

INSPECTION REPORT

Featherstone Purston Infant School

Featherstone

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 108200

Headteacher: Janet Young

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill
19623

Dates of inspection: 22 – 24 May 2000

Inspection number: 193932

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Nunn's Lane Featherstone Pontefract West Yorkshire
Postcode:	WF7 5HF
Telephone number:	01977 723550
Fax number:	n/a
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C G Keith
Date of previous inspection:	10 June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Michael J Cahill	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Science Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Graeme Norval	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Margaret Owen	Team inspector	Under-fives Information and communication technology Religious education Art Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?
Sanchia Pearse	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History Physical education	Attitudes, values and personal development

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 185 pupils on roll (86 boys and 99 girls) taught in six classes. At the time of the inspection there were 22 children in one of the reception classes who were under five years of age. In addition 76 children attend the nursery for either the morning or the afternoon session. There are 15 children on the school's register of special educational need, including one with a full statement. The attainment of most children on entry to the nursery is below the national average. Thirty-seven pupils are entitled to free school meals (a figure which is above the national average).

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with a number of excellent features. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve standards that are above national expectations when they leave. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and she is very well supported by her staff and by the governing body. The overall quality of teaching is high and the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership directed towards raising levels of achievement.
- The quality of teaching is consistently high.
- The children who are under five years of age are given a very good start to their education in the nursery and reception classes.
- The school is very successful in promoting very good behaviour, relationships, personal development and very positive attitudes towards school and learning.
- The school teaches a rich and balanced curriculum with an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There are good standards throughout the school in English, mathematics, science, religious education, art, geography, history, music and physical education.

What could be improved

In the context of its many strengths the school is rightly taking steps to improve two aspects of its work:

- The frequency and way in which parents are kept up to date with their children's progress.
- The way in which the school's forward planning is presented; in particular to include costs, timescales and how the governing body will know that its targets have been reached.

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 June 1996. Since then there has been considerable improvement in respect of two of the main points raised at that time. Through very good management, including the very effective use of the skills of the deputy headteacher, subject co-ordinators now make a major contribution to raising standards and improving the quality of work in their subjects. Assessment procedures and record keeping are now very good. The school maintains a comprehensive development plan but recognises the need to do more to sharpen its focus so that progress towards targets can more readily be checked.

Overall progress in raising levels of achievement and improving the quality of education provided are good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	B	C	A	A*
Writing	A	C	C	B
Mathematics	A	B	C	B

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

Schools are described as similar when they fall in the same group with respect to the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, in this case between 20 and 35 per cent (the present figure in the school is 25 per cent). The school's results are above average in writing and mathematics when compared with similar schools. In reading the school's performance places it in the highest five per cent of similar schools nationally. Over the time since the last inspection the school's results in reading have improved while those in writing and mathematics fell. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in the present Year 2 are above what is expected nationally in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Targets for next year are realistic and achievable.

Pupils achieve standards in art, geography, history, music and physical education that are above those expected for their age group nationally and they make good progress. In information and communication technology and design and technology standards and progress are satisfactory. Standards in religious education exceed those expected in the locally agreed syllabus and pupils make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils' attitudes to work and life at school are very positive. They are keen to come to school and they develop a high level of confidence and interest in their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils behave well in lessons, at lunchtime and in the playground. This contributes significantly to their progress and achievements.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils get on very well with each other and with the adults in the school community. This is largely due to the high expectations and good example of the adults.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

The attitude of the pupils to their learning and their behaviour and relationships are important strengths of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	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.

All of the lessons seen were at least satisfactory. More than 70 per cent of lessons were good or better and a third were judged to be very good. This is high quality teaching which enables children to make substantial improvements in their knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the classes.

The teaching of English and mathematics and of the skills of literacy and numeracy are good. Particular strengths of the teaching include very good management of pupils, high expectations of work and behaviour, good questioning and assessment of pupils' progress. All of the lessons observed in the Year 1 classes were judged to be good or very good.

From the time they enter the nursery children are very effectively encouraged to work independently when this is appropriate. As a result of being set work that is well matched to their individual needs and being given well-directed adult support all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good; pupils' learning is enriched through very good provision across the curriculum and excellent extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; the small number of pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and successfully included in all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; the school places a strong emphasis on this aspect of its work and provision is very good in all respects.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well; the school is safe, secure and welcoming and this encourages pupils to learn and helps their progress.

The school maintains good links with parents and enjoys their support.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent; the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the subject co-ordinators direct their energy and time towards improving teaching and learning. In this, as in other aspects of their role, they are very effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well; the governing body is very well informed and very supportive of the school. Individual governors give generously of their time to monitor and support the work of the school. The statutory responsibilities of governing bodies are very well discharged and governors have a clear role in shaping the future of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good; the school has very good procedures for checking how well the pupils are getting on and sets appropriate targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school is good at developing and using the skills of the staff and this directly benefits the pupils. Good teaching resources have been purchased and the school makes good use of the available accommodation.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good although classrooms are small. Particular strengths of the leadership and management of the school include the shared vision and commitment of the headteacher, staff and governing body. The strong leadership of the headteacher and her deputy keeps the school's work sharply focused on improving the quality of education that it provides and raising the levels of achievement of the pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The views of the 130 parents who returned completed questionnaires and of the nine parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting with members of the inspection team were taken into account.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school. • The quality of the leadership and management. • The school is very approachable. • The good teaching and the progress that their children make. • The school's high expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The frequency and detail of information about their children's progress. • General communication between school and parents.

The inspection team wholeheartedly agrees with the positive views of parents. Since the meeting for parents that was held before the inspection the school has taken effective steps to meet the concerns which were expressed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of social and early learning skills. For the most part, however, their speaking and listening and mathematical skills and their general knowledge and understanding of the world around them is below what is expected of children of their age. This is confirmed by the school's initial assessment of children's achievements.
2. Children who are under five years of age make good progress in their learning in the nursery and reception classes. By the time they reach the age of five most children have reached the expected standards for their age in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Their personal and social development is good. More able pupils are already working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum. For more detail of their achievements see the section on the Foundation Stage (paragraphs 67 to 79).
3. Only five per cent of pupils are designated as having special educational needs. This is very low in comparison to national averages. These pupils are well known to all staff and included in all aspects of school life. They are attaining well in relation to their special needs and making good progress.
4. The school's 1999 national test results show that at the age of seven pupils' attainment in reading was well above the national average and their attainment in writing and mathematics was in line with it. Teacher assessments of pupils' work in science were also in line with national expectations although a high proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 3. When compared to that of pupils at similar schools the performance of the pupils was very high in reading and above average in writing and mathematics.
5. Since the previous inspection in June 1996 performance in reading has fluctuated. The overall trend is an improvement in comparison with national averages. In mathematics the overall trend until this year has been downwards but the indications are that this year's results will be above average. Results in writing have fluctuated too but remain close to the national average. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
6. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in the present Year 2 are above the national expectation in reading, writing, mathematics and science (see paragraphs 80 to 112). There are considerable variations in the ability profile of the different year groups in the school and this means that comparisons can be misleading. What is quite clear is that pupils make good progress in comparison with their different starting points as they move through the school. The targets that the school sets are appropriate and achievable. Standards in literacy and numeracy are above average.
7. Pupils' attainment and progress in religious education exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus (see paragraphs 150 to 154). In information and communication technology and in design and technology pupils' attainment and progress are in line with what is expected for their age. In art, geography, history, music and physical education their attainment and progress exceed this expectation. See paragraphs 113 to 149 for more details of pupils' achievements.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The good standards described in the previous report have improved. They are now very good overall with some examples of excellent behaviour. Pupils automatically hold doors open for each other and for visitors. Many thank each other for this service and always thank visitors and members of staff. Pupils' very good attitudes to work, school, staff and each other make a significant contribution to their personal and academic development. Pupils are very eager to come to school. A number of parents comment that they frequently have to prevent their children leaving too early in the morning before the school is able to accommodate them.
9. A very large majority of parents believe that the school's procedures and the high expectations and standards of staff combine to create an atmosphere where learning is encouraged and supported by good behaviour. Inspection evidence strongly supports the parents' views. The school has a record of no exclusions over many years. The governing body supports the school in maintaining the high standards of behaviour and in the suppression of bullying or other inappropriate actions. Members of the governing body have attended training courses in these areas.
10. A strong supporting feature of pupils' behaviour and involvement in school is their positive response to the clear instructions, strong leadership and examples set by all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff. In a Year 1 music lesson pupils were offered a free choice of what they wished to sing to end the lesson. Typical of their response to challenge was their choice of a relatively difficult piece which they had last sung some time ago.
11. Pupils show great willingness to accept responsibility and take initiative. There is a well-developed system of monitors with wide ranging duties. Before physical education lessons a hall monitor dry mops the floor to ensure it is safe and clean. Others set out the music stands before recorder or singing lessons. Pupils are eager to return the registers to the school office and quick to tidy up at the end of each lesson. They need very little guidance and show a considerable sense of responsibility.
12. Pupils with special educational needs are well motivated and behave well in line with all other pupils. Even pupils with specific emotional or behavioural needs are so well supported and catered for that they are totally integrated into the high expectations of work and behaviour throughout the school. They are beginning to establish relationships with other pupils and learning to work as part of a group. Pupils with physical needs are also totally included in the school and make a positive contribution to the education of other pupils in terms of understanding their particular needs and establishing relationships.
13. The school's good attendance record over the last four years has fallen slightly during this academic year. It is still satisfactory, being close to the national average. Authorised absence has increased due to illness that affected many pupils in the reception classes and Year 1 during winter and early spring. Unauthorised absence has been affected by the illegal withdrawal from school of one pupil for no acceptable reason. There is no evidence to indicate that attendance is suffering from a high level of holiday absence during term time. Very few pupils are late. Punctuality is recorded and carefully monitored by class teachers and administrative staff who inform the headteacher if there is a concern.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Of the lessons observed 34 per cent were judged to be very good, 38 per cent to be good and the remaining 28 per cent to be satisfactory. This represents a considerable improvement on the last inspection when no teaching was judged to be very good and there were a small number of unsatisfactory lessons.
15. The teaching of pupils who are under five years of age in the nursery or reception classes is of very good quality overall (see paragraphs 67 to 79). The teaching in the Literacy Hour is good or very good in more than three-quarters of lessons. The teaching of mathematics, including the National Numeracy Strategy, is good or very good in more than 80 per cent of lessons. Teachers provide good opportunities for developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subject areas. For more details see paragraphs 113 to 154.
16. The good quality of teaching is due partly to the structure provided by the two national strategies but mainly to the systematic monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other teachers in their roles of subject co-ordinators.
17. The school has developed a good planning framework and in the vast majority of lessons the teachers clearly identify what they intend the pupils to learn. In a few of the best lessons teachers shared the learning targets with the pupils. This is very good practice and helps the pupils to focus their efforts.
18. Another strong feature of all the teaching seen was the very good use of questions to help pupils confirm what they already know and to extend their learning. Lessons have a clear beginning, middle and end and questioning of the whole class or of individuals plays a very important part in supporting good quality learning.
19. Teachers know their pupils very well and regularly assess their progress through questions and observation. The well-qualified classroom support assistants play an important part in this and make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching, learning and the progress of the pupils. Extensive records are kept of pupils' achievements and progress and this helps teachers to plan work that is appropriately challenging for all. The good teaching in the school supports pupils with special educational needs well. Teachers set realistic individual targets and use praise and constructive comments effectively to help all pupils improve.
20. Teachers use time and other resources well. Much work is practically based and lessons include a good balance of whole class, group and individual work. Teachers have high expectations of both work and behaviour and pupils from the nursery onwards respond well to this. The result is that pupils quickly become confident about their own ability to learn and show a considerable capacity for working independently and maintaining concentration. They also clearly enjoy learning.
21. The relationships between adults and pupils are a strength of the school and all classrooms have a pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere. Teachers have all established very good classroom routines that enable them to manage pupils and their learning very well. The work of volunteer parents and other adults is also important in raising levels of achievement and is appreciated by teachers and pupils alike.
22. Almost all parents are pleased with the quality of teaching in the school and very few are unhappy about the work that their children are set to do at home. The inspection confirms the overall high quality of the teaching and the good contribution that homework is already

making to raising levels of achievements. The school's present initiative aimed at further developing the partnership between parents and teachers is well designed to improve pupils' learning. Further information about teaching and the learning and progress of pupils can be found in each of the subject sections (paragraphs 67 to 154).

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

23. The curriculum for children under the age of five is carefully planned with regard to government guidance and includes a balance of good quality activities including purposeful play. Children usually transfer from a part-time place in the school's nursery to the full-time reception class at the beginning of the term in which they have their fifth birthday. To reduce the disadvantage this has on those with summer birthdays the school has transferred children in February this year rather than after Easter.
24. When children begin National Curriculum work in Key Stage 1 the curriculum is broad, balanced and enriched with a wide range of stimulating educational experiences such as the visit to study pond-life and minibeasts at Fairburn Ings. The school gives appropriate emphasis to the core subjects of literacy, numeracy and science and follows the local authority's agreed syllabus for religious education. All statutory requirements are met. The curriculum is well planned and includes high quality learning opportunities with visiting specialists such as the 'Bat Lady'. There is good time allocation for foundation subjects and experiences are planned well with the result that pupils achieve at levels higher than expected.
25. At the time of the last inspection curricular planning was judged sound with schemes of work in most subjects. Since that time the school has made very good progress in the development of high quality, detailed schemes of work in all subjects and many associated policy documents. This has had a positive impact on the quality of learning. In information and communication technology, however, resources in terms of up-to-date computers fall short of what is required to teach the full curriculum in this subject.
26. The staff have had training in teaching the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy and both are now well established. Appropriate quality resources have been purchased and the teaching of literacy and numeracy is planned effectively throughout the school.
27. There is appropriate provision for equal opportunities and excellent provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is a well kept special educational needs register and pupils at appropriate stages have relevant individual education plans which are regularly updated with carefully considered targets. Pupils benefit from occasional small withdrawal groups which address their particular needs, for example practising basic sounds for reading and spelling. Teachers prepare work which is well matched to the different levels of attainment and pupils with special educational needs benefit from being an integral part of the vast majority of lessons. They are well supported by experienced and well-qualified classroom assistants who conscientiously help with reading, writing, and numeracy skills.
28. There is very good provision of extra-curricular activities such as country dancing, recorder club and the lunchtime maths club. The school maintains good links with the local community and pupils enjoy demonstrating their skills in line dancing and maypole dancing at charity events and local galas.
29. The provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good. In assemblies pupils are encouraged to empathise with others less fortunate and to reflect on their

experiences. In circle time they demonstrate that they have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are developing good self-knowledge. Teachers arrange occasional opportunities, for example through art, music and science, to raise pupils' spiritual awareness.

30. The school encourages pupils to think of others and their social skills are well developed. Teachers provide many opportunities in lessons for pupils to develop their skills of working together. Lunchtime and breaktime arrangements are also well designed to promote good social behaviour. Provision for pupils' social development is very good.
31. Pupils are taught to appreciate their own cultural traditions through the study of artists such as William Morris and are helped to understand the richness of other cultures when handling prayer mats in a multi-faith display of artefacts. This is very good preparation for life in a multi-cultural society. Music and art have a high profile throughout the school. Excellent examples of children's drawings, paintings and models enhance the appearance of the classrooms and open spaces as well as supporting pupils' cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school makes very good provision for the care of its pupils. Pupils' health, safety and welfare are a high priority for all members of staff and the governing body. Classroom support assistants and midday dining room assistants are fully involved with teaching staff in providing an atmosphere where pupils feel safe. Pupils know that they will receive help from any member of staff should they need it.
33. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection matters. The procedures are good and care is taken to ensure that all members of staff know how to handle any concerns or disclosures. There is close liaison with social services and the educational welfare service.
34. The governing body is very involved in the health and safety procedures. A number of teaching and non-teaching staff are trained in first aid and there are procedures to treat and log any incidents of concern. Parents are informed verbally of such incidents and the school is examining ways to ensure that parents are given a more detailed written record. There are first aid boxes at various locations throughout the school. Care is taken to ensure that only appropriate materials are stored and used in first aid treatment. There is no separate area where injured pupils can wait in privacy to be collected; however, the staff-room and school office are used for this purpose and pupils are closely supervised whilst waiting.
35. At the time of the last inspection assessment was identified as an area needing improvement. The school has made considerable progress with this and procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are now very good. Good use is made of this assessment information when teachers evaluate progress and plan their future lessons.
36. An initial assessment based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes¹ is made of each child's development when they first join the nursery and this is the basis of their personal portfolio. As they are seen to succeed in different areas of development, such as sharing equipment sensibly and taking turns willingly, notes are added to this record. In the reception class a check is made in order to assess each child's speaking and listening

¹ Desirable learning outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy (*speaking, listening, reading (recognising their own names and common words, enjoyment of stories, books and pictures) and writing, e.g. writing their names and recognising UPPER and lower case*), numeracy (*recognising the meaning of numbers, beginning to add and subtract small numbers, sorting and matching objects and numbers and recognising common shapes and patterns*) and personal and social skills (*showing confidence, self-respect, ability to work with other children and adults, concentrating, offering ideas, taking turns and sharing*). These will be replaced with the Early Learning Goals in September 2000.

skills and development in other areas of learning. This information is used to measure future progress. This is good practice.

37. The school conducts regular standardised tests in reading, spelling and mathematics in each class and the results are carefully analysed. Targets are then set for individual pupils, for groups of children and for whole year groups. Test results and other assessments of pupils' work are also taken into account when staff and governors decide on the priorities in the school's development plan.
38. The school has very good procedures for monitoring attendance. Registers are maintained immaculately and weekly attendance statistics for each class are displayed progressively throughout the term on a chart in the school hall. The headteacher checks each register every day. These procedures and close liaison with the education welfare officer have decreased unauthorised absence over the last four years. The follow-up procedures for any absence are well documented. Their application reflects the detailed knowledge that teaching and administrative staff have of family backgrounds.
39. Neither parents nor pupils have any concerns about bullying or other forms of oppressive behaviour. All are confident that should they have concerns the school would take prompt and effective action. Their opinions are supported by evidence from this inspection. The very good behaviour noted previously is a direct outcome of the high standards set by all staff. They use praise and sanctions from the policy with sensitivity. Pupils are aware of the high standards expected from them; they respond accordingly.
40. Over 95 per cent of the parents responding to the questionnaire believe that the school helps their children to be mature and responsible. Inspection evidence supports their view. Pupils have a portfolio of their work and significant achievements, which follows them throughout their time in school. There are many procedures to encourage pupils to accept responsibility, including the appointment of monitors with a wide range of duties. These are not formally recorded but are valued by pupils and there is no shortage of volunteers when appointments are available. Pupils also take a lot of responsibility for their own work and display initiative. During a Year 2 physical education lesson a pupil achieved a complex position on the window bars. Without prompting the pupil commented that it prevented movement to the next phase. This demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose of the exercise.
41. The school makes excellent provision for pupils or children under five whose statements of special educational needs include procedures to overcome physical difficulties.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents have a very high opinion of the school and are very satisfied with their children's progress, behaviour and development. Evidence from this inspection supports the parents' opinions.
43. The school's partnership with parents is effective and has a positive impact on pupils' learning and the standards that they achieve. A significant number of parents support the school by helping in classrooms and by accompanying pupils on trips to locations outside the school. A number continue this work even after their children have left the school. For example, one parent is creating a school banner marking the Millennium. Every pupil has embroidered their name on a panel, which when sewn together will be displayed in the school hall. The husband of one of the teachers provides an excellent role model by helping pupils to mix and bake buns. There is no formal parents' association but the school receives help from parents for any social or fund-raising events.

44. Many parents contribute to their children's learning at home. The school has recently started to insert examples of how to help with numeracy at the beginning of mathematics homework. This is a direct outcome of a request from parents for more assistance in this area.
45. The prospectus and the annual report to parents are informative and clearly written. They comply with statutory requirements in all major respects. Pupils' annual reports are carefully written. It is recognised that the school has an open-door policy and that teachers are very willing to provide help and guidance when needed.
46. Parents are involved appropriately in annual reviews for pupils with special educational needs and are kept informed of pupil progress through the usual reporting procedures. Parents are generally satisfied with the level of information they receive from the school, but with some reservations. Some have requested further information, particularly about the progress that their children are making. The school recognises this concern. The establishment of three formal meetings each year is being considered.
47. Although some notices are posted in classroom windows, the factors noted above together with the lack of a regular newsletter and the unsuitable siting of the parents' main notice board provide some support for parents' concerns about access to information.
48. The school has reacted very positively to these issues. The provision of information about mathematics homework has already started. Discussions are taking place about the establishment of regular newsletters to include contributions from pupils. It is accepted that the profile of parent governors is too low. The parent governors and the headteacher are considering ways in which this can be remedied to enable parent governors to act as a more effective link between the parents and school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. At the time of the last inspection in June 1996 the management of the school was found to be good. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher was well organised and led an effective and hardworking staff. An identified area for improvement was the school development plan which was found to lack coherence and criteria by which the school could measure its success.
50. The present position is that the headteacher, well supported by her deputy, provides strong and effective leadership, giving clear direction to the development of the school. They actively promote high standards of work and behaviour in a warm and caring environment. The excellent ethos they have created supports both teaching and pupils' learning. Self-improvement is part of the school's culture and regular and effective monitoring and evaluation of its own performance is evident.
51. Parts of the school development plan show improvement, particularly the section that deals with the development of provision for teaching the skills of information and communication technology. This part indicates that the use of the specific grant for this purpose has been planned well and includes clear criteria by which the school can measure its success. It is a good model for other parts of the development plan.
52. The school identifies appropriate priorities and targets and these are quite rightly influenced by national initiatives such as the literacy hour and the numeracy strategy. The school regularly reviews its progress towards such targets. The results of tests are carefully analysed and pupils are given targets to improve their work.

53. The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties and is well informed about what is going on in the school. The school continues to operate an efficient 'governor of the month' scheme that includes involvement in the classroom, playground and at lunch times. This extends governors' understanding of the work of the school and supports their role in shaping its future direction. They are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
54. The headteacher has introduced an excellent systematic and rigorous programme of checking teaching quality in all classes. The effective use of the headteacher and deputy headteacher to release co-ordinators to monitor their colleagues supports a high standard of teaching in all subjects. Much of this takes place during the autumn term when the deputy head is not responsible for a class. This arrangement makes very good use of staff time and makes an important contribution towards improving pupils' achievement. Monitoring and support of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.
55. The school's explicit aims and values include a commitment to giving equal access to the curriculum to all its pupils. The provision for special educational needs is well managed by a conscientious co-ordinator and is taken seriously by all teachers, the senior managers and the governors. The named governor for special educational needs has observed all classes and spent time looking carefully at the procedures and provision. There are good, well-established procedures that ensure the thorough application of the Code of Practice², involving all relevant parties, especially parents. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs ensures there is good provision for them and careful records are kept of pupils' progress. The school recognises the importance of this work and extra staff are employed to provide additional support.
56. There is a shared commitment to improvement at Purston and the school's capacity to succeed is very good. The effective leadership and management of the school are reflected in the rising standards achieved by pupils from the nursery through to the end of Key Stage 1.
57. The school manages a very tight budget effectively and efficiently. There is a clear audit trail for purchases and all monies, including the imprest account, are handled efficiently. However, it is many years since the last external audit to ensure that the procedures are in line with current local authority guidelines. Communication between the school and the finance committee of the governing body is very good. The school administrators are conscientious, helpful and very efficient. Financial control is very good.
58. The school has sufficient well-qualified staff and class teachers have extensive experience. They work very well as a team, setting and demanding high standards. Classroom assistants are very supportive, valued for their work in the nursery and in Key Stage 1. They are an essential part of the complete team. All are qualified as nursery nurses. Their work in cramped classrooms with high numbers of pupils is an important and essential element in maintaining pupils' progress and attainment. The school recognises the need to arrange further staff training as part of the process of improving provision in information and communication technology.
59. The midday dining room assistants, caretaking and cleaning staff are all regarded as an important part of the team. Dining room staff efficiently carry out the difficult task of supervising pupils in the common areas and in classrooms. They also provide very good leadership in the playgrounds by taking part in and encouraging pupils' games. They maintain the expected high standards of behaviour.

² Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

60. The caretaker and her assistant are conscientious and maintain a clean, warm and welcoming atmosphere throughout the school. It is a measure of the respect in which the school holds them that they were included in the last meeting between staff and the inspection team.
61. The outside grounds are attractive and planted with many daffodil bulbs in memory of a former pupil. These have been obtained by sponsorship in the local community, as have the seats and rest areas around the playground.
62. Internally the accommodation is cramped and a number of classrooms contain more than 30 pupils. However, the school overcomes these difficulties very effectively through good organisation and management of pupils. Corridors and classrooms have attractive displays of pupils' work. Good use is made of the common areas, providing a base for extra tuition for pupils with special education needs.
63. Resources for teaching and learning are good. The exception is the number of modern personal computers available to pupils. This has an adverse affect on the amount of time pupils spend on information and communication technology and on the quality of their learning. However, the school plans for this to be remedied during this current term.
64. The school provides very good value for money. This judgement is based on the excellent leadership of the headteacher and the very strong support from the governing body and all staff. Combined with good teaching and the successful promotion of very good behaviour and personal development these enable pupils to make good progress in their learning despite a low cost per pupil.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. To further improve the quality of education and raise standards, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
 - review the frequency and way in which parents are kept up to date with their children's progress;
 - develop the presentation of the school's forward planning to include costs, timescales and how governors will know if their targets for improvement are met.
66. The school has already taken the necessary action to acquire up-to-date computer facilities and recognises the need for further staff training in this area. Discussions about increasing the level of planned meetings between parents and teachers to discuss children's progress are currently taking place.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	34	38	28	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	38	185
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	8

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

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	30	28	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	22	23
	Girls	27	27	25
	Total	49	49	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84	84	83
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	26
	Girls	27	25	25
	Total	48	46	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83	79	88
	National	82	86	87

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.9
Average class size	30.8

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	38

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	43.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	19
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	326,933
Total expenditure	327,840
Expenditure per pupil	1,372
Balance brought forward from previous year	(5,400)
Balance carried forward to next year	(6,307)

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 52%

Number of questionnaires sent out	250
Number of questionnaires returned	130

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	30	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	39	0	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	40	1	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	46	2	2	8
The teaching is good.	62	34	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	39	13	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	29	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	30	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	38	49	9	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	71	27	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	36	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	29	7	1	20

Percentages in a row may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Other issues raised by parents

Parents wanted to know their representatives on the governing body better and to have more formal opportunities for finding out how their children were getting on.

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

67. At the last inspection standards achieved in the nursery were judged to be sound. Children were found to make appropriate progress in all areas of the curriculum with the exception of the creative and aesthetic area where there was good progress.
68. The progress that children under five make in the nursery and reception classes is now judged to be good in all areas of learning. Starting from a low base a large majority achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas by the time they are five and more able children achieve Level 1 of the National Curriculum.
69. The nursery has 78 part-time places of which 76 are currently taken. Children are admitted to the nursery from the age of three and transfer to the reception class before their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection 22 children in the reception class were less than five years of age. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the nursery but overall many children have limited speaking and listening skills and a lack of vocabulary.
70. When children first enter the nursery an initial assessment is made of their development and this includes their speaking and listening skills and level of independence. This is recorded in an individual personal file. Observation is an important part of the daily routine in the nursery and careful notes are made when children achieve success in different areas. Examples of their drawings and early writing are included in their personal portfolio.

Personal and social development

71. By the time they are five most children have made good progress. They share equipment sensibly and are willing to take turns and co-operate with others. Children behave well, settle to tasks willingly and help to clear up when an activity is finished. They are familiar with the classroom routines and often work confidently without direct adult assistance. They form good relationships with each other and with adults.

Language and literacy

72. Children are encouraged to listen carefully and respond to stories, songs and rhymes. They join in group discussions and learn to listen to what others have to say. By the time they are five most children achieve in line with expectations for their age in speaking, reading and writing. They recognise their names and those of their friends. They write their names and know most letter sounds from using books and tapes. Children aged under five in the reception class enjoy reading books together and can change their voices to sound surprised! They listen attentively when the teacher gives them tips to help read unfamiliar words. In role-play they use a good range of vocabulary associated with a railway station café.

Mathematics

73. Children make a good start in their understanding of number and mathematics. In the nursery they learn to recognise and name shapes on vehicles and buildings, for example *square*, *triangle*, *circle* and *rectangle*. They sort two-dimensional shapes by colour, shape and size. They count together when checking the register with the number of children in the room. In the reception class children match number names to objects. They know how to use a number line and correctly add 'one more than' as far as 'one more than 20'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. Children make good progress over time in learning about their world through a number of themes including *Transport*. They can explain what the word means and are keen to answer questions about a recent journey the class made by train and on a bus. They understand that people travel on land, sea and air and enjoy role-play at the travel agents. Children in the nursery construct a motorbike with large wooden bricks and know that vehicles have number plates. They are fascinated when their teacher demonstrates how cogwheels work and enjoy discussing the different sizes and treads of tractor wheels and those on the small bikes in the nursery. They know that plants need food, water and light and they grow nasturtiums outside in a large pot. They use a tape recorder independently and are developing computer skills well.

Creative development

75. Children make good progress in creative development. They enjoy singing 'Twinkle, twinkle little star' together and they handle musical instruments sensibly. They name a triangle, bells, xylophone and tambourine and take turns to play them. They use tools such as a hammer with confidence and make a lorry from soft wood and tacks. At the mark table they record the finished product in a detailed drawing. After observing the tread on the wheels of different vehicles in the outside play area children carefully imprint a similar pattern in clay using a variety of instruments. In the reception class children examine their teacher's spare car wheel with interest and produce very good charcoal drawings showing the pattern in the tread.

Physical development

76. Children have satisfactory physical skills and play energetically in the outdoor environment. They make choices about play activities and confidently ride a bicycle or a tricycle. They steer a scooter safely and can run, skip and jump without bumping into people. They are developing cutting skills and hold and use a pencil properly. They successfully thread beads on a string and build a construction using mobilo or large bricks. They enjoy completing an interlocking jigsaw puzzle of Thomas the tank engine.
77. All children's attitudes to learning are very good. They willingly join in all activities and understand that they may have to wait for their turn. They co-operate well with their friends and can work independently and sustain concentration. They respond well to questions and follow instructions sensibly. When they join the rest of the school in assemblies their behaviour is very good.

Teaching and provision

78. The quality of teaching is very good overall in both the nursery and reception class with the teachers, nursery nurses and classroom assistants working well together as a team. Planning for the school year is appropriate and is well linked to the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children under the age of five.
79. The staff create a pleasant, stimulating environment where language development has a high profile. The atmosphere in the nursery is relaxed and children are happy and confident. All staff have very good relationships with the children. Children are enabled to make a very good start to their full time education.

ENGLISH

National Test results

80. Standards in English are good and as in the previous report pupils reach levels which are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 1. In the 1999 national assessment tests reading results show that the number of pupils attaining Level 3 is well above average and at Level 2 the numbers are in line with the national average. Attainment in writing is in line with the national average at Level 2 and above at Level 3. The predicted results for 2000 are even better than previous results. In comparison with similar schools pupils' results are very high in reading and above average in writing.

Standards and progress

81. Pupils enter the nursery at below national expectations and by the end of the reception year are in line with them. Speaking and listening skills are well developed throughout Key Stage 1 and are at least in line with national expectations. Many pupils attain above average standards by the end of the key stage. Reading is carefully developed throughout the school. Pupils make good progress with half of them achieving Level 3 by the end of Key Stage 1, which is well above the national average.
82. Recently the school has focused specifically on spelling and writing as attainment in these skills is slightly below those in reading and comprehension. Results in national tests and work seen during the inspection show that pupils are making good progress in writing skills. The number achieving the higher levels by the end of Key Stage 1 is above the national average. Good progress in all these basic skills is closely related to the good teaching, the conscientious implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, and the very good behaviour of pupils. Pupils are also well supported in their reading by parents at home.

Speaking and listening

83. The very good behaviour of the pupils throughout the school supports the development of good listening skills. Pupils are constantly encouraged to listen carefully. They show good understanding when following instructions and when talking about their work and answering questions. The very good relationships they have with teachers and other pupils help them develop good speaking skills. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils speak with confidence in front of the class or the whole school, for example, during assembly. They give full answers to questions and develop their ideas clearly and in an interesting way. They enjoy learning new words and definitions. For example, pupils in Year 2 took great pleasure in recalling the journey of an eel using terms such as 'instinct' and 'navigation' and remembering specialist words such as 'elva' for the eel's offspring.
84. Pupils in Year 1 also took pride in remembering key parts of a bicycle and felt free to attempt difficult words. For example, one pupil explained that his bike had what sounded like a *pension*. His description of the *pension* that made the seat bounce up and down and helped you ride over bumpy places, communicated his meaning to the teacher who was able to gently correct the pronunciation to *suspension!* Pupils are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions fully and teachers take time to check full understanding. This also helps to improve skills in reading and writing.

Reading

85. The good development of speaking and listening skills across the curriculum helps pupils with their comprehension when reading. As well as having good strategies for recognising words and sounds, pupils show good understanding and this assists them in predicting words and sequences. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils read with confidence. The few pupils with special educational needs receive extra specific help

from the headteacher, from classroom assistants trained as nursery nurses and from local authority specialists. This well targeted support means that all pupils make good progress with reading and in developing their comprehension skills.

86. Pupils enjoy books, both fiction and non-fiction. They understand and use technical terms such as illustrations, index and glossary and are able to discuss characters and plots in stories. Most read with fluency and confidence and are beginning to use appropriate expression and intonation. Their enjoyment is heightened by the lively reading of big books as a class and imaginative use of texts. For example, pupils in Year 2 interpreted one of their favourite sound poems through movement during a physical education lesson. This helped them appreciate the rhythm and the use of onomatopoeia. All pupils keep a reading record and read regularly in school and at home; this is further improving their confidence.

Writing

87. The development of writing skills is given a high priority in the school. Attention to spelling, handwriting and the use of punctuation is evident across the whole curriculum. From reception pupils are reminded of capital letters, full stops and finger spacing. Most pupils are developing cursive handwriting which is clear and well formed. They benefit from regular handwriting lessons and the consistent application of high standards of presentation.
88. By Year 1 many pupils are confident in their attempts to write independently. They use 'Have-a-go' books to attempt spellings and know how to look up words in dictionaries and wordbooks. They build on these good habits in Year 2, for example, enthusiastically searching for words with the same phoneme during registration time. Pupils enjoy writing for a wide range of purposes across the curriculum. For example, in reception they make their own books of favourite stories such as the *Three Little Pigs*. In Year 1 they write creative accounts of the story of *Noah's Ark* in religious education and enjoy a range of factual writing when recording a visit to a local conservation centre. Their caterpillar diaries carefully record their observations in connection with science. In Year 2 factual writing such as information about bats in science, records of visits for history and geography and noting recipes in home economics all help extend pupil awareness of the need to adapt writing according to the situation.
89. First hand experiences play an important part in writing, for example, poems about the sounds of the mill at Worsbrough. Pupils also practise letter writing using the correct layout. Book reviews help support pupils' reading as well as helping them appreciate other people's writing skills. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in the development of spelling and writing skills through small group work and tasks, which are well matched to their level of attainment. All pupils are given opportunities to word process and use computer programmes to help improve spelling and punctuation, although this is an area recognised as in need of further development.

Pupils and English

90. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and enjoyment to their English lessons. They concentrate hard and try their best to live up to the high expectations set for behaviour and work. They benefit from very good relationships with the adults and with each other, which lead to a good balance of independent learning and mutual support. They are keen to express their ideas and to use their reading and writing skills. This has a good effect on their learning across the curriculum as they approach work with justified confidence in their basic skills in English. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

Teaching

91. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is good overall with three very good lessons seen. Teachers know the pupils well and take care to set appropriate work. They plan in detail and with imagination and this provides a firm framework for learning and maintains the pupils' interest. Their high expectations of behaviour and work mean that pupils do their best at all times. They organise lessons well and in the better lessons are rigorous in their timing and reinforcing of key skills.
92. Pupils benefit from having these experienced teachers who understand well how young children learn and how to teach the basic skills of English. The teachers have combined this experience constructively with the careful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, which they are using effectively. Time is well spent in allowing pupils to express their own ideas and checking on good understanding before proceeding to the next stage. All teachers encourage the pupils' natural enthusiasm and curiosity, providing a good balance of well-targeted support and opportunities for independent learning.
93. Teachers take every opportunity to reinforce English skills across the curriculum and help pupils see links that further support their development. Teaching and support staff work well together to provide good reinforcement and help pupils make good progress. Planning and teaching is well monitored by the co-ordinator and by the governor with a particular interest and training in literacy.
94. Teachers use assessment well to help pupils appreciate their own targets and to modify their own planning. Pupils know that praise and encouragement are truly meant as this is combined with honest evaluations of the work undertaken. The last part of each lesson is used well to share pupils' work and discuss possible improvements. Pupils undergo regular testing in spelling and in reading and the results are carefully analysed to help further improvement. From the national assessment tests the school identified writing and spelling as targets for further development and good strategies are in place to improve pupils' attainment in these areas.
95. The school has continued to build on the good practice noted in the previous report. Teaching has further improved. The National Literacy Strategy has been well implemented and combined with teachers' considerable experience to provide a firm framework for pupil learning. The good ongoing evaluation of present practice and analysis of pupil performance mean that teachers are working hard at identified priorities of: -
- further improving writing skills;
 - maintaining an emphasis on the good development of speaking and listening skills;
 - reinforcing English skills across the curriculum;
 - further developing the use of information and communication technology to support learning in English.

MATHEMATICS

National test results

96. The results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that attainment was in line with the national average for all schools and above the national average for similar schools. Over the time since the last inspection in 1996 results have fallen in comparison with national averages.

Standards and progress

97. At the time of the last inspection standards of attainment were judged to be good in relation to national expectations. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and the overall levels of attainment in the present Year 2 are above

the national average. Indications are that this year's national test results will reflect this improvement.

98. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make consistently good progress as they move through the school. There was good progress in more than 80 per cent of the lessons observed during the inspection.
99. Pupils in one of the reception classes, for example, develop their use of the language of comparison as a result of carrying out well-planned practical activities and the teacher's consistently correct use of the language herself. During the course of two lessons pupils made noticeable progress their use of vocabulary, for example *taller, tallest, wider and narrower*. Other pupils made good progress in estimating lengths using their strides or straws.
100. Pupils in the Year 1 classes demonstrate confidence and accuracy when counting in 10s or 5s from starting points including 5, 27 and 86. Well-chosen practical activities using real money and good questioning by the teachers enable pupils to make good progress. Other strong features of the teaching include very good pace and good circulation by the teacher, picking up on individual difficulties. Throughout the school an investigative approach is used well.
101. Pupils in one of the Year 2 classes are given good strategies for visualising and for concentrating on mental work involving recognition and addition of money. They respond well and most successfully work out how many 2p coins make 30p and 50p. The teacher makes the tasks progressively more difficult and pupils demonstrate confidence and accuracy in dealing with the four rules applied to money. The final session of this lesson is used particularly well to give pupils an opportunity to show their level of knowledge, skill and understanding.
102. Pupils in the other Year 2 class benefit from a similarly well planned and presented lesson. The initial oral part of the lesson is used well to revise the pupils' ability to tell the time and state it in a variety of forms. The teacher sets tasks which match well the abilities of different groups of pupils and as a result all pupils make good progress. Higher attaining pupils are suitably extended by having to fill in gaps on a rail timetable. Other pupils become more and more confident and accurate during the lesson in converting from, for example, *quarter to five* to *4.45*.
103. Examination of the work which pupils have done earlier in the year shows that they have been well taught across the mathematics curriculum with suitable emphasis on shape, space and measurement as well as on pure number work. Standards at the end of the key stage are clearly above the national average.

Pupils and mathematics

104. Pupils throughout the school clearly enjoy their mathematics lessons and enjoy the challenge of mental arithmetic. They also enjoy practical work, including that of an investigative nature. Behaviour and concentration on the task in hand are very good and when they are asked to do so pupils work together very well.

Teaching

105. The overall quality of teaching is good and it is never less than satisfactory. Important features of the best teaching, which leads to good learning and progress include:
 - good lesson planning with work well matched to pupils of differing abilities;
 - good questioning, both to find out what pupils already know and to extend their learning;
 - good use of practical apparatus, for example material to compare the lengths of objects, money, clock faces, to support learning;

- high expectations of work and behaviour;
- good use of the beginning and end of lessons to revise and consolidate learning;
- clear learning targets for the lesson which are shared with pupils.

SCIENCE

National test results

106. The results of the 1999 national teacher assessments show that pupils' performance at the end of Key Stage 1 was broadly in line with national expectations. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above the national average. When compared with similar schools pupils' performance at the expected Level 2 was above average and at the higher Level 3 it was well above average.

Standards and progress overall

107. At the time of the last inspection pupils' levels of attainment were judged to be in line with national expectations. Inspection evidence shows that the attainment of the present pupils in Year 2 is above national expectations and the teachers' provisional assessments reflect this. The improvement is across all aspects of the programme of study, with a particular strength in experimental and investigative work. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make consistently good progress as they move through the school.
108. Evidence from the books of pupils in the reception classes and in Year 1 shows that pupils are developing a good base of scientific knowledge as well as an understanding of the scientific method. Pupils in Year 1, for example, correctly name the parts of plants and develop their understanding of classification of living things. They also experiment with melting jelly in hot water and forecast which hot water bottle will stay the hottest. Work in science contributes well to the development of literacy skills as pupils learn how to record their learning about the senses. Work in a reception class on growing beans provides useful mathematical experience for pupils developing the language of comparison of length and height. Pupils enjoy testing the toy boats that they have made in design and technology to find out whether they float or sink. This is good practice in terms of the experimental work, the application of science to "real-life" situations and the opportunities for language and conceptual development.
109. Pupils in Year 2 continue to improve their knowledge base and recording skills. Their work on recording the interesting facts about the animals seen at a farm shows good observation and recall of important features. The work of higher attaining pupils on electrical circuits is of a very good standard. The work in books and that seen in lessons during the inspection indicates that standards at the end of the key stage are above national expectations.

Pupils and science

110. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very positive and they welcome the opportunity to investigate practically and to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Behaviour in lessons is good, often enthusiastic but not rowdy! Pupils' response to the challenges presented by their teachers is good and this makes an important contribution to the achievement of high standards.

Teaching

111. The quality of science teaching is never less than satisfactory and overall it is good. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding themselves and plan interesting and appropriate learning activities. Questioning to confirm, challenge and extend learning is a strength of the teaching and skilful management of pupils and resources makes sure that classrooms become pleasant and purposeful laboratories during science lessons.

112. A further and important strength of science in the school is the emphasis on practical investigation and this was well demonstrated by one of the Year 2 lessons observed. Pupils were set the task of rediscovering the wheel or at least establishing which shape produced the best roll. They showed a good practical approach to the problem, selecting from and using the materials provided well. Much good discussion was stimulated by the teacher and pupils demonstrated above average interest and understanding of the nature of investigation.

ART

113. At the time of the last inspection standards of attainment were judged to be sound with some good features. The standard of attainment has improved and is now judged to be good overall with some excellent examples of observational drawing by seven-year-olds.
114. Although only a small number of lessons were observed, there is abundant evidence of good quality work displayed well throughout the school. The curriculum is enriched with educational visits and these are often used as a stimulus for artwork. The scheme of work is designed to cover a suitable range of skills to be taught using a good variety of materials.
115. Pupils are enthusiastic, concentrate well and take pride in their work. Younger pupils learn about the properties of clay and make models of animals to a good standard. They also experiment with different tools to make impressions and patterns in the clay. They mix colours then carefully paint animals seen at Temple Newsom Farm. They use wax-resist techniques to illustrate the wildlife at Fairburn Ings. Pupils in Year 1 make careful, colourful, illustrations of the butterflies they studied at the Tropical World in Leeds. They produce very good collage work of holidays on the beach and enjoy adding painted donkeys.
116. By the age of seven pupils can print well using potatoes to create a pattern. They are adept with chalk pastels and oil pastels and use keen observational skills to produce life-like pictures of black-headed gulls, thrushes and other birds.
117. The quality of teaching is very good and staff spend time discussing the work of famous artists and drawing pupil's attention to details. There is good use of a magnifying glass to examine the different colours in a geranium leaf before pupils paint it. Teachers encourage pupils to think of ways they might improve their own work. The school has a good range of good quality resources. Pupils' work is valued and used in displays, which help to make the school bright and attractive.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. At the time of the last inspection standards of attainment were judged to be in line with national age-related expectations. It was only possible to observe one lesson, in the reception class, during this inspection so it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. From the evidence of teachers' long-term plans, the scrutiny of previous work and discussions with staff and pupils attainment is judged to be in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress.
119. The subject is well planned and organised with a suitable scheme to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. There is a good balance of activities over time and very good cross-curricular links with other subjects, for example science and history. Current design technology work supports the theme of *Transport* and there are associated educational visits. Examples of good work include suspended mini-beasts

in the reception area, masks for *Noah's Ark* in Year 1 and model bats made after a visiting specialist inspired pupils in Year 2. In food technology pupils enjoy their success in baking buns. Pupils' response to the subject is good.

120. Pupils are encouraged to create their own designs, and planning sheets of an appropriate quality are displayed alongside completed models. Pupils aged five in the reception class sensibly discuss the kind of boat they want to make before they design it on paper. They select materials and tools from the limited range available and produce pirate ships and barges that they later test on water.
121. Teachers assess pupils' work through observations and they keep good records of this. Resources for the subject are good and each year group has a woodwork bench. On a regular audit day the co-ordinator monitors the teaching of design and technology with the subject governor.

GEOGRAPHY

122. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils achieve levels of knowledge and understanding that are above what is expected for pupils of their age. This represents an improvement from the previous inspection when attainment was in line with national expectations.
123. Pupils have a clear knowledge of their own locality and through regular visits they have a good idea of where they are in relation to these places. They also have a good grasp of where certain other countries are and can find them on a map. They can draw simple maps and know how grids work. They know directions, including North, South, East and West and give simple directions around the school. They are beginning to appreciate the effects of climate on the environment and talk about the different housing, food and clothing in other parts of the world and see the relationship with hot or cold weather. This has been helped by contacts such as a previous teacher who now works in Zambia sending letters, photographs and drawings. Awareness has also increased since teachers introduced the use of finding clues to guess where Barney the Bear is going on holiday. Staff have been generous in providing artefacts from holidays in, for example, Australia, Peru, Spain and parts of the United States. This helps geography to come alive for the pupils and involves them in discovering facts about different places. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in geography.
124. Pupils behave well and this makes it possible for teachers to use a wide range of teaching and learning strategies. Pupils take turns well and genuinely listen to each other's ideas and experiences. They are keen to use their knowledge, for example pointing out known places on a map or talking about visits they have made. They handle artefacts and resources with care and act responsibly when, for example, taking artefacts out of a rucksack.
125. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and was good in half the lessons seen. Planning carefully covers the recommended National Curriculum programmes of study and ensures that pupils with special educational needs are included in all aspects of the work. Where teaching is good teachers maintain a high level of interest and involve the pupils in a wide range of activities. They encourage independent learning and thinking and help pupils make connections to their own experiences and locality. Regular visits are used well, with good displays of photographs and pupils' work to help reinforce the first-hand experiences. In good lessons there is a lively pace and a good use of the final stages of the lesson to recap what pupils have learned. There are good links to literacy and numeracy and an awareness of the need to use information and communication technology more fully.

126. The subject is well co-ordinated and monitored with good informal exchange of ideas as well as more formal observations of teaching and learning.

HISTORY

127. Pupils' attainment in history is above that expected for their ages. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations. Pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding as well as historical skills related to interpreting evidence.
128. Pupils develop a lively sense of then and now and how things can change over time. This is helped by the many first-hand experiences on visits and by using a wide range of artefacts and resources. For example, pupils in Year 2 examined photographs of local places taken in the past and recently. They were fascinated to note the differences in transport, lighting, fashions and buildings. They used magnifying glasses to establish detail such as the change in names of shops and enjoyed discussing why such changes may have occurred. From previous work they showed an awareness of reasons for change such as the introduction of electricity and the development of cars. The higher attainers willingly took on the task of writing in order to record the group's observations. There was no history seen in Year 1 or reception but illustrations and work on artefacts and famous people show that pupils take an interest and make careful observations from primary evidence and secondary sources. Interesting displays of pupils' work around the school also show a good level of observation and questioning.
129. Pupils work well together, sharing resources and tasks. They show a keen interest in their work and concentrate hard. They put forward their ideas with confidence and enjoy the challenge of looking for clues. They appreciate the visits and remember them well. They show an eagerness to learn more and be actively involved.
130. The only teaching seen was in Year 2 where it was good with many very good features. Lessons are well planned to include a range of activities that maintain pupil interest. Carefully prepared resources and the use of strategies that encourage pupils to look for clues and come up with their own ideas stimulate pupils' natural curiosity. Teachers use questioning very effectively, targeting certain pupils and helping to build on pupils' contributions. Enthusiasm and good use of time help keep pupils fully involved. There are good links made with literacy and numeracy. Information and communication technology is used as appropriate. Tasks are well matched to the range of attainment in the class and pupils with special educational needs participate fully in all lessons.
131. History is enthusiastically co-ordinated and monitored. There is a good range of resources which are readily accessible and used well. These are complemented by the good use of museum loans, outside services and visits.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

132. The standards achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with national expectations for their age and they make satisfactory progress. This judgement echoes that made at the time of the last inspection. Pupils show confidence and skill when using a mouse and handling data. They are familiar with a range of software and use a programmable robot successfully when practising control. Pupils are well motivated and have a positive attitude to all forms of information technology.
133. No lessons were observed during the inspection but individual pupils were given good quality teaching of specific skills related to the points of a compass. Some pupils demonstrated their understanding when they explained the task to others.

134. Programmes of study are planned for each year group and the subject is linked well to the topic-work taking place. The subject contributes well to pupils' literacy development as it includes reading, word processing, matching letter sounds and following instructions. It supports numeracy development with number games and grid work involving position and direction. All pupils are encouraged to use the computer facilities and extra support is available. Pupils with special educational needs are set suitable tasks and many use word processing in their work.
135. Teachers keep suitable records of the work each child experiences and note how well they understand what they have been doing. Although pupils are encouraged to help one another, the teacher records how independent they are and what they can achieve working alone.
136. The school has recently received money from the National Grid for Learning and plans to convert the library area into a computer suite are well advanced. The school has produced a high-quality planning document which includes provision for staff training and sensible criteria by which to evaluate the project. The computers in use at the present time are old but the school makes good use of them, with one in each classroom. Pupils have access to computers at the local High School and the co-ordinator organises a timetable for this. Other equipment such as tape recorders and cameras are also used well throughout the school.

MUSIC

137. Music plays a very important part in the life of the school and the levels of attainment of the pupils are above national expectations for their age. Pupils make good progress in singing, in making music and in developing their skills of listening and appreciation. This judgement confirms that made at the time of the last inspection.
138. The strong support given to the subject by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, co-ordinator and the visiting accompanist assists other class teachers and leads to good standards of singing, percussion and recorder playing.
139. Pupils sing tunefully with confidence and their enjoyment is evident both in lessons and in assembly. When offered the choice of what to sing at the end of a lesson they choose a relatively difficult piece they learned some time ago and perform it well. All pupils sing well from memory and throughout the school they have a keen sense of rhythm. They show this clearly when they accompany their singing with rhythmic clapping. They are interested in different types of music and different rhythms. Pupils from a reception class play and know the names of drums, maracas and agogos.
140. In a lesson for all pupils in Year 1 there was a clear focus on practising, performing and echoing rhythms and developing an understanding of pulse. The lesson was well led by the two class teachers supported by very good piano accompaniment. Pupils were good both at clapping back a rhythm and at recognising which rhythm is being clapped. As well as singing well groups of pupils added an accompaniment using claves, beaters, bells and agogos. There was good learning and progress as the teachers focus on improving the performance of a new song with actions.
141. Pupils from Year 2 benefited from a similarly organised lesson in which they revisited some known songs. They demonstrated good unison and good two-part singing. They sang tunefully with a good sense of the rhythm and the dynamics. One boy confidently and with evident humour sang a solo from "Oliver" and the pupils looked forward

enthusiastically to a future public performance. In this lesson, however, there was less evident focus on giving pointers to the pupils to help them improve their performance.

142. Pupils from Year 2 also benefit from opportunities to learn to play the recorder and those who choose to take advantage of this make good progress.
143. Music is a strong feature of all assemblies and pupils have learned to listen well. They recognise and name different sections of Holst's *Planet Suite* and remember Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. They correctly identify a new piece of music as coming from Africa. Their awareness that "All over the world people, sing, dance and play instruments" is helped by displays of musical instruments from across the world. The school has good access to and uses well a very good range of resources in this respect.
144. The teaching of music is always at least satisfactory and often good. Teachers plan for regular lessons and the theme is often connected with a topic being studied in other subjects. The secure status of music within the curriculum is enhanced by the occasional residency by specialist musicians from other cultures and through the regular concerts organised for parents and friends.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. As in the previous report physical education is a strength of the school. Pupils achieve above national expectations for their age and make good progress.
146. Pupils show good body control. They respond enthusiastically to the challenges of creating different shapes; moving at a variety of paces or levels and, for example, balancing on the large apparatus. This control and co-ordination is also very evident in the country dancing which they perform with confidence and enjoyment. Pupils watch each other perform and readily accept suggestions for improvement which they eagerly try to apply. They behave sensibly and responsibly, using space well and being aware of others, for example, when travelling around the room. They benefit from a large hall space with good large apparatus and spacious outdoor areas.
147. Teaching is good or very good, except in one lesson where it was sound. Lessons are carefully planned with well-established routines. This means that pupils automatically work very quietly, creating a concentrated working atmosphere. Health and safety matters are emphasised and pupils understand the importance of listening carefully and watching out for other pupils. Teachers have high expectations to which pupils respond well. For example, from the reception classes onwards pupils get out the large apparatus and put it away again under the strict supervision of adults. This builds teamwork and responsibility as well as an awareness of the safety issues.
148. The pattern of a warm-up at the beginning and a cool down at the end of lessons means that pupils anticipate these aspects and confidently work through the different parts of their bodies. There is very good class control combined with plenty of opportunities and praise for creativity and individual response. Teachers encourage pupils to think carefully about their own performance and that of others and to offer constructive suggestions. Classroom assistants regularly observe individuals and support teachers in recording the skills that pupils are attaining on a comprehensive checklist. They also support pupils with specific needs and help to encourage the less confident.
149. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities related to sport. These are well attended and include team games such as cricket and rugby as well as various forms of dance. There is a rich and varied provision for physical education, both in and out of lessons, which pupils thoroughly enjoy.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. At the time of the last inspection pupils' attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations. Religious education now has a high profile and the standard attained by the end of the key stage is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The school has strong links with the local church.
151. The headteacher leads the whole school in stimulating morning assemblies which promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education well. A letter from a teacher they know in Zambia was used skilfully to extend their knowledge and understanding, encourage empathy and created very good opportunities for reflection.
152. In lessons pupils join in circle time with enthusiasm, listen attentively to the story of the 'Good Samaritan' and discuss the decisions made by the different characters. By the age of seven pupils understand why the journey to Mecca is so important to Muslims. They know why those who make the journey to the Great Mosque are dressed in white and they enjoy examining photographs and artefacts of other faiths. They recall that they designed an individual pattern for a prayer mat on the computer and made the mats in design technology lessons.
153. The quality of teaching is very good and teachers use skilful question and answer techniques to develop the pupils' understanding of their own faith and the importance of religion to others.
154. At the time of the last inspection some teachers were not wholly confident about the teaching of religious education. This is no longer the case. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has ensured that staff development has included visits to the Bradford Multi-Faith Centre and the Manchester Jewish Museum. She supports colleagues well in the planning and assessment of the subject. The school has a wonderful range of multi-cultural and religious artefacts that are used well and attractively displayed around the school.