

INSPECTION REPORT

YOHDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Horden

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114197

Headteacher: Ms Lindsay Gray

Reporting inspector: Dr Brian Male
14906

Dates of inspection: 24 - 27 September 2001

Inspection number: 192954

Full 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:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Windsor Terrace Horden Peter Lee Co Durham
Postcode:	SR8 4HP
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Gwen Harper
Date of previous inspection:	17/03/97

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
14906	B Male	Registered inspector	English Geography History Equal opportunities Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19419	S Boyle	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30705	G Stephens	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
3942	K Sanderson	Team inspector	Science Physical education Religious education	
26519	M Hatfield	Team inspector	Art and design Music Foundation Stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This popular community primary school takes pupils from four to 11 years old and is maintained by the Durham Local Education Authority. It is located on the South Durham coast and serves Horden and the nearby Crossroads estate. At the time of the inspection there were 272 pupils on roll in ten classes. Many pupils start school with standards of attainment well below those usually expected. Thirty six per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals which is above the national average. Thirty per cent of the pupils are on the special educational needs register which is also above the national average. There are seven pupils for whom English is an additional language, none at an early stage of learning English; this is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with a strong and caring ethos. Pupils make good progress across the school and attain standards in mathematics and science that are well above those in similar schools. Their behaviour and attitudes to school are very good. The quality of teaching is good overall, with lessons that excite and enthuse the pupils. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and sets a clear educational direction. The many recent improvements in educational provision have ensured a trend of rising standards. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Ensures that pupils make good progress and attain standards in mathematics and science that are well above those in similar schools.
- Ensures that pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to school.
- Provides a good quality of teaching overall, with lessons that are stimulating and interesting.
- Involves pupils, particularly at Key Stage 2, in a wide curriculum that takes them beyond the classroom.
- Makes very good provision for pupils' personal development.
- Makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and a clear educational direction.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, particularly in writing.
- The range of teaching styles used and the amount of independence pupils have in their learning.
- The way in which lessons build on the targets identified through the school's good assessment procedures.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997, and has made good progress since then. There has been a rising trend of standards over the last three years. The quality of teaching has improved, with many effective new strategies introduced. The new headteacher provides very strong leadership and sets a clear educational direction. Assessment and other data are now being much more effectively analysed and evaluated. The school has addressed most of the key issues raised by the previous inspection report, in particular the

planning of the curriculum and the assessment procedures. Further development is needed of pupils' independent learning skills.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. The 2001 comparisons are based on preliminary data as the official national scores are not yet available, but give a reasonably reliable guide to attainment.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	E	C
Mathematics	E	D	C	B
Science	E	C	D	C

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

There is a trend of rising standards over the last three years. This is continuing this year with standards in both mathematics and science in the present Year 6 in line with the national average (C) and well above the average of similar schools (A). Standards in English are lower than in the other two subjects, but have also been rising over the last three years, although they are still within the lowest category. Standards in reading are higher than those in writing. Standards in other subjects are generally in line with expectation. The overall standards attained at the end of Key Stage 2 represent good achievement for the pupils.

Standards of reading at the end of Key Stage 1 have been rising over the last three years, and are now in line with the national average and well above the average of similar schools. Standards in mathematics have been variable, but are now also generally in line with the national average. Standards in writing continue to be lower than the other subjects, and are well below the national average.

The targets set by the school in 2001 were far higher than the actual standards attained by the pupils. Previous targets have been more closely met.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They are keen to come to school and want to do well. They are enthused by their lessons and are keen to participate.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	There are very good standards of behaviour both in class and around the school. Standards at Key Stage 2 are particularly high. Pupils are very polite and are thoughtful of others.
Personal development and relationships	There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils, and between the pupils themselves. There is a very good ethos of concern where pupils think of others and are caring in their approach.

Attendance	The rate of attendance is broadly in line with the national average.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 4-5	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	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 quality of teaching is good overall. The special feature of the teaching across the school is the enthusiasm of the teachers and the way in which so many lessons are exciting and stimulating and so interest and engage the pupils. Another feature is the way in which teachers use role play and drama to involve pupils in situations that make the learning more immediate and meaningful. Teachers work very hard and have very good relationships with their pupils, and these relationships, together with good management techniques, underpin the pupils' very good behaviour and the progress that they make.

There is effective teaching of the basic skills of numeracy and literacy, although the teaching of writing has not been as effective as other aspects. In many classes, the range of strategies used could be wider and pupils could be challenged to be more independent in their learning.

The quality of teaching of children under five years old and at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, but not as high as at Key Stage 2. This is because fewer lessons have the excitement and interest of many Key Stage 2 lessons, the level of challenge is not always high, and the pace of learning is sometimes slower.

There is some good support for pupils with special educational needs, both from specialist teachers and from teaching assistants. Teachers generally meet the needs of all pupils well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The pupils are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum that is particularly rich at Key Stage 2 in the range of learning offered both in and outside the classroom. There is also a very good range of extracurricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for these pupils through the effective support of specialist teachers and teaching assistants. The Code of Practice is met, and the new individual education plans appropriately written.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development. There is good provision for social development, and very good provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development, although the multicultural element of the latter is restricted.

How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has a very caring ethos, underpinned by the very good relationships that prevail. There are very good systems for monitoring and supporting personal development and behaviour. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment, and these are used to shape curriculum planning.
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Parents are extremely supportive of the school and hold it in high esteem. The school is beginning to provide information about the curriculum and to involve parents more as partners in the learning process.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very strong leadership for the school and has set a clear educational direction. She has successfully introduced a number of initiatives that are contributing to the rising trend of standards. The deputy headteacher is a strong presence in the school, and the senior management team is appropriately developing its role in support of the headteacher. Co-ordinators manage their subjects effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive of the school, and many take a very active part in its life and work. They have recently changed the pattern of committees and meetings, and this should help improve their overview of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is taking many valuable steps to analyse assessment, test and other performance data. This is a valuable development and has enabled the school to set targets for groups and individuals. It will also enable it to target resources where they are most needed.
The strategic use of resources	The school budget is drawn up appropriately and resources are allocated effectively. Good use is made of specific grants and the support of the Education Action Zone. The principles of best value are applied appropriately.

The school has a good level of teaching and support staff. Resources are generally good across the school, although the range and quality of reading materials could be improved further. The school building is spacious and provides an attractive learning environment. The grounds are extensive, although the hard surface playground for Key Stage 2 is restricted.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards of behaviour are high.• The quality of teaching is good.• Pupils make good progress.• There is good provision for pupils' personal development.• The headteacher and school are very approachable.• There is a good range of extra curricular activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is no area where a significant number of parents would like to see improvement.

The inspection agrees with all the favourable comments made by parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils make good progress across the school and attain standards that represent good levels of achievement. Standards in mathematics and science represent particularly good achievement. There has been an overall trend of rising standards over the last three years. The good progress is associated with the good quality of the teaching and the pupils' own very good attitudes to school. The many initiatives instigated by the new headteacher have strengthened and secured this trend of rising standards.

The school's targets and pupils' achievement

2. The school has set challenging targets and has been generally successful in achieving them, although the standards attained by pupils in national tests in 2001 were far lower than the targets set. This was partly due to the reliability of previous information, and to the performance of a number of pupils during the actual tests. Present systems of assessment and target setting are more secure.

Children under five

3. Many pupils enter the school as four year olds with standards of attainment well below average, particularly in the areas of language and literacy. They make generally good progress through the Foundation Stage but standards are still below average by the time pupils enter Key Stage 1.

Key Stage 1

4. In national tests for seven year olds in 2001, the overall standards, as measured by average point scores, were in line with the national average in reading, but well below average in writing and mathematics, compared to the 2000 national scores. This is generally well above the average of similar schools in reading, and in line with similar schools in writing and mathematics.
5. Inspection evidence shows that standards have risen this year in mathematics, and are now in line with the national average and well above the average of similar school. Standards in reading are not as high as in 2001, but continue to be generally in the nationally average category. Standards in writing continue to be very low. At the beginning of Year 2 almost no pupil has yet attained the expected level because spelling is poor, sentence structure and punctuation are inaccurate, and vocabulary is limited. Very few pupils are able to write sequences of sentences that extend ideas. Further analysis can be found later in this report in the section on English.
6. Standards in other subjects are generally in line with those usually found, although insufficient lessons were seen in geography and religious education for an overall judgement to be made.

Key Stage 2

7. In national tests for 11 year olds in 2001, standards (compared to national scores in 2000) were well below the national average in English, in line with the average in mathematics and below average in science. These scores were in line with the average for similar schools in English, well above the average in mathematics and above average in science.
8. Inspection evidence indicates that standards have been maintained in mathematics and have risen in science, with standards in both subjects in line with the national

average and well above the average of similar schools. Standards in English remain well below average, mainly because standards in writing are so low. There is a significant number of pupils who fail to attain the expected level (Level 4) and very few pupils indeed attaining the higher level (Level 5). Most pupils acquire the basic spelling and punctuation skills that they lacked at the end of Key Stage 1, but the time taken to acquire these prevents them progressing on to the higher skills required for Levels 4 and 5.

9. Standards are above those usually found in history where there is a good focus and strong practical emphasis, and also above average in information technology where the new computer suite and recent training initiatives have been successful in promoting progress. Standards are broadly in line with those usually found in other subjects. Standards are below average in design and technology where there has been little emphasis, but the focus has now been changed and standards are already rising. Too few lessons were seen in geography for an overall judgement to be made.

Progress of different groups

10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in meeting the targets set in their individual education plans. This comes mainly from the good support they receive from specialist teachers and teaching assistants, as the general work in classrooms does not always focus on their specific needs. The progress of boys and girls is in line with national patterns and the general progress of the school. Although there is a number of pupils for whom English is an additional language, none requires extra help for language and their progress is generally in line with other pupils of their age. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels (Level 3 for seven year olds, and Level 5 for 11 year olds) has been above the average of similar schools at Key Stage 1, and in line with that average at Key Stage 2. This year, there is a lower proportion of higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1, and a similar proportion at Key Stage 2. The school is identifying such pupils, but lessons do not always meet their specific needs.

Literacy and numeracy

11. Standards in numeracy are in line with the national average across the school and pupils have a sound understanding of number. Standards of reading are higher than writing, speaking or listening. Standards of writing are low across the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They display enthusiasm and interest and are keen to be involved in the activities that school offers. Pupils enter school with positive attitudes, largely as a result of the positive views their parents have of the school. This means that pupils are receptive to the range of opportunities that the school offers, and this is a significant factor contributing to the progress that the pupils make. The school continues to promote the positive attitudes and values noted at the time of the previous inspection, and parents are pleased with their children's very good attitudes. Pupils display interest in their work and are keen to share with others what they have done. The oldest pupils delighted the rest of the school in an assembly when they gave a dramatic, wholehearted rendition of life in Tudor times. In lessons there is no shortage of volunteers to answer questions, to contribute to discussion and generally be involved.
13. Behaviour in school is very good both in class and in communal areas around school. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. Parents are very content with the standards achieved. The behaviour policy sets clear and realistic guidelines that are

well understood by pupils and sensibly and sensitively applied by staff. The atmosphere in lessons is generally orderly and calm, and friendly well-mannered pupils at lunchtimes help to make it a enjoyable social occasion. Rare instances of unpleasant behaviour or bullying are dealt with swiftly and firmly. Pupils are polite and pleasantly inquisitive with visitors and willingly join in conversation. There have been no exclusions in the last school year. Pupils' very good behaviour greatly benefits their attainments and learning.

14. Relationships are very good throughout and have a positive impact on the ethos of the school. Everyone is valued. Pupils know they will be listened to, and they value the opinions of their teachers. Staff provide very good role models. Personal development is good. Pupils are brought to a good understanding of how their actions affect others through the emphasis the school places on valuing individuals. Pupils enjoy responsibility and carry out both class and school duties with care. They give out milk, help organise and run the library and older pupils organise play equipment for younger pupils at lunchtimes. Recently, older pupils successfully devised a range of activities for the school in connection with 'Red Nose Day'. Pupils enjoy their individual and collective efforts being recognised at celebratory assemblies. They appreciate the purpose of charities, and regular residential trips for pupils provide opportunities for personal development that sometimes reveal 'hidden strengths'.

Attendance

15. Attendance rates are broadly in line with the national average, but in the last academic year they were below average. This was due to a very small number of pupils who had long periods of illness. Attendance rates are expected to be higher again in the current year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good overall across the school. Of the lessons seen in the school as a whole, 12 per cent were very good or excellent, 60 per cent good or better and 40 per cent satisfactory. Only three per cent of lessons were unsuccessful. This is a positive profile. Teaching is satisfactory overall at the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and good overall at Key Stage 2.
17. Teachers are very hardworking and have very good relationships with their pupils. These good relationships underpin the pupils' very good attitudes to school and the good progress that they make. Many lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2, are exciting and stimulating and enthuse the pupils. A feature of many lessons across the school is the use of drama and role play to involve pupils in situations that make the learning more immediate and meaningful. This has the added advantage of improving pupils' self confidence and improving the standards of their speaking. This culminates in the ability of pupils to take part in dramatic productions such as the play in the Year 6 assembly about Henry VII, where pupils acted particularly well and spoke their parts very clearly, even managing to bring out the humour of the lines.
18. The teaching of numeracy is generally good across the school and is responsible for the good progress pupils make. The teaching of literacy has been less effective, particularly in the area of writing. This is analysed in the 'English' section later in this report. Teaching of different groups is generally effective and some good support for pupils with special educational needs is provided by specialist teacher and support staff.
19. Teaching of children under five is satisfactory overall. At the time of the inspection, there was one reception class, and a small number of reception pupils in a

predominantly Year 1 class. In this situation it is difficult to arrange for equivalent provision for the two sets of reception pupils. The reception classroom can be set up with the variety of activities appropriate to these children, and the teacher can focus on them, whilst the other room and teacher must also accommodate the Year 1 pupils. In these circumstances, there were occasions during the inspection on which the provision for the pupils in the mixed aged class did not meet their needs.

20. Teaching is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1. Teaching was satisfactory in all subjects where sufficient lessons were seen to make an overall judgement. No judgements were made in information technology, design and technology, geography, or physical education. Teachers focus appropriately on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and involve their pupils in a good range of activities beyond these. This, together with the teachers' encouraging approach, is successful in encouraging pupils' self-confidence and very good attitudes to their work. Classroom management is good and lessons are planned effectively. The teaching of number work within mathematics and of reading within English have been particularly successful. The teaching of writing has not been so effective, and standards are low. Pupils have been taught phonics very well, to the extent that they tend to spell all words phonetically. Unfortunately, many of the most common words are not phonetic in their spelling, and pupils have not been taught the patterns of these words which would enable them to recognise that their phonetic spellings are inappropriate in many cases.
21. Teaching is good overall at Key Stage 2 and is often very good and sometimes excellent. It is at Key Stage 2 that many lessons are exciting and stimulating, and enthuse the pupils. Teaching is good overall in English, mathematics, science, history, physical education and religious education. Teaching is satisfactory overall in art and music. Too few lessons were seen in other subjects for an overall judgement to be made.
22. Where teaching is very good, there is a sharp focus on the learning needed to attain the set targets, together with clear explanations and activities that promote understanding. For example, in a very good Year 6 English lesson, the teacher focused very clearly on the need to look for meanings beyond the literal in their reading, and to refer to the text when explaining their views. These are the requirements of Level 4 of the National Curriculum. She took a passage from Roald Dahl's 'Matilda', which interested the pupils as they could relate it to their own experience, and used a helpful device of a wheel for them to sort what was stated in the text from what was implied. Her sharp questioning encouraged the pupils to look much more closely at the actual words and implications than they would otherwise have done. In a very good Year 5 mathematics lesson on equivalent fractions, the teacher managed to enthuse the pupils through the posing of a problem they had to solve in terms of whether doubling would be a helpful method for establishing equivalence, and also enthused them through the use of a bar of chocolate! The fact that pupils were given the opportunity to find things out for themselves made the learning much more powerful in this lesson.
23. Giving pupils the independence to explore ideas and to reach conclusions was also a feature of a very good Year 3 personal, social and health education lesson where pupils were given the opportunity to reflect on the nature of friendship in discussion with a partner. It was the independence, together with the way in which the teacher supervised the discussions and the quality of her questioning to shape their thoughts that made this lesson so good. Independence for pupils to explore ideas within a very stimulating situation was a feature of a very good Year 6 dance lesson in which the teacher used music from 'West Side Story' and Prokofiev's 'Romeo and Juliet' as she helped pupils to create sequences of movements. This lesson enthused the

pupils who worked extremely well together and attained high standards. In a very good Year 4 art lesson, pupils were given opportunities to study Roman mosaic patterns and create their own designs. The teacher then encouraged each pupil to evaluate their designs and think of ways in which they could be improved. It was the way in which he helped them in this that made the lesson so effective.

24. Many Key Stage 2 lessons have elements that excite and enthuse the pupils. In a very good Year 5 history lesson there was good use of drama role play to involve pupils in their learning. They took part in this very well, improvising speech and even adding their own humour. When a messenger was asked by Henry VII where the Duke of Gloucester's armies were, the messenger pointed across the classroom to the group of children portraying the assembled forces and said, "They're over there, look". There was also high intellectual challenge in this lesson with the reasons for Henry's marriage to Elizabeth of York, and his raising of taxes, rigorously explored. In another very good history lesson in Year 6, it was the teacher himself who assumed the dramatic role, dressing up as Henry VIII after a cleverly contrived mobile phone call to the class from Henry's secretary. All this excited, enthused and amused the pupils, but there was also an intellectual rigour in the way the teacher used the pupils' own questions to explore Henry's reasons for changing wives so often.
25. Teachers across the school have developed good skills in assessing pupils' attainment and progress and they keep good records and set some specific targets for both groups and individuals. However, these targets do not always form the basis of the lessons subsequently taught, and so there is no direct mechanism for ensuring that pupils receive the teaching required to attain the targets set for them. In some instances, the programmes set for a particular year group in one of the national strategies are followed whether or not they fit with the school's targets or the pupils' needs. This means that pupils are not always appropriately challenged. For example some Key Stage 1 pupils were asked to form the past tenses of verbs by adding 'ed' when they could scarcely spell the verbs themselves. Some Key Stage 2 pupils were involved in a series of lessons on a poetic form when this was nothing to do with any group or individual target and did not fit the very specific needs of this group of pupils whose writing skills are so poor. The marking of pupils' work is carefully carried out and is encouraging, but does not always refer back to the targets set or show how the pupils can move on.
26. Pupils are involved in a range of teaching strategies across the school that engage their interest and often challenge them intellectually. There are some very good examples, quoted above, where pupils are given some independence to find things out for themselves and to develop their ideas in ways that seem valuable to them. This is not always the case, and many lessons, although stimulating and interesting, are directed by the teacher to the extent that pupils have too little scope for the learning required for the National Curriculum. For example, a Key Stage 2 science lesson told pupils exactly how to investigate and record their findings when the National Curriculum requires them to 'decide on an appropriate approach' and 'select suitable equipment'. In a Key Stage 2 design and technology lesson, pupils were taught exactly how to make a model of a Tudor house, when the National Curriculum requires them to generate their own ideas, select suitable equipment and evaluate the outcome of their designs and so improve them. There is a place for such direct teaching, especially in the transfer of knowledge, but it is important that there is an appropriate range and balance of approaches and that approaches appropriate for knowledge are not used for the development of skills and concepts.
27. These above points are, in a sense, 'fine-tuning' of teaching that is good overall and which is particularly stimulating and exciting, especially at Key Stage 2. Pupils are

valued as individuals, and they make good progress and build self-confidence as they move through the school. The school's use of role play and drama in both lessons and assemblies is very special, and a significant feature in the pupils' engagement with their lessons and very good attitudes to school.

28. The good teaching and stimulating lessons have created a good quality of learning across the school. Pupils are very interested in their lessons and are keen to participate. The way pupils are valued and encouraged by teachers increases their self-esteem and this enables them to tackle new work with confidence. They sustain their concentration well and are keen to learn.

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

29. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets all statutory requirements and requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education. Children at the Foundation Stage are provided with a generally satisfactory curriculum based on the national Early Learning Goals, although provision is not equivalent between the two classes. The quality and range of opportunities for learning at Key Stage 1 are satisfactory, and they are good at Key Stage 2 where a wide range of visits, visitors and other stimuli, supported by lively teaching, motivate pupils to engage fully in class activities.
30. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, except at the Foundation Stage where the curriculum is different in the two classes. The very positive 'family' atmosphere of the school promotes the effective inclusion of pupils with special educational needs into every aspect of school life. The introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and the national guidance relating to schemes of work adopted by the school have ensured that planning reflects the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, an improvement since the last inspection. Long and medium term plans provide a good overview of the curriculum and help secure continuity and progression in learning at both key stages.
31. Arrangements for identifying pupils with special educational needs are good, and this group is very well supported by learning support assistants when withdrawn from class for additional support.
32. Sex education is taught through the science curriculum and involves the school nurse talking to boys and girls separately in their final year in school. Drugs education is taught to pupils through the science curriculum with the deputy headteacher talking to older pupils about specific issues with the support and advice of the community police officer. The policy for personal, social and health education has recently been revised. It is developed, when appropriate, across the curriculum ensuring it is reinforced in different contexts. In some classes it is provided by the provision of 'circle time' (when pupils sit in a circle and discuss things important to them with their friends and the teacher). The very good relationships that exist throughout the school both amongst pupils and adults and between the pupils themselves also provide very good examples for all pupils to observe and to follow.
33. There is very good provision for out of school activities, with the school offering a 'breakfast club' and a good range of extracurricular activities including football, netball, drama, information and communication technology, design and technology, gymnastics, art and athletics in the summer. Visits to local places of interest are also arranged each term for every class and the experiences gained add much to the quality of the learning experiences offered. During the week of the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 visited a Roman fort and this provided learning opportunities in

mathematics, art, history, geography and English. Two residential visits, one to France to experience a different culture and one to an outdoor activities centre, are arranged each year for older pupils. The school also enriches the curriculum by inviting artists, musicians, dancers and writers in to work with the pupils who respond with enthusiasm to the opportunities offered.

34. Links with partner institutions are very good. Pupils leave to attend one of two comprehensives and sound induction procedures exist for both. One school offers pupils the opportunity to take part in a science, mathematics and number challenge and has established very good links with regard to information technology. The other organises a music week involving primary pupils. The local Education Action Zone also offers very good support in a variety of ways. It encourages schools to work together and share expertise, provides in-service training opportunities and a visiting specialist teacher to support developments in information and communication technology (the school is an Education Action Zone and 'pathfinder school'). Links with the community are good. For example, the Parish Council has funded the attendance of all pupils at an annual pantomime, and the Education Action Zone has supported pupils taking part in the local Arts Festival.

Personal development

35. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. This is evident in the relationships in the school and particularly in the ways in which staff value pupils. This helps pupils to develop a sense of self worth and teaches them about relating to others in ways that are positive. Lessons are often exciting and inspiring and frequently create a sense of awe and wonder in pupils. A good example of this was a Year 6 history lesson in which the class received a mobile phone call from Henry VIII's secretary! The pupils knew this was pretend, but were still enthralled and amazed to receive the phone call. Visitors to school, such as the person who brought reptiles, enhance spiritual provision by helping pupils in a meaningful way towards a greater knowledge and understanding of the natural world, as well as teaching pupils about their responsibilities towards animals. Acts of collective worship are well planned and of a very good quality with well told stories and themes that are followed up in class worship. Pupils are often involved in the assemblies through readings and drama; for example in the Year 6 play about Henry VII.
36. Provision for moral development is very good. In the daily life of the school pupils develop an understanding and respect for school and classroom rules. In the implementation of the behaviour policy, they have good opportunities to think about their behaviour and what they might have done differently. This is reinforced through personal and social education in which pupils are helped to understand that they have choices in what they do, and are given good opportunities to discuss actions they might take.
37. Provision for social development is good. Staff are very good role models the way in which they relate to pupils and to other adults. Through this, pupils learn how to relate to others and this is evident in their relationships with each other and with adults. The very good range of after school and residential visits give pupils good experience of mixing with other pupils and their teachers in a less formal setting and this helps both relationships and pupils' personal development. Pupils are given good responsibility for the way in which they use the school, and this independence gives them a good sense of ownership so that they want to look after the school and treat it with respect. The school plans to give pupils more responsibility; for example, it is piloting a school council in Year 5. Although it is very early on, this appears to be working well, with pupils clear about what they want for their school and discussing ways in which it might be achieved.

38. Provision for cultural development is very good. There are many examples in lessons and through the school year of pupils being encouraged to engage in role play and to perform in plays. A great highlight was the school's visit to the opening of the local Magistrates' Court when pupils were invited to perform their own play in the court in front of an audience including the Princess Royal. This, together with the subsequent press attention, was a wonderful experience for the older children. In addition to their own performances, the school takes pupils to the theatre regularly where they enjoy watching others perform. Visits to art galleries and museums are all used to enhance pupils' experience. The school is aware of the need to extend the provision for the multicultural element of education and has addressed this to some extent, but provision is still limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARES FOR ITS PUPILS?

Assessment

39. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have been developed very well, and are now good. The records kept provide a clear overview of achievement by individuals and different groups of pupils. The school has developed very effective assessment procedures for the foundation subjects, that show attainment and progress, highlight weaknesses so that these can be addressed and also identify pupils who need more support.
40. The school is making effective use of this assessment information to guide the planning of the curriculum which is good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when assessment was a key issue for action. The information gained from assessment is carefully analysed and the results are used very effectively to guide future curriculum planning. For example, the results of the optional English tests for Year 4 were used to adapt the planning of the spelling curriculum to meet the specific needs of these pupils. The school also uses assessment to set targets for the levels of attainment that all pupils are expected to achieve at the end of each key stage, including the Foundation Stage.

Welfare

41. Staff are very supportive and positive in their approach to pupils. This very effectively supports pupils' personal development by raising their self-esteem, and by providing good examples of how to relate to others.
42. Arrangements for health and safety are sound. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory and all staff are clear about procedures. Teachers are very approachable, and use opportunities that arise to remind pupils that if they have concerns they should take them to a responsible adult.
43. The school is very effectively promoting good behaviour. There is a consistent approach to behaviour management by staff who have clear expectations for behaviour and emphasise the positive aspects of pupils' behaviour. The behaviour reward system is used fairly consistently alongside good opportunities for pupils to demonstrate self-discipline by, for example, the way in which they are allowed to move unsupervised around the school building.
44. Attendance is monitored well through an electronic system. The school receives good support in this from the education welfare officer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The number of parents returning questionnaires and attending the parents' meeting was small, but parents were all very positive about the school and very satisfied with

the standards of attainment and the quality of teaching. The school is very well regarded in the community to the extent that some parents charter a bus to bring their children from the other side of the village. Parents' very positive feeling about the school have helped form their children's very good attitudes to learning, and this in turn helps promote their good progress.

46. Written information for parents in brochures such as the school brochure and the reception booklet are good. Generally though, there is too little information for parents to help them support learning. The school has just started to send parents details of what will be taught and what they can do at home, but apart from this there is little to involve parents. The school is aware that it needs to do more to inform and involve parents. Annual reports on pupils' progress are computer generated. They are very long, often of a very general nature, and sometimes seem very similar for different pupils.
47. A small number of parents help in classrooms and are very committed to helping in the school. To make this help fully effective these parents need more guidance from staff. Some routines, such as the practice of teachers collecting children from the playground, keep parents outside school and away from the classroom. More recently, parents have been allowed to come into the school on wet mornings but even then they do not venture into classrooms. Teachers are very approachable and wish to engage parents in the learning process, but these sorts of routines have the unwanted effect of tending to reduce parents' involvement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The relatively new headteacher is providing very strong leadership for the school, and has set a very clear educational direction. She has already successfully introduced a range of initiatives to improve the quality of educational provision and to raise standards. She sets a good tone for the school and created a very positive ethos where there is strong shared commitment to improve.
49. Senior staff are playing an increasingly active role in developments through the senior management team, although at the time of the inspection there was a vacancy for a Key Stage 1 coordinator. The deputy headteacher is a strong presence in the school particularly in the areas of music and drama, and his role is developing more specifically to impact on standards of attainment. The role of subject coordinators is also developing under the new headteacher and they are gaining a more rigorous overview of standards and progress in their subjects. The management of English and mathematics has enabled the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to be introduced effectively. The good leadership in information technology has developed the subject well over the last year and ensured that the new computer suite has been created and introduced effectively. Art and music are also managed well.
50. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs has ensured that the national Code of Practice is implemented appropriately and that there is liaison with the required agencies and outside support. Specialist teachers and support staff are effective in their roles and give some good support to pupils. The management of the whole programme of support has not been so effective, with little direct support to teachers on strategies for helping pupils within their classes to meet the targets set on their individual education plans. This is partly a matter of time for the co-ordinator, but mainly her ability to impact on practice.
51. The governors are very supportive of the school and some take an active part in its life and work. They have recently altered the pattern of their committees and

meetings to ensure that they develop a better overview of the school and its standards. They are now on the right track toward such an overview.

52. The school is very active in the evaluation of its performance and there is a very professional and reflective approach. Teaching and learning are monitored effectively and a range of strategies introduced to impact on areas identified. A wide range of test and other data is analysed and evaluated to see how well pupils are doing. From this analysis, good targets are set for groups and for individuals. The next step is to ensure that lessons reflect these targets. All of this activity has had a very positive effect on the quality of education provided and the progress pupils make.
53. The school's budget is planned effectively and resources are allocated appropriately. Its link to the school's development plan could be closer, and this would make it easier to establish value for money in terms of targets being met. The principles of best value are implemented appropriately. Specific grants are used well to meet targets, and there has been particularly valuable cooperation with the Education Action Zone whose support has had a positive impact on the quality of educational provision.
54. There is an appropriate level of staffing across the school and this is deployed effectively. The school building is very spacious and offers a high level of accommodation. The grounds are spacious although the Key Stage 2 playground is restricted. This has been recognised by the school and there are costings for its extension. There is an adequate level of resources across the school with good resources in information technology, art and music contributing to the quality of provision in those subjects. The school has increased its stock of reading books over the last year, but there is still a need for wider provision of good quality reading materials to set a good model for pupils' writing.

WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE

55. The new headteacher has already identified the areas of the school's performance and provision that need development, and has already initiated improvements to ensure a trend of rising standards. In order to maintain this trend, the school needs to:
- 1) Raise standards in English, particularly in writing, by:
 - ensuring that pupils meet a wide range of good quality reading materials and that all examples of writing they study are of high quality;
 - ensuring that patterns of spellings are fixed at an early age;
 - giving the pupils more practice in writing extended pieces, and utilising opportunities in other subjects such as history and geography to do so;
 - involving older pupils more in the appraisal, review and redrafting of their work in terms of its clarity, style and interest.(paragraph 65)
 - 2) Build on the good assessment practice and the targets set for groups and individuals by ensuring that:
 - lessons focus directly on the targets generated by the assessments;
 - all pupils are sufficiently, and directly challenged;
 - the marking of pupils' work reflects the challenge and targets.(paragraph 25)
 - 3) Involve pupils in a wider range of teaching and learning strategies that give them more independence in their learning as the National Curriculum requires.
(paragraph 26)

The school may also wish to address the following minor issues:

- Ensure that all pupils at the Foundation Stage receive an equivalent curriculum.
(paragraph 29)
- Build on the partnership with parents to create an effective learning partnership.
(paragraph 47)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	9	35	29	2	0	0
Percentage	1	12	46	38	3	0	0

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

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 parttime pupils)	n/a	272
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	100

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	82

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	21	12	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	20
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	31	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (78)	94 (83)	97 (80)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	31	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (91)	97 (83)	97 (83)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	11	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	15	15
	Girls	7	6	8
	Total	16	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (49)	72 (59)	79 (66)
	National	75 (70)	72 (68)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	5	6	8
	Total	19	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (68)	72 (68)	79 (88)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	232
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	0	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)	11.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	27.2

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	4.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	157.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a
Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	526,448
Total expenditure	537,034
Expenditure per pupil	1,878
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,601
Balance carried forward to next year	31,015

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	280
Number of questionnaires returned	30

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	30	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	27	0	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	47	3	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	40	3	10	7
The teaching is good.	67	23	3	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	30	7	7	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	17	0	3	7
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	20	0	3	10
The school works closely with parents.	43	37	7	10	3
The school is well led and managed.	53	30	10	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	30	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	30	7	7	13

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

56. Many children start school with standards that are well below those usually found, particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. They make generally good progress through the Foundation Stage, but have still not reached the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Although the quality of teaching is generally satisfactory, many of these pupils have much ground to make up.
57. The curriculum in the reception class is firmly based on the recommended Early Learning Goals. It builds appropriately on what children already know and effectively promotes learning through small, structured steps of purposeful activities and first hand experiences. However, provision is inconsistent because the older reception children in the mixed reception/Year 1 class do not receive a similar nature of provision as those in the reception class. This has been explained in the 'Teaching' section of this report.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Effective teaching, in which children are valued and encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve enables them to make good progress in this area. Most behave well and develop positive attitudes to learning, but few are able to concentrate or listen for long. They are generally enthusiastic about learning and some play and work together well, for example, through learning to share constructional apparatus and to take turns using computers. Adults provide good role models, treating each other and the children with respect and courtesy, leading to very constructive relationships. Children respond very positively to the daily routines which give them confidence and a sense of security. Most begin to understand the difference between right and wrong through sensitive handling of everyday incidents by staff, and through stories. Staff promote personal development effectively by ensuring resources are easily accessible to help children to become independent. However, too few structured opportunities are given to develop independence in learning. Staff are aware of the need to establish a stimulating environment, but some lessons lack enthusiasm and pace, so that progress is slower.

Communication, language and literacy

59. Children make satisfactory progress from a low starting point but standards are still below expectations by the time they move on to Year 1, standards in early writing are well below those usually found. Children enjoy listening to stories and rhymes, but many have limited listening skills. Many are reluctant to respond verbally, often using single, familiar words to identify their needs. Although they begin to raise questions, for example, about the 'magnifiers' on display, there are insufficient structured opportunities to support the development of speaking and listening. Children become aware of story structure and sequences of events, through sharing books, such as 'The Brave Little Bear'. Many enjoy the story but very few are able to anticipate and join in the often repeated refrain, 'Don't look down!', even with encouragement from the teacher. The use of 'Jolly Phonics' is effective in helping children to recognise letters of the alphabet and their initial sounds, but not many retain this knowledge for long. Most are developing confidence in 'mark making' in a variety of ways, and one or two more able children ascribe meaning to marks, and a few are able to write over and under the teacher's writing with some success, but this is well below the levels usually found.

Mathematical development

60. Children make some good progress in this area, and by the end of the reception year some children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals, but overall attainment is below expectations. The range of activities, particularly in the reception class, encourages children to show interest in numbers, and to develop confidence in counting, ordering and matching. Through using shapes, structured apparatus, water and sand trays, they develop a basic understanding of space, shape and measures. It is the building on a firm base of practical experiences that enables progress to be made. For example, children were beginning to recognise different shapes and colours and combine two features, such as red triangle, after a great deal of practical experience with such shapes and good quality questioning from adults drawing the children's attention to the different features. Where learning is less successful, children spend too long on one activity without any adult input that would extend their thinking and understanding. In some instances children were taken too far too quickly in their learning, because they were working alongside Year 1 pupils. They did not have the necessary practical experience to understand the new ideas.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. Children enter school with well below average levels of general knowledge. The good range of activities enables them to build on this knowledge to help them understand more about the world. Most have some awareness of where they live, and some willingly talk about family and friends with very limited speaking skills. Children observe and show curiosity about the goldfish in the class aquarium and take turns in feeding it. Through practical activities, such as investigating magnets, some notice that "The washer and tin stuck to the magnet" and through working with sand and water they learn about different materials. They are provided with appropriate opportunities to explore constructional apparatus, and join and balance equipment with growing skill and awareness of safety. They perform practical activities, such as making 'cakes' from plasticine, with increasing confidence. Many show an interest in using the computer and, with support, are beginning to develop basic information technology skills.

Creative development

62. An appropriate balance of adult directed activities and activities of their own choice help children to develop their creative skills and knowledge. Most children enjoy creative activities, gain confidence, begin to differentiate colours and explore texture, colour and shape. Good support enables them to create effective collage pictures and self-portraits. Children join in singing familiar action songs and rhymes, such as 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes', but many lack confidence in this. They happily explore making musical sounds by using a variety of untuned musical instruments. The Home Corner encourages role play, but opportunities to develop sustained conversation and imaginative play are sometimes missed by insufficient staff intervention and the lack of a structured approach.

Physical development

63. The outdoor secure play area provides a very good resource for children to make good progress in the development of their large body skills of running, jumping, balancing and climbing. They use a good range of equipment, with increasing skill but there is a lack of wheeled toys to support the development of their body control and co-ordination. They use large apparatus with growing confidence and begin to develop awareness of space and of others, showing respect for other people's space. Children attempt to handle paintbrushes, glue sticks, writing tools, scissors and 'small world' activities and begin to gain safe control of their finer movements. Most find this difficult, but are well supported by staff.

ENGLISH

64. Standards of attainment are not as high in English as they are in other subjects, and standards of writing are particularly low. This results from the comparatively slow progress pupils make through the reception and Key Stage 1 classes, and from the very low base from which they start.
65. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards of reading are generally in line with the national average and above those of similar schools. The school gives a good emphasis to the teaching of reading both through the national literacy hour and through other lessons where pupils read individually and in groups. Pupils also take reading books home to read to parents or other adults. All of this results in a satisfactory level of word recognition across the school. By the age of seven, many pupils are able to read simple texts with some accuracy and fluency. In the 2001 national tests for seven year olds, almost a third of the pupils attained the higher level (Level 3). This was very good achievement for these pupils. Standards in the present Year 2 are not so high, but an appropriate number are at the expected level. By the age of 11, many pupils take an interest in reading and are able to talk with some interest about the books they read. Some even take an interest in challenging texts such as CS Lewis' 'Narnia' stories. Lessons at the top of Key Stage 2 focus well on the higher order reading skills, such as the ability to look for meaning beyond the literal. The very good Year 6 lesson based on Roald Dahl's 'Matilda' already mentioned was a good example of such a focus. A good Year 5 lesson looking at an instructional text focused well on the sorts of verbs and adverbs that gave the text its particular character. Such focused teaching helps pupils go beyond simple recognition of words and begin to understand text in a more sophisticated way. These pupils are able to attain the higher level (Level 5) by the end of the key stage. The significant number of pupils with special educational needs, some of who are still at an earlier stage of developing their reading, means that overall standards are no more than average.
66. There is some good teaching of speaking and listening across the school and pupils make good progress. Many pupils enter the school with poor skills in this area and find it difficult to communicate or follow extended conversations. There are many opportunities for pupils to talk to teachers and other adults through the reception and Key Stage 1 classes and they are encouraged to share their observations and relate their experiences. The way in which teachers listen to pupils talk and value their contributions, at both key stages, increases their confidence and encourages them to express their ideas. Many pupils still find it difficult to listen for a sustained period, even by the end of Key Stage 1, and need more 'short burst' activities. Teachers recognise this, but have not always adapted the patterns of their lessons to this need.
67. The use of drama and role play, particularly at Key Stage 2, gives some very good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills. These develop well through the key stage until pupils are able to extemporise conversations with ease. This was seen in the Year 5 history lesson where pupils in the role of Henry VII and various Dukes and messengers were able to hold conversations and respond very well to what had just been said. There were further examples in a Year 6 religious education lesson where the whole class was involved in a roleplay situation of being marooned on an island. They were able to hold extended conversations with other pupils and with their teacher, who slips in an out of various roles with ease in most lessons that he teaches. The pupils have become used to this and respond to it well.
68. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to discuss matters in pairs or groups, or to report back on their findings in either a formal or informal way. Where these are used, such as in a Year 6 English lesson where pupils discussed their interpretations

of 'Matilda', and a Year 4 art lesson where pupils explained their ideas and methods, there are valuable opportunities for pupils to extend the range of their speaking in different contexts that are not directed by the teacher.

69. The teaching of writing has not been as successful as the teaching of other aspects of English, and standards are low. It has already been pointed out there is a successful focus on the teaching of phonics through the reception and Key Stage 1 classes, and this has resulted in pupils gaining a very good knowledge of phonics. In fact, the level of ability is surprisingly high with pupils in Year 2 not only able to spell words phonetically, but actually to be able capture their own local accent in such misspellings as 'claymid' for 'climbed' and 'huom' for 'home'. This is a very high level of phonetic ability and shows that the pupils do not have great difficulties in learning, and have responded well to their teaching. Unfortunately, many of the most common words in the English language are not spelled phonetically, and the pupils have not learned the patterns of the common spellings so that they recognise when their phonetic renditions are not correct. This means that some write 'mee' when they mean 'me'. They have been taught that 'ee' forms that sound and then misapply it. They need considerably more practice with these patterns from an early age in order to have sense that some spellings are wrong.
70. By the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils also have poor ability to use punctuation and to divide their writing into sentences. The vocabulary they use is restricted and few have picked up the clarity of writing style that is expected by the end of the key stage. Progress is generally good through Key Stage 2, and by the end of the key stage, most pupils have learned to spell and punctuate correctly and many are able to express their ideas clearly. This results from the clear teaching they receive, and from the greater time they have been exposed to examples of good writing. Lessons particularly within the literacy hour, often focus well on elements of writing and this has helped pupils become more aware of what they need to do to improve. Because of their low start at the beginning of the key stage, very few pupils make the progress necessary to attain the higher level (Level 5) where writing is varied and interesting, and vocabulary choices are imaginative and precise.
71. The reading materials available to pupils through their reading books and in the shared texts used in class lessons are not always of the high standard that sets a good model for pupils' own writing. Pupils need considerable experience of good writing in order to absorb the styles and elements that make it good. Opportunities for pupils to engage in sustained pieces of writing are not always sufficient for them to develop the necessary skills and styles. The national literacy hour usually gives time for skills to be learned but not practised. Writing in other subjects, such as history and geography, consists mainly of short pieces and the completion of worksheets. Opportunities could be created here for pupils to practise their writing skills without extending English lessons. There are relatively few occasions on which pupils are called upon to review and amend their writing to improve its clarity and style, rather than to correct errors.
72. There is some good teaching of pupils with special educational needs by the specialist teachers and some good support from teaching assistants. The teaching of these pupils during the ordinary lessons is not always so well focused on their needs or on the targets on their individual education plans. This also applied to other pupils at various stages of development. The school is analysing test and other assessment data rigorously and has set some good targets for groups and individuals, but lessons seldom reflect these targets directly. This is partly because the programmes of the National Literacy Strategy for a particular year group are followed whether or not the programme is appropriate for the pupils or their targets.

It is also partly because lessons do not always focus directly on the targets set for different groups.

73. The co-ordinator has successfully overseen the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and has developed a good overview of attainment and progress. The school has increased its stock of reading books over the last year, but there is still a need for wider provision of good quality reading materials to set a good model for pupils' writing. The good teaching overall, particularly through Key Stage 2, has ensured that pupils make good progress, especially in reading. The school has arranged a programme of inservice education to improve skills in the teaching of writing. All of these skillsbased developments will take some time to work their way through the school and some patience will be needed as standards in English can seldom be raised as quickly as those in mathematics and science.

MATHEMATICS

74. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and attain standards in line with those in similar schools but below those expected nationally. Progress through Key Stage 2 is good with pupils achieving results well above those in similar schools and in line with results nationally. The significant factor affecting the good progress through the key stage is the lively teaching that interests and motivates the pupils.
75. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils work with numbers to 100 and have an understanding of place value relating tens and units. They work with coins up to the value of a £1 and some can give 'change' from £5. They sequence numbers, work with simple fractions and estimate and then measure centimetres and metres. They work with two-dimensional shape and can identify pentagons and hexagons as well as the more familiar shapes such as squares, rectangles and triangles. Much of the work is number based and, although all pupils completed and recorded tasks in 'practical maths books', much time is spent completing sheets consolidating work previously taught. In most cases these worksheets are the same for pupils of varying levels of attainment. This adversely affects their progress.
76. By end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound understanding of place value, can work to two places of decimals and are able to express fractions as percentages. They tell the time using the 24 hour clock, measure and identify angles and interpret data from both bar and line graphs and pie charts. They can identify and describe the properties of both two and threedimensional shapes and complete simple algebraic equations. There are few recorded examples in books of opportunities to apply what they have learned neither are there many examples of 'word problems'. However, through a systematic analysis of answers in national tests, the school has identified the need to provide more opportunities to present the pupils with word problems to solve related to real life situations. Scrutiny also shows that there is little differentiation between the work set for the average and higher attaining pupils and this needs to be addressed if higher standards of attainment are to be achieved.
77. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The good teaching was characterised by enthusiastic teachers presenting the lesson at a brisk pace and focusing clearly on the learning objective. For example, in one lesson the teacher was enthusiastic and confident as he said "Today we're going to look at Emma's favourite pie". He thereby immediately involved and interested the pupils and then went on to use resources extremely well using the overhead projector to create 'shadows' of fractions on the wall. Less successful teaching either failed to balance the lesson by launching straight into the main activity without any recap of work previously taught or failed to differentiate adequately between the different

ability groups and therefore pupils were either confused or not challenged by the tasks set. On some occasions teachers responded well when they realised that some pupils were coping easily with the tasks and either increased the level of difficulty or introduced the next activity earlier than planned. However in some classes pupils simply repeated work at the same level gaining little from the experience and getting bored in the process. Teachers' planning does not always sufficiently reflect tasks that differentiate between different ability groups.

78. The marking policy is not consistently applied and there is a wide variation in the standard of marking. In some books, work is mostly ticked with the occasional positive comments. In others, comments guide and encourage pupils, for example 'good, now you know that multiplication and division are inverse operations you can now use this to check your work,' or 'you have used the correct language for multiplication'. In some classes, teachers have placed learning objectives from the Programme of Study in the back of pupils' books and the pupils understand that these represent their overall targets for the year. However, in order to make them more effective these targets now need to be 'personalised' and made more short term in order that teachers focus specifically to an individual's progress in achieving them.
79. There is little evidence of pupils using information technology or other subjects to help develop their mathematical knowledge. However, there were examples of good practice on which the school can build. In one class, the teacher used the plan of a Roman Fort visited two days previously to motivate the pupils when teaching co ordinates. She then went on the following day to give each pupil a map of the local area to develop further the concept of co ordinates and at the same time introduce them to aspects of the geography Programmes of Study.
80. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed both in lessons, when many teachers question skilfully, in the plenary session, to determine whether learning objectives have been achieved. Pupils' answers in the statutory assessment tests have been analysed well and, led by the mathematics co ordinator, all staff are ensuring that provision is made for the solving of 'word problems' an aspect of the curriculum that the pupils found difficult. This is already being reflected in pupils' work

SCIENCE

81. The good quality of the teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2 ensures that pupils make good progress across the school and that standards of attainment are well above those in similar schools by the age of 11.
82. By the end of Key stage 1, standards are in line with expectations but skills in scientific enquiry are not as secure. Few pupils are attaining beyond expectations. For example, in their work on electricity, pupils are able to draw simple diagrams of a complete circuit, and in studying living things, they are able to recognise and name external parts of the human body and of plants, and are beginning to be able to classify and sort living things into groups. They are less secure in the skills of scientific enquiry. Although pupils are beginning to make 'predictions' there is too little emphasis placed by teachers on pupils undertaking their own experiments and investigating for themselves. Also, the overall curriculum time for science in Key Stage 1 is low, so pupils have less time with the subject. There is good teaching through Key Stage 2, and by the age of 11, pupils show sound understanding of materials and their properties and are able to test metals and identify them as 'conductors' or 'insulators'. They understand food groups and why the body needs them, and can investigate how distance from a light source affects shadows. They are secure in making predictions, undertaking investigations and show good

understanding of what makes a 'fair' test. Teachers encourage this approach and consistently devise situations where pupils can apply their knowledge to solving problems.

83. The quality of teaching is good overall and although there are variations in teachers' skills, a number of strengths account for pupils' good progress. These include good organisation, good use of time and resources and consistently good management of pupils, especially at Key Stage 2. Some of the best teaching, built on good subject knowledge, was where teachers had the confidence to explore ideas and ask probing questions to make pupils think. In a lesson with the oldest pupils, during discussions about good scientific practice and 'fair testing', one pupil, referring to an investigation involving temperature, said "The test wasn't fair because the window was open". However, others argued that this was not a factor because the window had been open all the time. Eventually, all agreed that it would have been unfair had the window been opened mid way through the experiment. This was a thoughtful discussion, well managed and prompted by a confident teacher. Pupils clarified their thinking and learning was good.
84. The school has a clear policy statement for the subject and an appropriate scheme of work. Teachers plan well together, share ideas about what works, and because they know pupils well are able to take into account, in their planning, all groups of pupils including those with special educational needs. With good support from classroom assistants these latter pupils make good progress. Science makes good contributions to literacy and numeracy in the school, through emphasis on using the correct technical language, through opportunities for discussion and good use of mathematical skills in recording and presenting data. However, the use of information technology in recording and presenting results is underdeveloped.

ART AND DESIGN

85. At both key stages, pupils attain standards in line with those usually found. These standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. There was some very good teaching seen during the inspection, especially at Key Stage 2. If this quality of teaching is maintained, and pupils continue to be involved in such a rich range of experiences, standards of attainment will rise.
86. A good Year 1/2 lesson built well on a visit to the school by some weavers, and pupils were given some independence to explore different ways of weaving rather than have to use a single technique. This gave them opportunity to develop different techniques and consider which was the most successful. There were some good opportunities in this lesson for Year 2 pupils to take responsibility for helping Year 1 pupils to learn this skill, while practising and improving their own technique. In a very good Year 4 lesson, pupils were again given good opportunities to develop their own designs from Roman mosaics they had seen. The teacher's good questioning and explanations of techniques enabled them to evaluate what they had done and to develop their work. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, particularly good use was made of a visit by a sculptor. The teacher's enthusiasm, outstanding group organisation and class management inspired involvement and collaboration of the highest quality. There was exciting use of unfamiliar resources such as 'mesh', 'wire' and 'plaster', to create vessels based on patterns and textures seen on a visit to Finchale Priory. This enthused pupils, and the teacher gave excellent support in the development of the techniques needed to use these materials. The result was a high level of attainment.
87. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. At both key stages, there are appropriate opportunities for pupils to explore ideas and work with a

wide variety of materials and tools, recording investigations in a range of media with increasing confidence. Pupils' creative skills, knowledge and understanding are built on and extended appropriately as they move through the school. The curriculum is enriched by a well-attended extracurricular art club, and enhanced by visits, for example, to Finchale Priory to study its architecture and stonework textures and patterns, and by visitors to school, such as a sculptor who supported follow-up work to the visit.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88. Only two lessons were observed and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning. A review of work indicates that there has been little emphasis on the subject in the past at Key Stage 2 and so standards are below those usually found. There is now much greater emphasis and so standards are beginning to rise. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils built on work with visitors from the local 'weavers guild' and used different materials to weave patches that were to be sewn together to make Joseph's 'coat of many colours.' They used information technology well to begin to understand the concept that they needed to design their coats. In the well-organised Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils learned to measure accurately and apply three different kinds of joints as they made frames for Tudor houses linked to their work in history. This was effective in enabling them to construct the houses, but did not give them sufficient scope to make their own designs and try different approaches or to review their work with a view to improving it for its intended purpose.
89. The development of the subject is at an early stage. The coordinator has already revised both the policy and scheme of work, having consulted the local authority for advice. He is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and determined to give design and technology a higher profile in the curriculum. Current medium-term planning indicates that teachers are now ensuring that design and technology is taught on a regular basis.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

90. Because of the school's cycle of topics, it was not possible to see any geography lessons during the inspection and so no overall judgement can be made. However, history was a significant focus of the inspection week.
91. The above average standards in history by the end of Key Stage 2 are promoted by the good teaching through that key stage and by the involvement of pupils in a wide range of visits, drama and practical activities that excite their interest and promote their understanding. There is also a good level of challenge within lessons so that pupils do not just learn facts, but also develop an understanding of historical forces and the reasons why things happened as they did.
92. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have an appropriate knowledge of the events and people they have studied. For example, in a good Year 1 lesson looking at the life of Florence Nightingale, pupils learned about her role in the Crimean War, and how her help was needed. The dressing up of pupils in modern nurses' uniform and in the costume of Florence Nightingale and acting scenes in a hospital made this lesson much more immediate and captured the interest of the pupils. The teacher's very good relationships with the pupils enabled him to involve them in role play confidently. Even at this young age some were able to extemporise speech: whilst most patients told Florence that they were fine when she asked if they were all right, one complained, "No, I've got a belly ache!"

93. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have good knowledge of the periods they have studied, and good understanding of the main events and changes. These standards are above those usually found. Year 3 and 4 pupils were enthused by a visit they made to the site of a Roman fort during the inspection and were very knowledgeable about its construction and function, having learned the technical names for its different parts. They took great delight in displaying this technical knowledge, and such delight is an illustration of their very good attitudes to learning. It also illustrates how valuable such visits are in stimulating interest and enthusiasm for the subject, and making history so much more real to the pupils. The visit was well followed up in lessons back in school.
94. There were some very good lessons for older pupils at Key Stage 2 who were studying the Tudors. Mention has already been made in the 'Teaching' section of this report, of the very good Year 5 lesson in which role play was used to help pupils to understand the relationship of Henry VII to various nobles in the kingdom and how he established his power. This went beyond the learning of facts and was very successful in promoting understanding. The Year 6 lesson in which the teacher dressed up as Henry VIII and then gave a bravura performance in role was fairly typical of lessons in that class. It involved great showmanship by the teacher along with cleverly contrived devices such as the telephone call from Henry VIII's secretary that excite and enthuse the pupils. The device did give opportunity for pupils to explore the reasons for Henry's many marriages in a stimulating session. The lesson was well prepared because pupils had previously used the computer suite to look up information about Henry VIII on the Internet. This gave them sufficient background to ask meaningful questions and so extend their understanding.
95. The school gives good emphasis to the teaching of history and has a rich programme of visits and practical activities. This, together with the good, and often very good, teaching has promoted the above average standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

96. At both key stages, standards are in line with those usually found. Recent initiatives such as the use of a server in the computer suite, ongoing support from a specialist teacher funded by the Education Action Zone, and the completion of nationally funded training by all staff, have placed the school in a strong position to raise standards still further.
97. Insufficient lessons were observed to make an overall judgement of teaching and learning. However, it is clear that information technology has been made a high priority on the timetable and all pupils use the newly equipped computer suite regularly. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils cooperated well using a repeating pattern to design a coat. In Year 6, following the directions of the teacher, pupils located a page on the Internet which they interrogated in order to answer questions on the six wives of Henry VIII. In a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils completed their IT lesson on the use of spreadsheets and began to display their outcomes, again following the directions of the teacher. The very high level of challenge together with the teacher's very clear explanations and good support enabled pupils to understand the nature of the spreadsheet. No computers were observed being used other than in the computer suite, and their use in supporting work across the curriculum needs to be further exploited.
98. The recently appointed coordinator is determined to raise standards and achieve the very clear vision he has for the school. He has worked well with the very good support offered by the Education Action Zone and has also been well supported by

the headteacher who has arranged regular non-contact time in order that he can support staff, monitor teaching and oversee the working of the newly installed server.

MUSIC

99. At both key stages, standards of attainment are broadly in line with those usually found. These standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
100. Teaching is generally satisfactory across the school and pupils make appropriate progress, but there is some good teaching at Key Stage 2, and some very effective work with the whole key stage in singing lessons. At both key stages, pupils are involved in an appropriate range of activities and given opportunities to use a variety of tuned and untuned instruments. This allows them to develop skills and understanding appropriately. In some lessons, the challenge of the teaching is high and there is a very direct focus on certain techniques that promote good learning. For example, a good Year 4 singing lesson focused well on the rhythms and beat of the sea-shanties that pupils were studying. The teacher's clear explanation of pulse, beat and rhythms and the good examples he used enabled the pupils to appreciate the particular qualities of these songs. A good Year 6 lesson focused on chords and their function in creating music. The teacher's own facility to produce a wide variety of music from a minimum of chords enabled him to explain and illustrate their function clearly, and the device of pupils singing chords was particularly effective.
101. A special feature of the school is the way pupils sing with enthusiasm in assemblies. This is in no small part related to the very lively approach of the deputy headteacher who plays the piano with great gusto. The verve with which he deploys his chords and his own enthusiasm create a special atmosphere. The pupils pick up this enthusiasm, are keen to sing and enjoy the experience. For example, in one assembly when the reception pupils chose 'Twinkle, twinkle little star' to sing as everyone walked out, the teacher realised that some older pupils might think this below them, but a look in their direction and his own enthusiastic rendition were sufficient for them all to join in and sustain the song as they walked down the corridor.
102. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched by visiting musicians, such as a brass quintet and an African drummer, by visits to the local secondary school during 'Music week', and by pupils' involvement in school performances. There are some good arrangements for instrumental tuition, with a number of pupils being taught to play the guitar by a peripatetic teacher. Resources have improved since the last inspection and they are now very good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103. It was not possible to see any physical education lessons at Key Stage 1 so no judgement can be made. By the age of 11, standards of attainment are in line with those usually found, and this is a similar position to that at the time of the previous inspection.
104. Good teaching though Key Stage 2 ensures that pupils' skills are extended effectively. Teachers have high expectations, and concentrate well on developing pupils' skills and knowledge. For example, very effective planning and organisation enabled Year 4 pupils to experience a range of challenges involving passing, catching, attacking and defending in a hockey game. Pupils in turn worked very hard, co-operated well and used their time to the full. Confident, innovative teaching resulted in a very good dance lesson with Year 6 pupils. Mindful of the lack of experience in dance for some pupils, the teacher clearly shared the learning

objectives through this session with the pupils exploring ideas of 'relationships' and 'conflict' as expressed in different versions of 'Romeo and Juliet'. The teacher skilfully used a video extract from 'West Side Story' to introduce the session and pupils were immediately enthused. By the end all pupils were creating vivid physical images stimulated by music from Prokofiev's 'Romeo and Juliet'. Pupils were exploring shared ideas with control and poise, and all without a trace of self-consciousness. They responded very well to this confident, knowledgeable and stimulating teaching.

105. At both key stages, pupils have the opportunity to go swimming, with some classes visiting the pool weekly throughout the year. By the end of Year 4, all pupils are able to swim with the majority able to swim 25 metres, and this represents good attainment.
106. Teachers' planning indicates clear learning objectives, and teachers encourage a healthy lifestyle by emphasising the value of both regular exercise, and of 'warming up' prior to exercise. 'Healthy Skipping', promoted by the British Heart Foundation, and practised by some of the older pupils, is proving to be very popular hard work! Recent monitoring of teaching has enabled the coordinator to identify areas for development such as progression in gymnastics and dance, and these are being addressed. The curriculum is broad and balanced and there are good opportunities for boys and girls to participate in competitive team events such as football, netball and cross-country running. Outdoor pursuits and 'Adventure Weekends' make a valuable contribution to pupils' physical and personal development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

107. At both key stages, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and have been maintained since the previous inspection.
108. Pupils make sound progress in broadening their knowledge of world religions, and this is a valuable contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. Seven year olds display sound knowledge of the Bible as a special book and are becoming aware of the importance of religious objects, practices and festivals. They can relate some of these to their own experiences of celebrating Christmas, Easter, christenings and weddings. They know stories from the Bible, as Year 1 pupils showed when re-telling the details of the story of Joseph and his brothers. Other faiths are suitably introduced and seven year olds display sound knowledge of aspects of Buddhism and Islam when writing about what is special to these faiths.
109. At Key Stage 2, the teaching of religious education demonstrates how pupils are expected to think for themselves, and to make connections between stories they hear, and everyday life. In a Year 5 lesson looking at Moses as a leader, and trying to identify some of the qualities of a 'leader', pupils quickly identified a range of 'leaders' they knew such as 'The Queen', 'George Bush', 'Teacher' and 'My Mum'. Identification of such qualities as 'caring', 'supporting' and 'being there for you' showed sound understanding. Pupils broaden their knowledge of Christianity through study of local churches such as the Church of England, Roman Catholic and Methodist. They learn how Christianity developed in their area through study of the lives of St Cuthbert, and of Oswald, the first Christian king in the North East. Pupils enjoy the variety of approaches teachers encourage them to use. In looking at 'miracles' and how Jesus responded to human need, Year 3 pupils considered the story of the five loaves and two fishes, and engaged in very effective role play, improvised by the teacher, to attempt to broaden their understanding. The notion that "A miracle is something we find hard to understand" came from the pupils themselves. Pupils develop sound understanding of some of the customs and beliefs

of Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism and are coming to a better understanding of similarities and differences between faiths.

110. The quality of teaching is predominantly good. Teachers engage pupils' interest through a variety of strategies such as story telling, drama and role play and good use of video extracts. Thoughtful discussions and sharing and valuing ideas are regular features of lessons.