preparing their action plan, the governing body should also pay attention to the following:

- ensuring that the annual written pupil report meets legal requirements;
- tracking what pupils miss out on when they are withdrawn for additional basic skills support;
- undertaking a systematic review of whole-school policies to ensure they reflect practice and are consistently implemented;
- as part of the planning for Curriculum 2000, giving sufficient time for pupils to learn in reasonable depth across the range of foundation subjects;
- extending the range of resources available in the school library;
- ensuring that useful minutes are kept of staff and management meetings to aid school monitoring and that a copy of governing body minutes is available for public scrutiny.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	79
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	49	35	4	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)	13.5	222
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	87

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	76

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	35
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.12
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.52
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	16	15	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	14	14	13
	Total	26	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (80)	81 (70)	81 ((87)
	National	82 (81)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	13
	Girls	14	15	13
	Total	26	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (87)	87 (89)	84 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	18	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	8	10
	Girls	12	8	12
	Total	18	16	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (51)	52 (29)	71 (47)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	8	12
	Girls	13	8	12
	Total	19	16	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (49)	52 (43)	77 (49)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	220
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: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.8
Average class size	30.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	99

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	49 4489
Total expenditure	48 4842
Expenditure per pupil	2 046
Balance brought forward from previous year	15 710
Balance carried forward to next year	25 357

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

255

Number of questionnaires returned

64

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	33	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	45	5	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	44	2	3	6
The teaching is good.	48	42	5	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	36	16	6	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	34	3	5	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	30	2	2	5
The school works closely with parents.	48	33	5	6	8
The school is well led and managed.	41	39	11	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	42	6	3	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	45	11	8	14

Rows may not total 100% due to rounding

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

77. At the time of the last inspection provision for children under five was recognised as a strength of the school. This strength has been effectively sustained. Good provision at this stage ensures that these young children, including those with special educational needs, are given a solid foundation upon which to build for the later stages of school life. The curriculum in place enables children to learn according to the desired learning outcomes for young children. These have been successfully linked to preparation for involvement in the literacy and numeracy strategies, but adapted appropriately to meet children's needs. Together with coverage of the desired learning outcomes this adaptation has a positive impact upon the standards achieved.
78. Provision for under-fives is within the nursery and a reception class of the school and is of good quality, due to the commitment and effort of the adults who work as a successful team and overcome the acknowledged problems of having the two classes geographically far apart. Although the provision is well managed by the nursery class teacher working in close liaison and well informed co-operation with the reception class teacher and support staff, their work would be enhanced and made easier if an early years unit of rooms were to be formed. This could easily be achieved with a rationalisation of the accommodation space that is available and would avoid doubling up of resources, would give a better child adult ratio and make more space available to those children under five in the reception class.
79. At the time of the inspection there were twenty-seven children in the nursery class and eighteen children in the reception class who were under five. Children in the nursery attend for a morning session only. These significant numbers of children were having their needs appropriately met by the team of teachers and support staff. The children enter the nursery from aged three years and move into the reception class the term before they become five. There is an informal assessment made in the term when they start in the nursery. This is a follow-up to the efficient pre entry visits that are made by the nursery teacher and the nursery nurse and the visits to school by children and parents or carers. The pre-entry visits give a clear picture of the level of language ability and social and personal capabilities of the children. More formal assessment is carried out in the nursery class and repeated in the reception class to check on progress. The baseline assessment provided to the local education authority indicates clearly that attainment on entry is well below average in all areas of learning. Inspection findings judge that the children make at least good progress in most areas so that they enter statutory schooling appropriately prepared for their future learning. Nevertheless their attainment remains below average in all areas of learning.

Personal and social development

80. Teaching is good and the children under five make good progress in their personal and social development even though they remain below the average expected for their age by the time they reach the age of five. All staff place a great deal of appropriate emphasis on social skills development. They have a sensitive and perceptive approach that helps children settle into nursery and reception class routines readily. Children come into school happily because a good range of activities welcomes them where they work in pairs or small groups. There are good tabletop activities that help them to start their school day in a positive way as they share them with one another. Their skills are then further developed in the structured play activities in the nursery. For example, the clinic that has been set up in their classroom supports the children effectively in finding out about what they need to do to make appointments, go with one another to give support and helps to reinforce their learning of language and literacy skills at the same time. They show good measures of confidence in taking some responsibility for their own learning as they plan some of their morning's activities. In the reception class, children under five play just as constructively in the Post Office that has been established; there they learn to work with one another with patience as they accept letters, give out stamps and put letters into a box, understanding that this is how letters are sent on. They always listen carefully to instructions and try

hard to carry them out successfully. Relationships with adults are good. The teachers have planned effectively for the children's personal development through the social skills that they are given and by resourcing tasks well. Good support is given by adults who present themselves as good role models for the children and promote co-operative working very successfully.

Language and literacy

81. Children's attainment is well below what would normally be expected of those nearly five in this area of learning. Teachers make this a core area of the learning opportunities that they build for children and effectively use all other areas of learning to help to develop language and literacy skills. The children make good progress in their learning through a well-balanced mixture of well thought out role-play activities and more formal structured support programme. In their role-play they visit the clinic. This is a meaningful experience for them as they have visited the local clinic earlier in the term. This visit included some parents as well, which also helped to ensure that work in school is understood and followed up appropriately at home. In their role-play visits they are helped to understand the sequence of learning in language as they telephone to make appointments, appointments are 'written' in the diary, they arrive, are welcomed, have a consultation and finally make a further appointment in order to continue being looked after. Their speaking and listening skills are constantly being reinforced as they sequence their learning and this helps many to grow in confidence. They enjoy sharing books as they listen with enjoyment to stories, anxiously ask to look at the pictures and join in with pleasure when the stories contain words that they know, such as in 'The Three Little Pigs'. A few know that print carries meaning and are able to sit quietly and 'read' to themselves. Others are heavily reliant on pictures to cue and have not yet developed sufficient recognition of why text is different from pictures. The home school diaries appropriately support reading. The children get used to the computer as a learning tool as they 'write' descriptions and illustrate these with line drawings of themselves. They copy their names in nursery and move on to writing them independently in reception class as they begin to form letters with more consistency and increasingly good structure. Few children can write words and short sentences unaided, although most can write their own name or a plausible attempt at so doing. The teachers have planned thoroughly to ensure that all opportunities to enhance learning are in place. The good teaching that ensues impacts effectively on the good progress that the children make.

Mathematics

82. Children's mathematics skills are well below average when they enter the nursery. Most make good progress although their attainment is still below average by the time they become statutory school age. They have particular difficulty in applying mathematical knowledge on entry to school. In order to overcome these difficulties the children are given many practical experiences. They make good progress as a result of this. They become secure in their understanding of numbers to five and what it means to add numbers together and take them away as they join in the singing game of 'The five speckled frogs'. This is made meaningful for them as the teacher has made five frogs which five children hold as they move in and out of the imaginary pool that has been made for them in the nursery. Few can manipulate the numbers, for example to know that four is three more than one. The small number of higher attainers can count to ten but hardly anyone can handle these bigger numbers with confidence before they are five years old. Children build on these experiences in reception as they fill the containers in the sand tray with more or less sand. They use the language of mathematics with increasing accuracy as they follow these activities through, with good measures of logic when finding out about size and capacity as they use the sand and water trays. They find out about space as they move around their classrooms in the carousel of activities with competence. This is reinforced as they join in the physical activities in the larger hall space with confidence and recognition of the need to build up their movements with care. The cross-curricular approach is a good central feature of teacher planning but the specific elements of mathematical learning are not lost. The good teaching in this area of learning ensures that the children are developing equally good attitudes to learning in mathematics.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Children start school with limited experiences about the world around them and their knowledge and understanding is well below average. Few have any first-hand experiences of technology before they start school. The practical teaching approach to learning adopted by nursery and reception class staff is particularly helpful to the children's development of skills in this area of learning and they make good progress as a result. They enjoy their immediate environment and have taken increasing pleasure in it through creating a small, well-tended garden outside the nursery. They use the gardening tools and watch the growth of flowers with wonder. They build competently with Duplo building blocks as they make vehicles that move on wheels. They begin to discover about distance as they make a visit to the local clinic and at the same time find out about the local area. Their knowledge and understanding about past times is made relevant for them as their teacher shows them an iron that would have been used in grandma's time. Through good, well distributed questions children become totally involved in this discussion as the teacher uses the appropriate resources and the accurate descriptive language effectively. They use the computer with particular skill, as in the nursery when they move the mouse around to show their knowledge and understanding of how colours can be changed effectively. This is then built upon in reception class as they use their knowledge of colours to draw houses with windows and doors and then have the confidence and skill to print their own pictures without adult support. They cut and stick with good measures of dexterity as they dress three little pigs and make their houses of straw and wood after hearing the story and becoming totally involved in it. They listen carefully to adults and other children in order to increase their learning about the world. The teachers work hard to develop children's experiences and receive good support from other adults as well as good responses from the children.

Physical development

84. The children enter nursery with well below average physical development but make good progress because of well-structured and imaginative teaching even, though their attainment remains below average by the time they are five. Pupils follow instructions well and try hard to shape their bodies in the ways the teacher asks. Many tire easily after physical exertion and some have difficulty giving attention for sustained periods. The adults are very patient in giving time for pupils to work at their own pace in developing their physical skills. Outside the nursery classroom there is a suitable grassed area and a play space that is marked out like a road with bus stops and crossings that the children love to play with. In good weather there is appropriate use of this area as activities are effectively carried out with an adequate amount of large wheeled toys. Activities are still carried out when it is not possible for children to go outside. There is a slide that the children climb and use in the large space in the nursery. Children in both nursery and reception classes find out about how to use larger space effectively when they climb and roll in the hall using benches and inclined ladders. The finer physical skills are also appropriately used when they cut and stick as well as begin to understand what needs to be done in order to sew effectively. Good teaching strategies are used to give support from well-deployed support staff as well as from teachers.

Creative development

85. Children are given a number of opportunities to develop their creative skills from a well below average base. Teachers are successful in providing pupils with experiences that enable good progress and have moved attainments to being below average by the time they become statutory school age. The good teaching of this area of development gives children a wide range of well-focused activities. Apart from being able to paint they are given opportunities to draw line illustration after writing about themselves on the computer. They listen carefully as the Reception class teacher outlines the techniques of making shades of colours. They then successfully use the techniques to paint portraits of their mothers with different shades of pink in the skin tones. However these techniques are not always transferred into other artwork. The children do, however, match colours together quite carefully as they dress the three little pigs in materials that they choose for themselves, but with some sensitive guidance from a nursery nurse. They join in with songs that have actions with a good sense of rhythm but with immature voices that they do not always controlled successfully. This good variety of work helps to create a bright and stimulating environment for the children. They appreciate this and the positive impact that their

happiness at coming to school has is shown by the fact that they move from well below in attainment to below average in all of the areas of learning in these early years.

ENGLISH

86. At the time of the last inspection standards in English were broadly in line with national expectations at both key stages. This was reflected in National Curriculum test results at both key stages, which showed attainment as broadly average overall, with reading and writing fitting into this category and speaking and listening being good. Over the three-year period from 1996 to 1998 when compared with all schools, there was a decline in reading and writing standards at Key Stage 1 according to tests, although school results show an improving picture overall with no significant gender variation. When Key Stage 2 results are compared to all schools over the same period there is a very uneven picture but one of improving trends overall. The impact of the National Literacy Strategy has clearly had a positive effect on standards in very recent years.
87. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 1 when compared to all schools, reading was found to be average whilst writing was below average. When compared to similar schools at this key stage reading was well above average and writing was above average. The 1999 results for eleven-year-olds show below average attainment in English when compared to all schools but above average attainment when compared to similar schools.
88. Inspection evidence suggests that attainment is average overall in English at both key stages, but that there is a need to improve writing skills, particularly at Key Stage 1. The inspection did not reveal any significant difference in the attainment between boys and girls.
89. Attainment in speaking and listening is average at both key stages. Pupils enter nursery with well below average skills in language and literacy. Teachers and support staff in the early years work hard at developing these skills. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils are listening carefully although there is a minority which finds it very difficult to settle for too long a period of time. Some teachers still expect pupils to concentrate for too long and be inactive for their speaking and listening skills to be developed further. Pupils are over anxious to respond quickly to questions and so do not always answer in full sentences. This hampers the development of their oracy skills and the school has rightly identified the need to target the development of these skills in the immediate future. Nevertheless, teachers do provide enough opportunities for pupils to enter into discussions as part of the literacy hour lessons and this has supported them well in developing their speaking and listening skills. At the end of Key Stage 2, speaking and listening skills are better developed, with accelerated development at the end of the key stage because of challenging and inspiring teaching. The pupils contribute with growing confidence to class discussions as part of the literacy hours. They can express themselves with good measures of clarity in complete sentences. For example, in a Year 6 lesson a large number of pupils became really involved in giving descriptions of settings for stories and made use of metaphors appropriately and with confidence.
90. Attainment in reading is average at both key stages. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has also had a beneficial effect upon the reading standards in Key Stage 1. The successful introduction of the strategy has further raised the status of reading in a school where reading was already considered to be very important. The involvement of parents coming into school to hear their children read is a highly successful start to the school day and is well supported by a significant number of parents on a regular basis. Average and above average readers at the end of Key Stage 1 read with confidence, reasonable accuracy and understanding. The best readers are fluent and use expression well whilst the less able readers use picture and context clues to help them to understand. Most are able to talk about the characters in the books and predict with confidence what might happen next in the stories. The most able readers visit the local library as well as taking books home from school and enjoy reading. The less competent readers are also able to talk about their books but do so with less confidence and need to be prompted to give opinions and predictions about what might happen in the stories. Their reliance on picture and context clues to help them in developing their reading skills is

because they have not fully developed their phonic skills, although they have made good use of the strategies to give them better support in this respect.

91. Attainment in reading is also average throughout Key Stage 2, with some attainment of the most able readers going beyond levels expected for their age. The most able readers in Year 6 are very confident and use expression well, differentiate between characters and understand all of the parts of a book, gaining a full understanding of the value that books can give them. They continue to have the support of parents coming into school for the start of the school day, which gives a clear signal of the importance given to reading, by both home and school. All pupils are able to select books, which give them pleasure and enjoyment. They are less confident about books that will help them to research and the school does not provide an enriching programme of developing research skills that would support pupils in this respect. There are different library areas for the key stages in the school with a satisfactory supply of books but in the Key Stage 2 library, which is classified under the Dewey system, there is no guidance to help pupils to make use of it as a reference tool.
92. Attainment in writing is below average at the end of both key stages. At Key Stage 1 pupils have not been given enough opportunity to widen their writing skills through being given a variety of writing tasks. Much of their written work is straightforward recording of stories, either re-telling them or from pupils' imagination. Strategies such as note taking, writing in diary form or writing in poetic form have either not been introduced to them or they have not had enough opportunity given to them to use these different forms that would help them to develop wider writing skills. Handwriting and presentation skills are not given enough attention and there is some unsatisfactory letter formation by a significant number of pupils. An over reliance on worksheets means that pupils are not often required to write very much and so pupils do not practise writing at length often enough. The literacy strategy has given impetus to the need to spell correctly and by the end of the key stage many pupils are beginning to use dictionaries with confidence in order to support them appropriately in spelling correctly.
93. Attainment in writing still does not match that in reading but there is evidence of accelerated attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. It is still below average overall but pupils are beginning to write in different forms for different audiences. Pupils use dictionaries and thesauruses increasingly to support their developing knowledge of words at the end of the key stage. They write in a wider context with success in other curriculum areas such as religious education and history. Basic punctuation is used accurately and there is evidence of improving standards in handwriting and presentation skills. The computer is being used successfully as a word processing tool, and in Year 5 as a research tool as pupils find out more about Martin Luther King as part of a religious education lesson. Poetry and reporting are two of the different forms of writing that are beginning to be used with more confidence in the key stage. At the end of the key stage in Year 6 there is a good buzz in the classroom as an indication of the high interest level of pupils as they tackle the difficult concept of combining character study with a dream-like story setting.
94. Taking account of pupils' well below average attainment on entry to school, most make good progress in both key stages. They are being well supported by the school by the good teaching that is an integral part of a significant number of English lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as they are well supported within class and when they are withdrawn. The additional literacy support is helping to raise standards in the progress pupils make in basic skills, although the organisation of withdrawal groups sometimes impedes progress in wider terms in some lessons. The literacy hour has made a good contribution to the progress in all of the elements of learning in English. Good use is being made of information technology such as 'success maker' to extend opportunities for pupils to learn independently and pursue a structured programme of learning that gets harder and harder as they work towards a personal goal of success.
95. Most pupils have positive attitudes to English in both key stages. They are well motivated by interesting tasks. They become increasingly able to develop their ideas in class discussions once they have overcome their inability to express themselves clearly. These good attitudes are brought about by the fact that in the main they listen carefully and concentrate commendably. They try hard in their work

because of the high level of positive interaction that there is between pupils and adults throughout the school in the classrooms.

96. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. There is some very good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2, which is very supportive of pupils, but there is also a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching at the end of Key Stage 1, that does not support pupils well in developing their skills in English. Where teaching is best, lessons are planned with care and teachers provide interesting introductions and tasks. Lessons move along at a good pace and in the very best lessons teachers make good use of time targets. Lessons are generally well organised and managed. Where teaching is least satisfactory there is a weakness in setting clear learning objectives in planning and consequently tasks are not clearly introduced to pupils nor are they as interesting as they might be. Marking is consistently better at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1 where clear indications are not always given to pupils about what they could do to improve their work. The use of assessment information to inform teaching and learning is underdeveloped.
97. The co-ordinator provides good support for other teachers. A careful and detailed analysis of test results has been made by the co-ordinator to support others in understanding what needs to be done in order to raise standards appropriately. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced successfully under her guidance and is quickly becoming embedded in the school's more successful practice. Homework is also being used to support standards but this is still inconsistently used across the whole school in order to do this. The school is well placed to continue to raise standards in English and is on track to meet the challenging targets set this year.

MATHEMATICS

98. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in mathematics were average at the end of both key stages and it was judged that they had risen in recent years. Nonetheless, it was also flagged that standards required continued improvement. In the year after the 1996 inspection, standards in the Key Stage 2 national tests in mathematics were well below average.
99. Since that time standards have stood still. In national tests, mathematics results have remained stubbornly as 'E' grades (well below average) at Key Stage 2 when compared with all schools and have not shown a sufficient improvement, particularly when set against English results over the same period. In relation to similar schools in tests in 1999, eleven-year-old pupils at Carcroft Primary School attained below the average level of pupils in schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals. At Key Stage 1, the 1999 results in mathematics were below the national average but close to the average of similar schools. A greater proportion of the 1999 cohort achieved the higher level 3 than did nationally. The school's analysis puts this down to better preparation and speedier responses as a result of the school's early implementation of a structured approach to numeracy skills development.
100. There is no firm evidence that boys outperform girls, or girls outperform boys, in either the Key Stage 1 or 2 national tests. Similarly, during the inspection there was no evidence of one sex doing better than the other.
101. Inspectors judge that standards in school this year are much closer to the national average than the above results indicate. The current Year 6 class has a higher proportion of pupils working at the expected level than in the past, and there is an above average proportion who are on track to gain level 5 in the forthcoming national tests. Similarly in Year 2, the level of attainment is substantially as expected for this age group and some pupils are working above level 2. Since pupils start school with well below average standards in mathematics, this pattern marks good progress by pupils as they move through the school.
102. In the last year there have been some significant changes made to the curriculum studied and to the ways in which mathematics is taught. The introduction of the numeracy strategy is already showing potential

in terms of better teaching and learning quality and improving standards. Teachers now have a clear structure to aid teaching and to assist with setting work that is well matched to individual needs and projected likely achievement. The system of teaching advanced mathematics classes in Years 2 and 6 is boosting the attainment of the higher-attaining pupils well. In addition, the good support given to pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good gains in their learning. The use of the 'success-maker' computer programme is having a good impact on developing pupils' independent learning skills and demanding quick-fire and accurate responses to harder and harder questions. The climate for learning mathematics is now better than in the past and pupils show the benefits in terms of higher standards. The deputy headteacher has undertaken some monitoring of lessons to help gain oversight of strengths and areas for development, but is aware that she needs to build on this to further support the development of mathematics throughout both key stages. The school is well on track to meet the challenging targets set for attainment in the subject for the next few years.

103. Mathematics is taught to a good standard overall, though the quality of teaching is more consistently good in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1 because of the greater freedom given to pupils to learn by employing their own strategies to solve problems. Generally, teachers have good subject knowledge and they teach the basic skills of numeracy well, allowing pupils to build knowledge at good rates. Mathematics lessons are orderly and proceed at a brisk pace with some effective use of resources to help pupils understand the complexities of number, counting and arithmetic. There are more strengths than weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics. However, the clear identification of what knowledge, skills and understanding are to be learned in lessons, the use of everyday assessment to check that these things are learned and revising, setting, sharing and evaluating targets for groups of pupils are aspects that require improvement.
104. The best mathematics teaching is in Year 6. In one very good lesson in that year, the teacher introduced the pupils to the calculation of the mean. At the start of the lesson, she shared the learning target with the pupils and then used questioning techniques very well to find straightforward ways of calculating the total value before working out the mean. Having established that the pupils understood the most obvious method, the teacher then placed more demands on higher-attaining pupils by demanding greater speed, the calculation of much higher values and the use of patterns and relationships to make addition and division quicker. The pupils rose to the challenge and worked with very good effort and concentration for the whole sixty minutes and extended their knowledge and skills at a very good rate.
105. Because mathematics is taught well, pupils respond positively. Behaviour in lessons is generally good, pupils want to learn and often do this with enjoyment and the quality of relationships is good. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities to work independently, though this could be more even across all classes and there could be more consistent development of investigation and problem solving in order to enhance both standards and pupils' personal development. In other respects, the curriculum for mathematics is good and the numeracy strategy has been introduced well.
106. Mathematics is managed effectively. The chief shortcoming of management is the degree to which standards, teaching and the curriculum are monitored against rigorous criteria in all classes. This process has been started but it is early days yet and the impact of such monitoring has yet to be shared enough in order to spread what is good and eliminate what is not. The new co-ordinator has spent much time in evaluating the equipment and materials for mathematics and gathering them together in a resource room that is intended to assist both teaching and learning. Computers are used a little to develop pupils' skills and knowledge in mathematics, though this could be more intensive across all classes.
107. Standards in mathematics are rising this year. In order to maintain this advancement in future years, the first priority is the need for more monitoring of mathematics to ensure that teaching is consistently good or better.

SCIENCE

108. At the time of the last inspection, attainments in science were reported as being in line with the standards expected for pupils at the end of both key stages. Attainment over the last four years has been inconsistent, but always below the national average. With the exception of 1998, the trend has been one of improving standards and at a rate that compares well with the school's rising standards in English and much better than the rate of improvement in mathematics. The two-year cycle of topics is having a limiting impact on the quality and range of the curriculum in science and this needs consideration as the school plans for Curriculum 2000.
109. Teachers' assessments of the results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 1 show pupils achieving below average when compared to all schools. Results in 1999 at Key Stage 2 were well below average when compared to all schools. To some extent results overall were negatively influenced by the very low number of pupils who managed to attain at the higher level 5 compared to the national picture. Against similar schools results were average.
110. Findings from inspection show that when they enter statutory schooling, the majority of children have limited knowledge and understanding of exploring objects or living things. Their knowledge of the world is narrow in this respect and their attainment is below average. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are still below average. However the pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the key stage. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average and pupils make good progress. The progress made by pupils towards the end of the key stage is very good. Overall this represents good progress since the last inspection. The results from national tests have shown a steady improvement. The evidence from this inspection is that results in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 will show a further improvement this year with standards in line with schools nationally.
111. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of the pupils recognise the difference between living and non-living things. They can name the main parts of the human body such as head, legs and arms. The majority of the pupils are able to describe materials using correct terms from a list supplied by their teacher. When carrying out experiments they are unsure of scientific processes. They describe what they see but are less secure in making simple scientific suggestions of their own. This lack of curiosity and ability to reflect on what they already know limits their attainment in science.
112. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of the pupils use their scientific knowledge to make generalisations. For example they are able to apply what they have learnt about conductors and insulators to other contexts. Most pupils have a secure understanding of magnetism. They know that when north poles are placed together they repel and unlike poles attract. They are able to use correct terms for the major organs of the human body and have an understanding of how blood circulates around the body. Most pupils have developed a sound understanding of science as an experimentally based subject. They make accurate records of the results from their experiments and present these in a variety of appropriate formats such as graphs and charts.
113. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers. The most able pupils make good progress towards the end of Key Stage 2 but in some lessons there is not enough challenge for them to learn quickly. Although they make satisfactory progress, they are unable to accelerate their learning. Throughout the school pupils enjoy science and most have good attitudes to learning. They are usually keen to learn but there is sometimes some inappropriate behaviour when the activities they have are either too challenging or do not make sufficient demands on them. In all lessons seen, the quality of relationships was good, and often very good. In group work pupils get on very well together. They respect one another and listen to the views of others. For example Year 5 pupils were working in the hall investigating the effect of exercise on the pulse. They helped each other and worked sensibly throughout the lesson. These very positive relationships had a positive impact on their behaviour and the quality of their learning.
114. The quality of teaching is good overall. At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is satisfactory and is good in Key Stage 2 where there is some very good teaching. Throughout the school the teachers know their pupils well. They establish a stable working environment where the pupils feel secure and valued.

The quality of the relationships between teachers and pupils is good throughout the school and especially in Key Stage 2. Teachers plan their lessons carefully but there is sometimes not sufficient clarity about what pupils will learn and this results in a lack of focus in lessons. In the best lessons, the teacher not only knows exactly what pupils will learn but tells the pupils, who are then able to reflect on what they are learning. This has a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and on pupils' learning. For example, the Year 6 pupils were planning an investigation to find out the factors which might affect the germination of seeds. The teacher carefully showed the pupils where they should concentrate their efforts by setting sensible targets. The pupils were encouraged to measure their own progress and learning by looking at the criteria of the National Curriculum. They were all very involved in their learning, extremely positive about what they were doing and keen to make further progress. This approach to learning is not new to these pupils. Unfortunately, this good practice has not been shared throughout the school. The use of homework in Year 6 is very positive. Homework is carefully linked to work in the school and used to reinforce knowledge and concepts. However, the use of homework in science is not uniform throughout the school.

115. The curriculum is satisfactory. A two-year cycle ensures that pupils have full access to all the required elements of the National Curriculum. However, there are some areas where the curriculum is not sufficiently carefully structured. At Key Stage 1 there is an under emphasis on developing pupils' ability to investigate and this has an adverse impact on standards. In the mixed-age classes in Key Stage 1, planning fails to take sufficient account of the needs of pupils of differing ages and abilities. At Key Stage 2, pupils are in single age classes. Teachers work closely together, planning in pairs. This has advantages of pooling expertise. However, there is sometimes a sameness about the curriculum offered to pupils in differing years and insufficient thought given to making the lessons more appropriate for pupils of differing ages. The unevenness of the curriculum and the variation in practice is an indication of the lack of careful monitoring and evaluation. Although the management of science is sound overall it has not been a high priority in the school. There is no clear vision for the development of the subject. The co-ordinator does not have sufficient opportunities to gain a picture of the strengths and weaknesses of science in the school or to improve standards through monitoring the quality of teaching. To date there has been little sampling of work to gain oversight of how science is taught and learnt through the school. This is unsatisfactory.
116. The assessment of science is unsatisfactory. Individual teachers have instigated a number of procedures, some of which are good. There are often tests to find out what pupils have learnt during a topic. However there are no procedures to assist teachers to use what they know their pupils have already learnt when planning the next lesson or topic. This has a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

ART

117. The last inspection report stated that standards in art were better than expected in both key stages and that progress was good. In some respects the situation is the same today, though there are aspects of art work that are under promoted and so standards overall are closer to the expected level by the age of seven and eleven. Through worthwhile experiences pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress in developing their artistic skills overall, but make better progress in certain aspects of the art curriculum that are taught in more depth.
118. Pupils show good progress in developing the skills of painting. During the inspection, the theme of flower painting was studied throughout the school and gave rise to some very good pictures. In Year 2, for example, pupils were learning to mix paint to replicate as well as could be achieved the colours in cherry blossom and daffodil flowers. They used different brushes to apply the paint and experimented well with different brush strokes. Other pupils used different types of pencil to draw a stuffed owl. One or two pupils represented the camouflage effect of the feathers very well. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show more precision in their artwork and a finer eye for detail. The work of some Year 6 pupils is technically accomplished and shows the nuances of light and shade in iris flowers very effectively.

119. The display of art around the school is attractive and sets standards for other pupils to aspire to. However, there is little representation of the works of famous artists from different cultural backgrounds in displays, apart from the most well known works by Monet, Van Gogh, Renoir and Da Vinci. In addition, most work seen is two-dimensional and usually paint based. There is some work in pencil, crayon or pastel and a limited use of sketchbooks to build skills progressively. There is however, little work in three dimensions, although Year 4 have made and fired clay pots after the Ancient Greek style. The result of this bias towards painting is that standards and progress are good in painting but less in other media. Overall progress in art is, therefore, satisfactory, though pupils' cultural development is not served as well in art as it is in most other schools.
120. Teaching is satisfactory overall, though some art lessons observed involved good teaching quality. Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and teach basic skills of painting well. Lessons are well managed and organised and teaching is at a brisk pace in most lessons. The limited range of resources and their use is a weakness, as is the inconsistent identification of precise objectives for learning in planning and day-to-day assessment of skills and knowledge. In a few lessons, especially at Key Stage 1, teachers over-control the work by making all the choices of materials, mixing paint and completing pupils' work themselves. This does not encourage pupils to develop the necessary independence, responsibility and creativity in the work.
121. Pupils are keen to complete their work, they often show much enjoyment in painting and they take great care with their work. Behaviour is good in art lessons and the pupils, including those with special educational needs, work collaboratively, and give good creative effort to their tasks.
122. Management of art is effective because the co-ordinator gets a useful oversight of the subject from seeing work on display. The weakness is that she has no planned time or opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in other classes. Assessment is generally limited to marking and is unsatisfactory as it does not provide sufficient information on which to assist the planning of future lessons to ensure that all pupils are enabled to maximise their potential in art. Whilst there are enough resources for the work completed at present, there are not enough to extend the work into the use of other media, materials and techniques, including three-dimensional art. This widening of the basis of art teaching is essential if the school is to meet all the requirements for the revamped curriculum due in the next few months.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. The 1996 inspection report judged standards in design and technology to be satisfactory at the end of both key stages and pupils made appropriate progress. Since then, the school has made sound progress in improving both provision and standards.
124. The progress pupils make, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory through the school. There is appropriate focus on design and technology within the curriculum so pupils have enough opportunities to build skills and knowledge at sound rates. Some pupils do better than this. There are one or two key aspects of the work that are not as well developed as others and attention to these will bring more consistent progress and better standards.
125. Teaching quality is sound in both key stages. Teachers give good emphasis to not just the *make* aspect of the work, but also to the *plan and design* and *evaluate and improve* aspects. Pupils in Key Stage 1 give careful thought to the design of their items and show appropriate skills in cutting, joining and finishing. In Key Stage 2, pupils have good opportunities to extend their experiences by sharing work with local woodwork apprentices. This enables them to use tools and materials not usually available in schools. They also learn well the need for safety in handling power tools, cutting tools and sharp-edged materials. The quality of some finished products is good, including the book stands made by Year 6 pupils.
126. In much of the Key Stage 1 work, and to a lesser degree in Key Stage 2, paper and card are the chief

materials used. The lack of opportunity to work with other materials, and associated tools, restricts the progress that pupils make in the subject overall. Nonetheless, pupils work well with the available materials and are keen to succeed. Behaviour is good in lessons and pupils work well with others. They take great pleasure in sharing their products and successes with other people.

127. The management of design and technology is good. The co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the curriculum and resourcing for the subject. This has been successful. He has not yet had the opportunity to monitor standards and the curriculum through sampling work and observing teaching, for example. Assessment of design and technology is a weakness as it is ad hoc and incidental and doesn't enable teachers to have a clear picture of rates of progress being made year on year. The annual written report for parents does not specifically report on the subject and therefore does not comply with statutory requirements.

GEOGRAPHY

128. The findings from this inspection are similar to those from the previous inspection. As then, no lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 and judgements about provision at this key stage are therefore based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils.
129. The quality of learning is good for most pupils, including those with special needs. Pupils enjoy learning about geography, especially facts about places that they remember well. Younger pupils learn about their locality. For example pupils in Year 1 and 2 visited a farm. This visit linked well with their work in science and geography. Older pupils were keen to find out about countries in Europe. They were able to name most of the countries in the Economic Union (EU) and were able to give simple facts about currency and location.
130. In lessons observed during the inspection the pupils behaved well. Their attitudes to learning were good. In particular the relationships developed by pupils were very good and a feature which contributed to good learning. They work well together and are prepared to help each other. Older pupils identified the good relationships as one of the features of Carcroft School.
131. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers build on the good relationships that permeate everything they do. They respect the opinions and views of the pupils. This creates a good discipline in the class and enables effective learning to take place for most. Although teachers plan their lessons carefully, they do not always consider sufficiently carefully what pupils of differing abilities are expected to learn, and this has a negative impact on the quality of learning in so much as sometimes potentially higher-attaining pupils kill time. In lessons teachers question pupils carefully and effectively about what they know and can do. For example the youngest pupils in Key Stage 2 were investigating how their local environment had improved. The teacher used his questioning skills very effectively to make the pupils think carefully about what they knew and had seen around them. They demonstrated good knowledge of the neighbourhood around the school, and devised ways to improve it. In recorded work the depth of knowledge they had shown in discussion was less in evidence.

132. The curriculum for geography is satisfactory. Since the temporary suspension of statutory orders to teach the National Curriculum, the time devoted to geography has declined, to take account of the increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Although there has been an attempt to make this reduced proportion of time effective, the resultant curriculum is barely adequate and does not always enable pupils to build on the skills that they have already developed. The geography co-ordinator is aware of this and has plans to improve the curriculum coverage. There are presently no procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress in geography. Although not a statutory requirement the lack of simple and manageable procedures to assess what pupils have learnt make it difficult for teachers to plan effectively, based on a secure knowledge of what their pupils have learnt. This is unsatisfactory as they tend to rely on pre-written plans that give access and coverage of the programme but are not geared to making the best of the potential learning rates of some pupils. This adversely affects the quality of learning across the school.
133. The leadership provided informally by the geography co-ordinator is good and helps to ensure that geography provision is satisfactory. However there are no procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and good practice is not shared. This is unsatisfactory.

HISTORY

134. The findings from this inspection are broadly similar to those from the last inspection. Since that inspection there has been a temporary suspension of the statutory orders for the National Curriculum in history. With the focus on other aspects of the curriculum, especially literacy and numeracy, history has not been a high priority in the school.
135. The pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs, is still good in the areas of history covered and is sound overall. At Key Stage 1 all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Much of their history is integrated in a thematic approach, but there are also some opportunities for pupils to learn about historical events. For example during the inspection pupils were finding out about the Fire of London. At Key Stage 2 history is usually taught as a distinct subject. The quality of learning is good throughout the key stage. Younger pupils have learnt to a reasonable depth about Ancient Greek civilisation and the older pupils have usefully been finding out about Britain since 1930.
136. All pupils enjoy finding out about the past. They are enthusiastic about what they are doing. For example, younger pupils in Key Stage 2 were finding which modern words had Greek origins. Some had difficulty in understanding the meaning of words, but were very keen to undertake the task given to them. In lessons the pupils behave well. They like their teachers and respect them. This forms the basis of the good discipline, which enable pupils to learn effectively.
137. The quality of teaching is good overall. At Key Stage 1 teaching is sound and there is consistently good teaching at Key Stage 2. All teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of history and are able to use this effectively. Relationships with the pupils are a strength, especially at Key Stage 2 where they have a very positive impact on learning. The relative weakness of teaching throughout the school is a lack of focus in what teachers expect their pupils to learn during the lesson. Teachers plan carefully but the bulk of their efforts is in making provision for what pupils will do. There is often a lack of attention to the historical knowledge and skills that pupils are expected to gain. Because of the teachers' good skills in adapting the planning during the course of the lesson, for example by follow-up questions, this does not have a large detrimental impact on pupils' learning but it does restrict the progress which pupils make. For example, there are no strategies to provide opportunities for the most able pupils to extend their historical skills or to embark on personal research activities often leading to extensive studies in many schools. There are also too few structured opportunities for pupils to develop information retrieval and interpretation skills in history; the situation is not helped by the very limited library stock.

138. The curriculum is satisfactory. However, the school has recognised the need to review the provision of history when new statutory orders are introduced later this year. The present system of sharing the same topic between two year groups in Key Stage 2 makes it difficult for teachers to ensure that pupils develop historical skills in a sequential manner. There are examples of good practice, which are not presently shared across the school. For example many teachers are using history effectively as a means of improving pupils' literacy skills. They develop pupils' ability to speak effectively, hold a discussion, write in different styles and to use non-fiction books. But there is a lack of cohesion and rigour in the systems that manage the subject. This is because there are no procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. This is unsatisfactory. There are no simple and manageable procedures to assess what pupils have learnt in history. This makes it difficult for teachers to use their knowledge of what pupils in their class have already learnt to inform their future planning. This is also unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

139. Standards in information technology were satisfactory at the time of the 1996 inspection. This position has been maintained, though there are signs that improved resourcing is having a positive impact on standards.
140. Pupils start school with limited experience of using computers and other technology. They quickly learn the first steps in computer use and build skills and knowledge at a steady rate through the school. Pupils attain the expected standards at the end of both key stages, though some pupils in Year 6 show more advanced skills.
141. The school is building its stock of up-to-date computers progressively but also puts dated models to effective use. The establishment of the Millennium Room as a computer centre is a positive move in providing more computers for pupils to use. The clustering of computers in other rooms is also working to advantage in boosting the progress pupils make in information technology. This is especially the case for pupils with special educational needs who have good access to the suite of programs '*Success Maker*' that is designed to support individual and specific needs. Such pupils make good progress in their learning because they use computers systematically and regularly.
142. Most classes have information technology lessons written into their timetables. These lessons are often used to develop pupils' skills and knowledge in other subjects. In some instances this works well. During the inspection, the Year 6 pupils were using computers, particularly the Internet, to research aspects of the Second World War for their history topic. These pupils located emotive pictures of V2 rockets and bombing damage that they downloaded, saved and merged into a word processed account of the Blitz. Attainment in both history and information technology was boosted well by this experience. There are other occasions, however, when the potential of the computer to advance learning is missed by not being sufficiently built into planning. For example, pupils are shown an appropriate program, but do not then use it immediately to further their studies.
143. There is satisfactory use of the computers in classrooms overall. During the inspection, class-based machines were not used much, but there is other evidence, chiefly from the work scrutiny and lesson planning, to show that pupils use the class based computers sufficiently across the year.
144. The teaching of information technology is satisfactory in both key stages. Teachers plan appropriate experiences across all strands of the subject, including control and modelling. The teaching of skills and knowledge is systematic, though there are not always enough opportunities to practise these in the following sessions. This is partly related to the need to pair pupils in turn to use the one or two available machines. This takes much time. Where computers are grouped in greater numbers, the potential for instant practice is better and progress is more rapid. The school is working hard to eliminate the bottleneck caused by limited resourcing. Information technology is a core priority for the school and improvement is already evident.

145. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they have to work with computers and allied technology. They behave well in lessons, work well with other pupils and their personal and social development is well promoted. Older pupils show good self-regulation of learning when working in pairs away from the classroom. Because concentration and effort are good, pupils often build skills and knowledge at good rates.
146. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has good knowledge of the subject throughout the school, though he has had no opportunities to monitor the work in classrooms. He has firm and appropriate priorities for the subject and works hard to support other teachers and to develop the curriculum and planning effectively. Assessment is in its infancy and there is a need to monitor assessment processes to ensure their consistent application and how well the information gained is put to successful use in subsequent planning. The annual written report for parents does not meet the statutory requirement to report specifically on information technology.
147. Some, but not enough, pupils achieve much. The staff are concerned that standards in information technology should be better and there has been steady improvement over the last few years. The co-ordinator understands that monitoring is the key to continued success and even better standards.

MUSIC

148. The last inspection indicated that standards were at the levels expected and progress was mainly satisfactory throughout the school, with good progress in the early years. Standards have been sustained at an appropriate level as learning remains good in the early years, is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, where it is particularly well supported by some effective instrumental work. The instrumental tuition is partly provided by the co-ordinator, who works successfully with recorder groups and violinists, and by peripatetic teachers from the local authority team who work with recorder players, stringed instruments and brass instrument players. The policy is supported appropriately by a scheme of work for non-specialist class teachers.
149. At Key Stage 1 pupils sing with great enthusiasm, particularly when they join together with one another in the hall. They learn to pitch their voices accurately but do not always manage to control the volume of their voices effectively. They make commendable efforts at part-singing at this key stage when they build upon skills learnt previously. They sing with good measures of confidence and spontaneously join in actions to show their enjoyment of singing. At this key stage they work together in their classes as they begin to understand the need to consider others when performing. They form an orchestra as they follow signs and symbols to make a tune. They clap and use their feet to do this competently at first before they use a limited number of instruments to perform successfully. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. The good progress at Key Stage 2 is clearly shown as pupils build upon skills learnt at the earlier key stage. They explore the finer skills of dynamics and tempo in Year 4 as they use voices with good levels of modulation. They play an imaginative game of 'Hunt The Thimble' with their voices indicating to a pupil who has been outside the classroom his closeness or not to an object. Pupils use this knowledge of dynamics and tempo very effectively in Year 6 when they play violins, trumpets and cornets in a small ensemble.
150. Pupils enjoy their music making. In showing their good attitudes clearly they are invariably well behaved. These attitudes help them to develop well personally as they join in large and smaller groups to make music together successfully. This supports pupils well in developing their social skills.
151. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, where it is particularly enhanced by the instrumental tuition provided through the school to a good range of pupils from all classes in the key stage. Where teaching is best there is secure subject knowledge from non-specialist teachers who feel well supported by the scheme of work. Teachers support the developing understanding of pupils but also give appropriate opportunities for them to be creative. Teachers are imaginative in their methods and task setting. Where teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 teachers

provide good resources but do not give enough opportunity for appraising performance as a result of brief planning notes that do not have tight enough learning objectives.

152. Generally music is satisfactorily resourced and there is good leadership. The co-ordinator has provided colleagues with a sound scheme of work but has yet to play a full role in monitoring the quality of the music curriculum across the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

153. The findings from this inspection are broadly similar to those from the last inspection and the school has made satisfactory progress in sustaining the quality of the physical education curriculum overall. The headteacher is temporarily care-taking the co-ordination of the subject due to the secondment of the post-holder to another position within the local education authority.
154. Throughout the school the quality of learning in physical education is satisfactory. Pupils learn to develop key skills of sharing experiences and making judgements through structured play in the nursery and this continues to be developed through dance, game play and gymnastics as they get older. Pupils learn a range of skills in physical education. In dance they generally respond well to a range of stimuli, particularly music, such as in a Year 1/2 lesson when pupils had to pretend to be 'Mr Strong', one of the characters from the Mr Men stories. Most showed expression and good interpretation as they walked firmly and loudly, taking big strides about the hall. All enjoyed their chance to be 'Mr Jelly' with the teacher taking good opportunity to extend vocabulary too by introducing words such as 'vibrate and wobble' to help with movement. In swimming, attainment is below the levels expected of eleven-year-olds, but pupils are making satisfactory progress towards improving their confidence in the water and improving their swimming techniques.
155. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy physical education. In lessons their attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory and often good. This is an improvement since the last inspection where a number of examples of unsatisfactory behaviour were noted. When working together they are sensible and collaborate well. For example the Year 6 pupils were playing games in the hall because rain had prevented their outdoor games lesson. Working in groups they devised their own small games to practice their catching and bouncing skills. Each group worked together well and came up with sensible games within the framework suggested by their teacher. Good attention was paid to using space and to body control. This promoted effective learning in physical education and also social development skills as pupils recognised one another's efforts and ensured fair play.
156. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers know their pupils well and this helps them to make suitable provision for all pupils. In most lessons they expect high standards of behaviour which enables the pupils to learn effectively in a calm environment. When this does not happen it has an adverse impact on the quality of learning. For example a class of older pupils in Key Stage 1 was doing gymnastics in the small hall. The noise created by the pupils talking excitedly and shouting made it difficult for the teacher to be heard and the pupils were unable to take full advantage of the learning opportunities.
157. The curriculum for physical education is satisfactory. Teachers use a scheme of work that has been purchased by the school. It includes ready-prepared lesson plans that teachers use. However, these plans do not always reflect the organisation of Carcroft School, as in the case of the mixed age classes. Nor do the plans always reflect what is needed for the pupils. For example pupils in Year 4 were using the plans for a dance lesson. The lesson gave some good suggestions for how to link the dance to the science that pupils might be doing; the dance encouraged pupils to think about growth and decay. However, the pupils had not studied this part of the science curriculum. The good links in the lesson could not therefore be used. Although the commercial scheme of work has provided a useful structure to the provision for physical education, the illustration above showed the disadvantages of too great a dependency on such a scheme.

158. The present co-ordinator for physical education had been absent from the school for two terms, having been seconded to the local education authority. Although it has been possible for the school to manage physical education in the short term, the present arrangement is unsatisfactory since the development of the subject is being adversely affected, as is the extent to which extracurricular opportunities are provided. The school management is aware of the need to ensure the effective co-ordination of physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

159. The last inspection indicated that attainment was mainly in line with national expectations at both key stages but with some attainment below these expectations due to some disruptive behaviour. Attainment was not reported against the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards when measured against the locally agreed syllabus are satisfactory at the end of both key stages today. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2.
160. At Key Stage 1 pupils show high levels of interest in stories from the Bible when they are captivated by words and pictures and when the teacher draws extensively from pupils' own knowledge and experiences. For example in learning about the Easter story, pupils showed good recall of the key facts and showed real empathy with the betrayal of Jesus by Judas. In discussion they were willing to share feelings and tried to think what it might have been like to be let down so badly by a friend and still show so much courage. In some lessons however, they are unable to sustain concentration and appear to have difficulty in listening, sometimes shouting out and not taking in new information. This tends to be when they are asked to sit for too long without activity. This impedes how much new learning is made.
161. At Key Stage 2 pupils in Year 3 listened with care to the story of 'The Last Supper', gave absolute attention and confirmed their understanding in response to the teacher's thoughtful and well-prepared lesson. Good use was made of video clips to add interest and colour to the lesson and resulted in pupils being motivated and working with sustained concentration. At Years 5 and 6 the pupils focus on the life of Martin Luther King but approach work in different, but equally imaginative ways so that pupils' attention is stimulated. In Year 5 they find information from the computer whilst at Year 6 they look at an incident from different viewpoints. This range of activities supports pupils in mature decision making and taking responsibility for their own work. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, benefit from this wide range of opportunities as they work together in pairs and small groups, before bringing their learning together to help improve everyone's knowledge and understanding.
162. There were no incidents of disruptive behaviour seen during this inspection. Pupils' interest levels were generally high as a result of well-targeted tasks. Attitudes are good with good behaviour across both key stages. As a result of good behaviour, personal development of pupils through their understanding of the values and beliefs of Christianity, Judaism and Sikhism is also good. In studying these religions the curriculum clearly meets the requirements of the local authority agreed syllabus. Through worthwhile experiences pupils develop their skills systematically and work at a good pace to do so.
163. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, particularly at the end of the key stage. Where teaching is best, teachers have good knowledge of the agreed syllabus and what tasks need to be provided to get the best responses from pupils. Clear instructions are given by teachers who have asked open-ended questions that have made pupils think about their tasks. Sensitive interventions are made by teachers who are giving appropriate but unobtrusive support to their pupils. Praise is used well and lessons are conducted at a good pace. The good interpersonal skills between teachers and pupils underpin the good teaching and subsequent good progress made by pupils at this key stage.
164. The co-ordinator has clarified the intentions of the agreed syllabus for teachers so that continuity and progression in learning can be assured. The resources are satisfactory and used efficiently. The

artefacts support the delivery of the agreed syllabus but could be usefully extended. The co-ordinator is keen to establish a closer monitoring role in order to fulfil responsibilities more fully.