

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HEXTHORPE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Doncaster

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 130290

Head teacher: Mrs Catherine Lawson

Reporting inspector: Mrs Barbara Doughty  
22261

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> November 2001

Inspection number: 194149

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Urban Road  
Hexthorpe  
Doncaster  
Postcode: DN4 0HH

Telephone number: 01302 852245

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Rosy Gill

Date of previous inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs Barbara Doughty 22261 Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage Curriculum  English as an additional language	What sort of school it is and what it should do to improve further  The school's results and achievements How well the pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
Mr Jim Griffin 12682 Lay inspector		How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
Mrs Heather Toynbee 11976 Team inspector	Science Art and design Physical education	
Mr John Collins 27541 Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education	How good the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils are
Mr Mike Wehrmeyer 15015 Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs English Design and technology	
Mr Richard Eaton 4430 Team inspector	Geography History Music	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Hexthorpe Primary School is a large primary school for boys and girls aged three to eleven. There are 428 pupils on roll, 210 boys and 218 girls, including 59 children attending the Nursery part-time. Although rich in spirit, resilience and sense of community, the area the school serves is one of material deprivation and most of the pupils come from below average socio-economic backgrounds. Twenty-six per cent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals; this is above the national average. There is a high percentage of pupils with English as an additional language, over six per cent, some of whom are from asylum seeking families; three are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Two pupils are from traveller families. Twenty-six per cent of the pupils have special needs; this is above the national average. A high number of these, 12 pupils, have a statement of special need. There is a lot of movement to and from the school and pupil mobility is high, with 82 pupils joining mid-year last year and 56 leaving. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below that found in most other schools nationally, in particular, in their communication, language and literacy skills.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very good school. Standards are high in mathematics and science, and average in English; pupils do well from their attainment on entry and very well compared with those in similar schools. Teaching and learning are good overall; they are very good in the Nursery and Years 1, 2 and 6. Leadership and management are very good. The head teacher, staff and governors have a very clear idea about what needs doing to raise standards and because of this, the school has excellent capacity to improve further. The school accesses additional funding through grants and it spends what it gets very wisely and effectively. It gives very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Good teaching brings about high standards in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education and religious education by the age of eleven.
- Teaching is particularly good in the Nursery and Years 1, 2 and 6.
- Staff work together very well; because of good liaison between the infants and juniors, pupils' learning is developed well over time.
- A community spirit permeates the school. Pupils get on extremely well together, following the example set by staff.
- Information about pupils' progress is collected and used effectively to make pupils' learning opportunities rich and varied and interesting for those of different abilities and backgrounds. This means that pupils want to learn and encourages them to work hard to achieve good results.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in writing and information and communication technology (ICT) could be higher.
- The measures taken to improve the poor attendance rate are not working effectively enough.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

This school is much better than it was when it was last inspected in 1997. Although progress was slow for the first two to three years, all of the key issues have now been dealt with very successfully. Standards by the end of the juniors have risen from below average to above in mathematics and science and to average in English. Very effective lesson observations and focused evaluations of what teachers do and do not do well have brought about improvements to teaching. The better measurement and recording of pupils' achievements mean that teachers know more about what pupils need to be taught next and this, in turn, helps them with more effective curriculum planning. New improved resources and better teaching in ICT mean that pupils are now catching up with new technology and their understanding of how it can be used to help them in their work.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	E	E	D	B	well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average    E
Mathematics	E	E	A	A*	
Science	E	E	A	A*	

The table shows that the school has a history of below average results at the end of the juniors. It was a similar picture in the infants, although to a lesser degree. However, standards rose significantly between 2000 and 2001, and at a much greater rate than they did nationally. This followed improvements to teaching and the systems that support it, brought about by much greater focus on school improvement after the head teacher's return from a two-year secondment. Pupils now do well and the standards they are achieving in the infant and junior tests and during lessons show that many of them are working at above expected levels in mathematics. In English, the attainment of the junior pupils is in line with the expected level for this time in the school year, reflected by the latest test results. Although in the 2001 English tests, more infant pupils attained the average level and above than in most other schools, the standards Year 2 pupils were seen achieving during the inspection were as expected for this time in the school year. Standards in science are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils do better than expected from their attainment on entry and targets are usually met or exceeded. However, pupils do not do as well in writing as they do in reading and their attainment is not good enough. This is because they are not given enough time to write extended stories or reports and encouragement to apply the word skills they have learnt to their work. Their handwriting is untidy, spelling is weak and they do not always use adventurous enough words to capture the attention of the reader. Although pupils now make good progress in ICT, compared with what they did in the recent past, Year 6 pupils still have some catching up to do following a legacy of poor resources and insecure teaching, and their attainment is still below the expected level. Standards are high in the infants and juniors in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, and in some aspects of religious education.

Children do well in Nursery and Reception. They make good progress from a low starting point and, although they do not all securely attain the early learning goals in communication, language, literacy, and mathematics by the end of Reception, they do in all other areas of learning. However, their writing skills are under-developed, despite teachers' efforts to improve them, and their number skills are not quite as good as those found in most other Reception classes by the end of the school year. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special needs and English as an additional language, and those from asylum seeking and traveller families, all do equally as well as their classmates because of effective support in and out of lessons.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. This is because pupils are interested in their work and want to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is good. Pupils pay attention to what is going on around them. They respond well to the high expectations teachers have and the demands they make on them to behave well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are courteous and polite to others. They are trustworthy and show respect for property. They work together well and support each other at work and play.
Attendance	Although pupils enjoy coming to school, attendance rates are well below the national average because too many pupils take extended holidays during term time, and pupils who have left the school remain on the school register and are marked absent until parents notify the school that they have left.

Whilst the school knows why the attendance rate is well below average, the measures it has taken to bring about improvement have not been successful.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching and learning are good overall. They were very good in some of the lessons seen in the Nursery and Years 1, 2 and 6, where the teaching was often inspirational and exciting. Teachers were enthusiastic and clearly enjoyed their work. Because of this, lessons were often enjoyable and enthused the pupils. Throughout the school, consistently good teaching of the basic skills of English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, ICT, music, physical education and religious education means that pupils learn well and do better than expected from their attainment on entry in these subjects by the end of both the infants and juniors. In addition, effective booster classes for literacy and numeracy, additional literacy support sessions, and the newly introduced writing workshops all contribute to the rising standards in English and mathematics. Mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of mathematics lessons, in which teachers use quick-fire questioning well, make pupils more alert and speedy at calculation. However, writing skills are not taught as well as they should be because not enough time or encouragement is given for pupils to apply what they have learnt about spelling, punctuation and interesting vocabulary to extended stories or reports. Handwriting skills are not taught effectively enough. Computers are used extremely well in the computer suite to enhance pupils' ICT skills, but not enough use is made of those in the classrooms to support work in other subjects.

A significant feature of effective teaching is the way in which teachers link subjects together. This means that, for example, literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively through reading about events in history and measuring minus temperatures in science. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Lessons move at a rapid pace and learning support assistants help pupils very effectively with their work. Consequently, pupils of all ages, abilities and backgrounds do equally well. Good quality learning resources are used very well to enhance pupils' learning and because of this, pupils' concentrate well and work hard. At the end of lessons, teachers talk with pupils about what they have learnt and what they are going to do next, involving them well in their own learning. Some teachers write very useful comments on pupils' work, which show pupils what they are doing and not doing well. This helps them to improve next time. However, not all teachers do this well and there is inconsistency in the quality of marking within year groups and across the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is rich and exciting and incorporates an excellent range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, visits to places of educational value and visitors to school. These experiences enthuse the pupils well and make them want to learn.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. These pupils learn quickly because they are supported very effectively by learning support assistants. Pupils make good progress towards their learning targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The co-ordinator responsible for overseeing the provision for these pupils knows them and their families very well and makes sure that teachers and learning support assistants plan an appropriate curriculum for them. Many of these pupils work with the brighter groups and get on as well as their peers because a bi-lingual assistant and others make sure that they understand what they are doing.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good overall. The provision for developing pupils' multicultural awareness is excellent. This is because very good use is made of visiting religious leaders who talk about their customs and beliefs. Many different religious festivals are celebrated in school and parents of different nationalities come into school to tell traditional stories from their own countries.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a very caring school. Assessment procedures support pupils' academic and personal progress very well, but the school has been unsuccessful in its attempts to improve attendance.

The school works extremely well with parents, who are exceptionally happy with what it provides and achieves.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good. Excellent leadership from the head teacher drives the school forward and has brought about significant improvements to teaching, learning and standards in the last 18 months. The deputy and senior management team support her very well, and subject leaders have a clear idea about what is happening in their subjects and how to bring about improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	This is good. The governors are very supportive of the school and involve themselves well in school development planning. They know what is happening in school and what things are working well and what needs improving.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has very effective procedures in place for measuring pupils' achievements and progress as they move through the school. Most importantly, staff use this information well to target pupils for additional support, adapt curriculum planning, and improve teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Very good financial management ensures that funding and specific grants are used extremely well to improve provision and so raise standards. Staffing levels are very generous; the accommodation and quality and quantity of learning resources are good. The principles of best value for money are applied well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like coming to school and make good progress.</li><li>• The way children behave in and out of school.</li><li>• The good teaching in school and the approachability of staff.</li><li>• The way the school helps children to become mature and responsible and always expects them to work hard and do their best.</li><li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li></ul>	<p>A very small minority of parents would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• more information about what topics their children are studying so that they can help them at home;</li><li>• answers to the homework questions so that they are better prepared to help their children with them.</li></ul>

Parents are extremely happy with this school. There were very few negative responses to the questionnaire or unhappy views expressed at the parents' meeting. Inspectors support the very positive views that the vast majority of parents have about this school. The school acknowledges the parents' views about what they would like to see improved and intends to address them.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. In the 2001 national tests for seven and eleven year olds, Hexthorpe Primary pupils did very well, overall, in comparison with pupils in most other schools, showing considerable improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of the juniors. Last year, the junior pupils did exceptionally well in the mathematics and science tests in comparison with pupils in similar schools. However, the picture has not always been such a good one; pupils have not always done as well as they are doing now and improvements are recent. The school has a five-year history of below average standards but, because of recent significantly effective improvements to teaching and learning, the infant and, in particular, the junior test results rose considerably between 2000 and 2001 in English, mathematics and science. This followed the head teacher's return after two years secondment to the local education authority and the implementation of many new initiatives designed to raise standards.
2. The work pupils did last year, and what they currently achieve in lessons, shows that attainment is now above average in mathematics by the end of the infants and juniors. It is average by the end of the infants and above by the end of the juniors in science, and broadly average at the end of both in English, although infant pupils did particularly well in the national tests last year, when more attained the expected level and above than in most other schools. This reflects good achievement from children entering Nursery with poorly developed communication, language and literacy skills and mathematical attainment below that found in most other schools.
3. Children achieve well in Nursery and Reception and make good progress during their first two years in school. This is because the provision in both years is good, and often very good. Many children enter the Nursery with impoverished language skills. Many are not confident speakers and do not talk to adults with ease. Eye contact is avoided and they prefer to use gestures instead of words to make clear what they want. Although they listen attentively to stories, spellbound as the story unfolds, they do not make comments about what is happening. Their mathematical skills are slightly better, but still below those found typically in most other nurseries. For example, many listened to the teacher and a few of their more mature classmates singing 'Five currant buns in a baker's shop', rather than join in. They show little interest in numbers and counting unless asked to do so. By the time they start Reception, nevertheless, they have done well and are much closer to typical levels. They know some letter sounds and are starting to spell words by sounding out the letters in them. However, less than a third of them draw recognisable pictures and their letter formation is under-developed. Less than a tenth are writing independently and very few are attempting to read words in books, preferring to look at the pictures. Whilst pretending to read, they do not talk about the stories or explain what they think is happening in the pictures. Despite good teaching, by the end of Reception, not all children securely attain the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and, although their achievements are slightly better in mathematics, many are not as well on as pupils about to start Year 1 in most other schools.
4. The work pupils are now doing shows that standards in speaking, listening and reading are broadly as expected by the end of the infants and juniors, and in writing by the end of the infants. Although they are improving, writing standards are below those found nationally by the end of the juniors. In the 2001 English tests, results were above average by the end of the infants and although still slightly below average in the junior tests, they were the closest to the national picture they have been for the last five years. This is due in the main to better teaching throughout the school, more effective booster classes and additional literacy

sessions, and the introduction of writing workshops. However, pupils always do much better in speaking and listening and reading than they do in writing. Although this reflects the national picture, and the gap is narrowing year on year, it is still wider at this school than in most other schools. Although pupils make sound progress from their poor attainment on entry, by the end of the juniors their spelling is still weak, they do not use adventurous enough words to excite the reader, their handwriting is untidy, and their punctuation skills are under-developed.

5. Pupils achieve well in mathematics and because of this, standards are above average at the end of both the infants and the juniors. Fast moving mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of lessons mean that pupils have well-developed calculation skills. Most pupils in Year 2 work confidently with numbers up to 100. They have a good understanding of addition and subtraction facts to 20 and sort two- and three-dimensional shapes in various ways, using mathematical properties such as angles and the number of edges and sides. By the time they reach Year 6, their numeracy skills are well developed. They order negative numbers correctly and work confidently with numbers beyond 1000. They reduce fractions to their simplest form and use and interpret co-ordinates in all four quadrants.
6. Standards in science are broadly as expected by the end of the infants and above expected levels by the end of the juniors. Pupils of all ages are particularly good at investigative work. Older junior pupils understand the need to make tests fair in order to give reliable results and be able to draw secure conclusions. They record their work in different ways, but weak spelling and under-developed vocabulary means that this is not as good as it could be and the standard of drawing, diagrams and explanations does not reflect pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding as well as it might.
7. Standards in ICT are rising rapidly due to improved resources and better teaching. The infant pupils now reach standards expected for their age by the end of Year 2. However, because pupils' skills were not taught effectively enough in the past, Year 6 pupils are taking time to catch up, and their attainment is still below that expected for pupils aged eleven. Nevertheless, their learning is good and they are achieving well during lessons in the computer suite and over time. However, they do not make enough use of classroom computers to support their work in other subjects.
8. Attainment in religious education is broadly as expected by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement over time is good. Pupils have, in particular, a very good knowledge and understanding of the different world faiths and customs.
9. Pupils attain above expected standards in art and design, design and technology, physical education, and music. Their history enquiry skills are well developed. Observational artwork is of a particularly high standard, with intricate detail shown in pencil drawings. Pupils are good at making things in design and technology; their singing is extremely tuneful during music lessons, assemblies and choir practice. They move to music sensitively and with good co-ordination in physical education lessons. Standards in all other subjects are broadly as expected by the end of the infants and juniors.
10. This school includes pupils of all abilities, gender and background well in lessons and, because of this, boys and girls performed as well as each other in the lessons seen, special needs pupils make good progress over time, and those pupils with English as an additional language and from travelling families do as well as their classmates. This is because of very effective support from both teachers and learning support assistants. In the past, infant boys have not done as well in the national tests as the infant girls. In 2001, the gap between boys and girls decreased and although girls still outperform boys at the higher level, the difference is less pronounced. In the juniors, the performance of boys and girls fluctuates year by year, particularly in English and science. However, taking the last three years together their performance is fairly even in science, and boys do slightly better than girls in mathematics. This follows the general national trend. In English, girls usually do better than boys, again

following the national trend. However, the school bought a range of new books, which they felt boys would be more interested in, to try to redress the balance. This was successful and in 2001 the difference between boys and girls was only slight.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes and pupils in all year groups enjoy coming to school. They have very good attitudes to their work. They join in activities willingly and happily and there are many smiles. Pupils are proud of their school. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils enjoy very good relationships with one another and adults. This helps them to co-operate with each other in lessons and in turn helps their learning. In physical education, for example, all pupils participate well and in a Year 6 English lesson seen, choral speaking showed pupils' good co-operative attitudes; pupils with special educational needs gained especially during this activity.
12. Despite pupils' very positive attitudes to school, attendance rates are poor. They have been well below the national average for the last four years. These figures do not, however, reflect pupils' enthusiasm for school, which is very good. Punctuality is good; nearly all pupils come to school on time and settle to their work promptly and calmly. Whilst data analysis is limited, there are indications that a small minority of pupils take extended holidays abroad, and there is a significant minority who attend the school for a short period of time, staying on the roll even though they are not intending to return. These pupils make a higher than average contribution to the poor attendance. Nevertheless, the unauthorised absence level has fallen and was broadly in line with the national average last year. This is an important improvement.
13. Pupils are interested in their lessons and want to learn. They take part enthusiastically in after-school and lunchtime clubs, and assemblies. In one assembly featuring Indian music, for example, pupils requested a repeat performance by the pupil dancers and musicians. In lessons where some pupils take the 'hot seat', others ask questions sensibly and there is much enthusiasm for this activity. In a particularly lengthy singing lesson, Year 6 pupils maintained their concentration well, singing almost as enthusiastically at the end as they did at the beginning!
14. Pupils are aware of what impact their action has on others. They sometimes remind each other of the school rules, as when a child in Reception reminded another not to run in the corridor! In the 'achievement' assembly, there was an excellent atmosphere, with pupils rejoicing in the success of others. It was also noticeable that they had a genuine awareness of why the awards were appropriate. Several instances were seen during the inspection week of pupils spontaneously applauding others – in the Reception class, for example, when one child successfully wrote an 's' on the board after several attempts, and in music when a Year 4 pupil played a drum solo.
15. Behaviour is good. In class lessons, assemblies, and the large gatherings for music lessons, pupils behave well. Lunchtime is a quiet, orderly time and pupils sit together in a friendly way. Pupils are courteous; they talk readily and politely to visitors. They show respect for property as the well-kept resources and displays around the building show. There have been one permanent and eight fixed-term exclusions in the past year; appropriate procedures were followed. This is an unusually high level of exclusion for the school and involved a small number of pupils.
16. Pupils' personal development is very good. They act responsibly as monitors, Year 6 pupils calling in classes for lunch, for example. Pupils grow in confidence as a result of these opportunities. The responsibility of belonging to and regularly supporting the after-school and lunchtime clubs helps pupils' personal development. It was noticeable that choir members had learned their words well for the Christmas activities. Circle times, when pupils gather

together to share their thoughts, offer good opportunities for pupils to discuss things that interest or worry them. The system of conducting these is well established and respected by pupils. Pupils understand well how the school would deal with any bullying and there is no evidence of racism or sexism.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

17. Teaching and learning are good. Of the 99 lessons seen, 47 were good, 21 were very good, and 3 were excellent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons seen, showing good improvement since the last inspection when nine per cent of the teaching was less than sound.
18. Much of the teaching and learning seen in the Nursery and Years 1, 2 and 6 lessons were very good. Teaching in these years was particularly lively and inspirational and interested the pupils extremely well. Teachers showed enthusiasm and clearly enjoyed their work; this rubbed off on the pupils and spurred them on to do well. Work was challenging and, most importantly, relevant to the pupils. For example, in a Year 6 music lesson, the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject injected excitement into the pupils' singing and they sang dramatically following her example. In a Year 2 religious education lesson, references to the pupils' own experiences of Christmas decorations and candles stimulated a lively discussion about Diwali. The classroom became a buzz of excited activity as pupils became immersed in making divas, Mendhi and Rangoli patterns, and a Diwali card. In another Year 2 art lesson, pupils listened to music by Mozart playing quietly in the background as they looked at the fine intricacies of leaf skeletons and drew what they saw with great care and precision. Success rested with the pupils as the teacher replied to the question, "Miss... is this all right?" with, "Well, does it match what you see?" One pupil, immersed in his own imaginative thought murmured, "If you draw it carefully, the leaf spirit might become real". In this lesson, pupils worked with pride, perseverance and curiosity. In Nursery, children are given a wide range of experiences to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. Adults are aware of their needs and are extremely sensitive to their feelings. They encourage children to become more responsible for organising themselves and the order in which they do their work, developing independence extremely well. The Nursery is a hive of activity, with children persevering with their activities and learning rapidly from a low starting point.
19. Good teaching in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, music, and physical education results in above average standards in these subjects. Although the teaching of English is good overall, pupils do not do as well as they could in writing because they spend too long analysing the writing of others and not enough time using what they learn from this in their own writing. Good teaching of other world religions in religious education lessons means that pupils' knowledge and understanding are better than those found in most other schools. Mental arithmetic is taught effectively at the beginning of mathematics lessons and dance is taught extremely well in physical education lessons. In art, teachers encourage pupils to look closely at what they are drawing so that they make accurate representations of what they see. The teaching of structures and mechanisms is good so that pupils use these well in designing and making models in design and technology. Singing is taught well and consequently pupils' voices are tuneful and have good pitch.
20. Teachers throughout the school manage pupils well. They establish very good relationships with them by injecting humour into lessons. Because of this, pupils like them and work hard to please them. For instance, in a Year 2 poetry lesson, the teacher made jokes about liking "chocolate and chips". This leads to a relaxed feeling to most lessons, and calmness around the school. Even so, lessons are usually quick moving and this means that pupils concentrate well and work productively.

21. Teachers expect good behaviour and pupils respond positively to their demands, mainly because they enjoy the work and understand why they are doing it. This is because teachers talk with them at the beginning of lessons, explaining carefully what they are going to learn by the end. This motivates pupils and gives purpose to their efforts. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils knew that, by the end of the session, they were going to know more about what conditions are needed to speed up or slow down the evaporation process. They predicted how quickly liquid would evaporate from containers placed in different places over the next 24 hours. They were well prepared for the lesson the next day because they knew that they would be measuring the amount of liquid that had evaporated in order to check their hypotheses. This gave them a sense of challenge and excitement about being proved right or wrong.
22. Resources are good in quality and quantity and are used very well in lessons to support teaching and learning. For example, in two parallel Year 1 science lessons, both teachers made excellent use of a video taken of a recent physical education lesson and still photographs of pupils' movements to explore different ways of moving. Pupils enjoyed looking at themselves and took pride in writing about their movements, motivating them well to get on and complete the science work. All pupils were involved and even those who struggled with the writing were interested and motivated. This example of linking subjects together is extremely effective and is used very well throughout the school. There were good opportunities, for example, for mathematical skills to be developed in Year 4 when pupils measured temperatures of ice cubes as they melted, and in Year 5 design and technology when they measured angles and nets. Pupils write instructions in science and record events in history, although their weak spelling and under-developed handwriting too often mar the end product. Computers are used to word process stories, draw pictures for art, and carry out research in history and geography. However, most of this is done in the timetabled sessions in the computer suite, where the focus is on acquiring the skills to be able to do it, and not enough use is made of classroom computers to encourage pupils to use these skills to support other work at other times throughout the day.
23. There is an exceptionally generous number of support staff in this school, who work with teachers extremely well. They support pupils with English as an additional language and the lower attaining pupils, including those with special needs. This means that these pupils understand what they are expected to do and how to do it. Trained assistants give individual support to the high number of pupils with statements of special need, meeting the requirements of these statements well. A bi-lingual assistant helps those pupils with English as an additional language to learn to speak and understand the English language. It is possible for pupils from both classes in the same year group to join together for this support because teachers from parallel classes plan together closely so that each class is given the same work to do.
24. The evaluation sessions at the end of lessons successfully help pupils to understand what they have learnt to do and what they need to do next. This involves them well in their own learning and guides them towards improvement. Class targets are agreed each half term for improvements in basic English and mathematics skills and pupils work enthusiastically towards them. However, teachers' marking does not always tell pupils enough about what they are and are not doing well to guide them to further improvement. Some teachers do this extremely well; they write comments about how well pupils have done something and make very clear suggestions about how they could do it better next time. However, some merely tick the work and write positive comments, which do little to help pupils bring about improvements to their work.
25. Teachers often talk for too long at the beginning of lessons and pupils lose interest or forget what was said at the very start because too many things are incorporated in the talk. This has most impact in literacy lessons, because it means that pupils are given insufficient time to write extended stories and reports and this slows their progress. Teachers spend a lot of time with pupils analysing text and talking about the construction of it, but they give pupils too



little time to put what they have talked about and learnt into practice in their own writing. Guidelines showing pupils how to set out their writing, recently introduced, restrict pupils' space and call for a fairly narrow range of responses, so pupils often write short phrases or single words.

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

26. The school provides an exciting, varied and rich curriculum that stimulates pupils to learn. It is broad and balanced and very successfully meets the interests, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. An excellent range of after-school and lunchtime clubs and activities enhances it considerably. These are extremely well supported by pupils and parents. Coupled with the very strong links the school has established with the local community, this makes for extremely good learning.
27. All subjects are taught in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum, the early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Curriculum planning has improved considerably since the last inspection and the planning and subject co-ordinators regularly monitor its effectiveness. The school has successfully implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and this has had a positive impact on raising standards in English and mathematics in particular. There is very good provision for pupils' personal, health and social education across the school. Sex and health education and the dangers of drugs misuse are taught as part of the science curriculum and the school makes good use of outside agencies, such as the school nurse and the police, to support their work. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well to support work in other subjects, but the use of computers to support teaching and learning in lessons other than ICT is not as well developed as it might be. The school is aware of the need to develop this aspect of its work.
28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs, and those for with English as an additional language, is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. These pupils make progress that is as good as that of their classmates because the school ensures that all pupils have full and equal access to all aspects of its work.
29. The school has very strong links with the community through visits to such places as the local church and other places of worship. Pupils take part in some services such as harvest, Easter and Christmas festivals and have visited a local mosque and an Islamic exhibition. Other visits farther afield include those to Gainsborough Old Hall for work on the Tudors, and Eden Camp for work in Year 6 on World War II. In addition, visitors to school such as various theatre, puppet, drama and musician groups provide a wide range of experiences for pupils. For example, during the inspection, a local Indian drummer group took part in the school's assemblies. In a Year 6 lesson, two visitors, one a Methodist, the other a Muslim, talked about the holy books of their different faiths. The school has a thriving 'gardeners' club', thanks to the generosity of the local council and the community policeman. An allotment has been reclaimed and made available, and the school already has harvested some of its produce to make jam! Pupils in Years 5 and 6 manage their own budget and have applied for funding to build a greenhouse. The local council has provided benches and a shed and this is one example of how well the school develops pupils' sense of community and citizenship.
30. The school has good links with its partner institutions. For example, local playgroups are invited to visit the Nursery prior to children starting school and the Nursery teacher visits them in turn. Similar good relationships exist with the local secondary schools and visits, before the end of Year 6, help pupils to settle more easily when they move.

31. The previous report found that the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was a strength of the school. This remains the case, with still excellent provision for cultural development. The school has clear values expressed in its aims that are integral to all aspects of its work. The spiritual development of pupils is carefully and sensitively nurtured through assemblies and the teaching of religious education. Time is given for pupils to reflect on the words and meaning of what they hear. Assemblies and religious education lessons provide very good opportunities for the teaching of Christian beliefs and values as well as those of other faiths. Stories, such as the '£5 to fill a room' one told by the head teacher, offer good guidance for pupils' personal development.
32. Opportunities are taken to foster pupils' sense of wonder and mystery. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on Diwali, the festival of light, the effects of Rangoli patterns and Diwali cards fascinated pupils. One pupils' response was simply "Wow!" All groups of pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and all adults in the school act as very good role models for children. For example, in Year 1, a pupil had just started school in the week of the inspection. The teacher asked all pupils to remember to make sure he "has a friend with him all day today so he doesn't feel lonely". Older pupils in Year 6 also act as members of a 'circle of friends' for schoolmates experiencing problems and do this in a most mature and sensible manner. The school has a very good system of rewards that encourages pupils to not only work well but also behave and care for others, and these are celebrated in the weekly 'achievement' assemblies.
33. Many opportunities are taken to develop pupils' social skills. Year 6 pupils go on a residential visit to the High Force Activity Centre, which helps foster their skills of getting on together and co-operating with others. Opportunities are taken in lessons for small groups or pairs of pupils to work together and to share resources, for example in computer lessons. Older pupils are given a series of duties around the school, helping in the dining room at lunchtime or acting as monitors during break times. There are numerous occasions when pupils celebrate the successes of others with spontaneous clapping, as happened in a Year 1 mathematics lesson and a drama lesson in Year 6. The school council gives all pupils the opportunity to vote for their class representatives and good opportunities for the council members to act responsibly.
34. The cultural development of pupils across the school continues to be excellent, as it was at the last inspection. The work of the school is considerably enriched by the ways in which it celebrates the different cultures of its pupils. All pupils are made to feel valued and the way pupils are taught to show respect for different beliefs is a strength of the school's work. The school supports and celebrates the customs and beliefs of other cultures such as Islam and Sikhism besides those of Christianity. In this, they are supported well by parents who contribute greatly to the work of the school by providing artefacts from their own cultures; some of them come into school to talk to pupils of all age groups about their beliefs and way of life. A number of refugee children from various countries have allowed the school to develop pupils' awareness of places and good use is made of topics in geography and history to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own and other cultures. The art and music curriculum is also used well to widen pupils' cultural awareness. This is well in evidence in the bright, colourful and informative displays that celebrate the different cultures represented throughout the world. The assembly featuring Indian music and dance was a good part of a programme for preparing pupils well for their life in a multicultural society.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

35. As at the previous inspection, the care arrangements for pupils are good overall, despite weaknesses in the steps taken to improve attendance. Assessment procedures and their use are now very good. This is a key improvement since the last inspection and has made a significant contribution to the recent rapid rise in academic standards.

36. This is a very caring school. There are very good arrangements for induction to Nursery, Reception and other classes. Transfer arrangements to secondary school are well established and appropriate. Pupils are well cared for when they are ill or otherwise distressed. There are good links and involvement with outside agencies, such as the school nurse. The 'Nurture Group', taken by the Nursery nurses and involving 12 Reception pupils, provides these pupils with extra help to develop co-operation and sharing skills. Child protection procedures are good and adults in the school know the procedures to follow. Teachers make pupils aware of health and safety issues in lessons such as physical education and science. This effectively contributes to the development of a safety-conscious attitude among pupils.
37. There are very good procedures in place to monitor and promote good behaviour and eliminate oppressive behaviour, including bullying and racism. The comprehensive behaviour policy and classroom rules provide a coherent basis for pupil behaviour, discipline and personal development. The main emphasis is on recognising and rewarding good behaviour and nearly all pupils respond positively to this. In nearly all lessons, teachers' management of pupil behaviour is consistently very good. Ongoing praise in lessons and assemblies are routine features. Measures to create and maintain discipline are appropriate, proportionate, and consistently applied by staff. Parents are very effectively informed about pupils' good behaviour, effectively instilling a sense of pride.
38. The few pupils who have significant behaviour difficulties are clearly identified and behaviour improvement plans are used well to support them. There is a clear and proportionate set of sanctions used to deal with unacceptable classroom and playground behaviour. Lunchtime supervisors, informed by effective behaviour management training, are very positive about pupils' behaviour and the way in which they are supported by staff when incidents arise; parents are very effectively involved. Measures to prevent and address the rare incidents of bullying are very effective. The school has worked hard and very effectively to address racist incidents over a number of years. As a result, incident levels, which are systematically recorded, have declined sharply to a very low level. Pupils feel comfortable reporting rare incidents of bullying or other anti-social behaviour, when their own best efforts to resolve incidents prove ineffective. Parents and pupils confirm that the measures taken to resolve such incidents are usually very effective.
39. The arrangements in place to deal with the poor attendance rates are not working effectively enough to bring about improvements. Individual recognition and rewards are given for full term and annual attendance and first-day absence contact has recently been introduced. The head teacher monitors attendance and involves the education welfare officer to help resolve those cases where there are persistent attendance difficulties. However, insufficient is done to highlight and promote attendance. Despite the persistently low attendance levels, this is not currently a school development priority. The current way of monitoring attendance on computer does not break down pupil absence into key categories, such as by gender or background. As a result, regular monitoring and effective data analysis are more difficult than they could be.
40. The procedures for assessing how well pupils are doing are very good overall. This is a key improvement since the previous inspection when the arrangements were unsatisfactory. The substantial rise in the number of pupils attaining the expected level and above in the 2001 national tests results is a clear indication that the application of these procedures is now having a significant impact on pupils' learning. A range of assessment procedures are now in place, including school entry assessments, statutory assessment tests for seven and eleven year olds, and the optional national tests for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. Pupils are routinely assessed on a half termly basis to further refine the tracking of their progress. These are particularly effective in literacy and numeracy and, whilst less well developed, procedures in science and the other subjects are in place.

41. Overall, the use of the assessment information to guide curriculum planning is very good but, again, more so in English and mathematics than in other subjects. Teachers effectively use what they know about pupils' previous learning to adapt the curriculum to meet the differing needs of pupils and to inform teaching and learning in lessons and over time. It also effectively informs which pupils will take part in the booster classes and identifies end of Key Stage 2 targets for the following years. Pupils have class and individual targets, which are shared and reviewed with parents and pupils at the very well attended termly parents' evenings. As a result, all parties are kept very well informed. The impact of the very good quality assessment information, very well shared with parents and pupils, is now starting to be reflected in pupils' rising standards at the end of Key Stage 2.
42. The monitoring of and support for pupils' personal development are very good. Each pupil has a 'pupil profile' where their skills, and attitudes towards work and other people, are recorded. As a result, pupils and their needs are very well known to all staff, including learning support assistants. Good work and attitudes are regularly celebrated in assemblies. This recognition and reward provides pupils with frequent and public confirmation of what is good in their lives and helps raise their self-esteem. The personal, social and health education programme makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. The way in which learning is organised in the Foundation Stage makes an important contribution to developing children's skills in making choices and becoming more independent. From Reception upwards, pupils are given responsibilities, such as returning registers to the office and delivering messages. The exceptional range of extra-curricular activities provides most pupils with very good opportunities to experience and discover enjoyable things that interest them, and in which they can excel. Parents are very positive about the school's part in helping their children to become mature and responsible.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43. Overall, the school's partnership with parents makes a very good contribution to the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. It has continued to develop since the last inspection and is better than it was.
44. This school is an open, friendly, and welcoming place; staff listen to parents' concerns and value the partnership they have with them. A number of consultations to gauge parental views on a range of issues have taken place. The school always considers parents' views before making any major changes to school rules or routines and involves them fully when they have any concerns about pupils' progress or behaviour. Links with parents of special needs pupils are very good, whilst links with those for whom English is an additional language are exceptional, starting with very well-supported admissions arrangements.
45. The quality of information given to parents about how well their children are doing and how they can support their learning is very good overall. Informal contacts between teachers and parents, the very good use of homework diaries, and the termly teacher-parent meetings mean that parents get frequent updates on their children's progress and any concerns staff have about how well they are or are not doing. As a result, nearly all of the parents feel very well informed about how their children are getting on. The quality of pupils' written annual progress reports is good. These convey a clear sense of what pupils are doing and give a clear indication of the progress they are making. Targets for improvements are identified, including areas for improvement in attitudes, if appropriate.
46. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed about events in school. The school brochure gives a clear outline of the school's expectations and its character and the governors' annual report to parents provides a good account of the school's progress towards the targets the school is working on.

47. Parents' involvement with the work of the school makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning and the life of the school. Parents are keen for their pupils to do well and nearly all respond to any individual requests to come into school to discuss issues such as their children's behaviour or attendance. Attendance at parents' evenings is exceptional, with nearly all parents and their children present. Crèches, organised and supervised by school staff, enable those parents with young children to attend. Many parents attend and enjoy Christmas and other performances and sports days. A significant number of parents have attended a wide range of curriculum workshops. Parents are well represented on the governing body. All parent governor positions are filled, often after elections, which is another indication of parents' very positive support for school. Most exceptionally, around 40 to 60 parents attend the annual meeting at which governors present their annual report to parents. Whilst most parents meet their responsibility to get their pupils to attend school routinely, a minority do not and this leads to well below average attendance.
48. A significant number of parents help regularly with art, design and technology, preparation of materials, and on school trips. The 'Share Project' for parents is a particularly valuable activity. This gives parents the opportunity to meet together in a group with a teacher once a week to discuss things of interest and to get ideas about how they can work with their children at home. There is an active 'friends of the school' group, which works tirelessly to organise fund-raising and social events. This money is used well to enhance existing resources. The group's activities also help to establish and maintain good informal links between staff, parents and pupils, as all parties are usually involved in the events.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

49. The school is very well led and managed. The head teacher has excellent leadership and management qualities. Since her return from a two-year secondment to the local education authority, she has put in place, very ably supported by her deputy and senior managers, a number of very effective systems and arrangements, which have led to good improvements in standards. This means that, since the last inspection, but mostly so within the last 18 months, all of the issues identified in the last report have been successfully dealt with. The most important improvements are:
- standards have risen rapidly in a number of subjects, including English, mathematics and science;
  - teaching is better than it was because of more effective lesson observations and focused in-service training;
  - resources have improved, particularly for English and ICT teaching and learning;
  - there is better curriculum planning and a much wider and varied curriculum, which motivates pupils to learn and stimulates their thinking;
  - school development planning focuses more precisely on bringing about improvement;
  - improved assessment procedures and data analysis, which identifies what is and is not working in teaching and learning.
50. There is a new sense of urgency to raise standards that permeates the school and is shared by all of the staff and governors. There is good commitment to do well and strive to do even better. The way staff, parents and governors work together is exemplary; there is a real community feel to this school.
51. Standards are rising because teaching is much better than it was. There are many reasons for this. It is partly because teachers have access to better information about what pupils can and cannot do. They are well trained in how to use this information to adapt the work they give to pupils and this, in turn, means that pupils' work is much more relevant to their needs. Coupled with better teaching guidelines, this means that the curriculum is better focused on meeting the needs of individual pupils. There is also a clearer awareness of

where support needs to be focused and which pupils need to attend the booster classes, additional literacy support sessions, or get additional help from teachers and learning support assistants during lessons and withdrawal sessions.

52. The arrangements for analysing information about pupils' achievements are excellent. The assessment co-ordinators work hard to collect and make sense of the data and uses it to pinpoint what needs improving and, most importantly, where, when and how. This has already brought about a significant increase in the number of pupils attaining the expected level and above in the national English, mathematics and science tests at the end of Year 6. Individual pupils' progress is tracked as they move through the school and, although these systems are fairly new, this is already identifying those pupils who are not making as much progress as they should from year to year; further investigation reveals why.
53. Lesson observations, currently limited mainly to literacy and numeracy, have already brought about good improvements to the teaching of these two subjects. Well-focused and appropriate areas for improvement are identified and discussed with individual teachers and include recommendations like "Less teacher talk and more interaction with pupils", "Plan activities for the more able pupils", and "Target questions to involve all pupils". Apart from the first one, very few of the weaknesses identified in past observations were seen during the inspection, indicating success in dealing with them. This is because teachers are attentive to comments and are extremely keen to improve their teaching. They are responsive to suggestions for improvement and welcome views on how they can make their teaching better. Training is well focused, informed by lesson observations and effective performance management, to deal with bringing about improvements. Teachers are keen to attend courses and visit other schools to learn from good practice elsewhere. All teachers monitor the work of learning support assistants, who access relevant training to help them with their work.
54. The school is driven by a real desire to bring about improvement and is good at finding out how to do this. Subject leaders are given the opportunity and responsibility to make decisions about their subjects and some of them do this particularly well. Their subject improvement plans focus the school well on what it needs to do and ensures that the governing body, through its school development plan, is alerted to where funding should be channelled to bring about improvement. Because they are well informed, governors fulfil their duties well. They are well aware of what is happening in school through their involvement with school development planning, in particular, and are particularly focused on what they need to do to make things better. The questions they ask and the challenge of decisions and requests from the head teacher ensure that what she suggests are the right things to do. Support and advice is forthcoming from individual governors whenever it is needed, with them acting as valuable critical friends of the school.
55. The school's finances are administered well. Modern technology is used effectively to check on, for example, the school's financial spending and keep track of where the money is going. The school accesses additional funding from a variety of sources and uses the money it gets very effectively on, for example, improving staffing levels, which are good and are impacting well on raising standards, making the accommodation better, and building more and better learning resources, which are good overall. The school is extremely well placed to bring about further improvement.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. The school should now:

(1) Improve standards in writing and ICT by:

a) In writing, making sure pupils:

- have enough time to include what they have learnt in literacy lessons in their story and report writing;
- record work accurately in other subjects, writing neatly, using appropriate subject words, and taking care to spell them correctly;
- have access to thesauruses to help them find alternative and more interesting words to say what they want in report writing and to capture the attention of the reader in story writing.

(paragraphs 4, 6, 22, 73, 74, 79, 80, 82, 96, 110, 114)

b) In ICT, using classroom computers more to support work in other subjects.

(paragraphs 7, 22, 27, 81, 91, 95, 102, 112, 118, 121, 125-126).

(2) Improve attendance by:

- setting realistically challenging targets for future attendance rates;
- looking at the information about which pupils are absent and why, identifying trends or particular issues, and attempting to resolve these.

(paragraphs 12, 39)

In addition to the above areas for improvement the following minor weaknesses are identified in the report and the governing body should have regard to them in their action plan:

1. Not all teachers make relevant comments to help pupils realise what they do well and what they need to do to improve their work next time.

(paragraphs 24, 89, 98, 111, 116).

2. Lesson introductions sometimes go on too long and pupils either lose interest or cannot recall what was said at the very beginning.

(paragraphs 23, 79, 80, 82, 88, 97).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	99
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	21	47	28	0	0	0
Percentage	3	21	47	28	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	59	369
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	98

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	107

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	27

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	82
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	56

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	7.4	School data	0.5
National comparative data	5.6	National comparative data	0.5

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



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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	28	26	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	24
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	46	47	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (70)	87 (73)	87 (92)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	25	24
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	48	48	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (77)	89 (92)	87 (82)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	27	28	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	22	27
	Girls	19	23	26
	Total	38	45	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (55)	82 (48)	96 (67)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	19	23
	Girls	18	20	22
	Total	33	39	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (41)	71 (38)	82 (45)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	7
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	7
Indian	14
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	287
Any other minority ethnic group	4

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

*\* Not all parents return information about ethnic background. These numbers are based on the information available.*

### ***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	8	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.9
Average class size	26.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	288

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	863651
Total expenditure	834532
Expenditure per pupil	2119
Balance brought forward from previous year	44407
Balance carried forward to next year	73526

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	428
Number of questionnaires returned	228

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	24	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	32	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	36	2	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	36	5	1	6
The teaching is good.	81	18	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	27	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	15	0	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	18	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	75	21	3	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	82	16	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	21	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	68	21	2	0	8

## **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**

57. Children attend the Nursery part-time from the beginning of the school year in which they reach four years of age; their attainment is well below that found in most other nurseries. Full-time attendance in Reception starts at the beginning of the school year in which the children become five years old. The quality of teaching is good in both years and often very good. Although children make good progress in the Nursery, their attainment is still generally below that expected by the time they start Reception. However, children continue to do well during their second year in school, and by the time they start Year 1 their physical and creative skills are broadly as expected for children of their age and their knowledge and understanding of the world are secure. They have satisfactory personal and social skills, but their communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills are still not as well developed as most other children's are at this age.
58. Since the last inspection, the Foundation Stage teaching team have worked hard to:
- establish the new curriculum for children in Nursery and Reception;
  - implement a more effective assessment system to measure children's learning over time;
  - introduce the 'Nurture Group', involving some parents meeting with staff on a regular basis to discuss how well their children are doing and how they can help them further at home; and
  - organise children's learning in a more effective way that promotes independent skills well.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

59. From the time they start Nursery, children are given a wide range of rich and varied learning experiences and they make good progress in this area of learning. In Nursery and during some afternoon sessions in Reception, children choose the activities they will do and in which order they will do them. This works well and encourages children to organise themselves and teaches them that they have to work around what others want to do. For example, only four children can go into certain areas at a time, and children need to wait for a space to become available before they can complete their planned tasks. However, whilst they do this well, most of the Nursery children find it difficult to play and work with others, tending to engage in solitary play rather than join with others. Although up to four children, for example, were seen playing in the water together several times during the inspection, they each became engrossed in what they were doing, with little or no regard to others playing alongside them. Those listening to tapes paid no attention to others listening, even when the tape was stopped or started again or the volume was changed, silently moving on when they had had enough. Adults do too little at these times to show children how to respond to their classmates by playing with them and initiating conversation between them. Nevertheless, even the youngest Nursery children sustain good concentration and stay at activities for reasonable lengths of time, painting a balloon in shades of blue, for example, or threading beads onto laces. They do not act on impulse, though, and usually respond to instructions rather than take initiative or show curiosity in things happening around them. They show some independence during self-registration and when clearing away, busily putting things in their place, but do not seek out others to share experiences.
60. In contrast, a year later, because of the very good teaching in Nursery, by the time they get to Reception, children get on very well together. They show care towards others when, for example, in a Reception literacy lesson, they spontaneously clapped one child who, after a long struggle and many prompts and words of encouragement, formed the letter 's'

correctly. The air was electric as classmates silently willed him to do it! Children now organise themselves well and initiate conversations with adults and other children confidently. They talk excitedly about their work and their families, but are very much concerned with the 'here and now' and are reluctant to talk about the abstract, such as things they have done in the past. Nevertheless, because of good teaching, by the time they leave Reception to start Year 1, many of them have attained most of the early learning goals in this area of learning and are enthusiastic, independent, confident, and sociable learners.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

61. As at the time of the last inspection, Nursery children are encouraged to talk but, at this very early time in the school year, they do so reluctantly. They have been in Nursery just over half a term and are not confident speakers; they do not engage easily or enthusiastically in conversation. They often respond to a question with a shrug or by pointing. For example, when showing a teacher her 'cutting and sticking' picture, one child pointed in response to the question "Which is your favourite bit?" and then responded with a shrug to "What happened here?" Inspectors trying to initiate conversations with small groups or individual children playing in, for example, the sand or water, were often met with blank expressions. Even in the role-play area, when inspectors played alongside children they were often handed objects, for example a piece of pizza, wordlessly. At snack time, not many children responded to offers of a biscuit with "Thank you" or "No, thank you" even though encouraged to by the teachers. Many respond to questions with one-word answers, such as "Stuck" to the question "How did you get that on there?" All children listen to stories and look at the pictures wide-eyed, as teachers read them with good expression and excited voices, trying to enthuse the children. However, children do not comment spontaneously on what they see or hear, nor do they join in repeated refrains. During these times, adults do not model appropriate responses, however, and so children are unaware of how they could respond. Pencil control skills are poor, even though teachers work extremely hard to develop these through activities such as tracing, copying and colouring.
62. Nevertheless, because teaching is so good, work saved from last year shows that from the beginning of Nursery, when children's attainment was clearly well below that found in most other nurseries, many children had made good progress. A few of them could draw recognisable pictures and many made distinguishable marks on paper. For example, some wrote single letters to represent words such as 'p' for the word 'play', but far fewer children were able to do this than most children of this age.
63. Even now, after a short time in Reception, these same children have already progressed further. They now complete rhyming strings, recognising most letter sounds, and knowing for example that "'e' is for elephant" and "'s' is for soup". They read some words independently, like 'the' and 'one'. They point to words, as they 'read' their books, but not always accurately. They talk in sentences, but these are not always grammatically correct and they tend to talk alongside, rather than with others. Nevertheless, they negotiate roles when acting out stories and give and follow classmates' instructions. However, their handwriting is still under-developed and not many write independently. Only seven children out of 22 in one class, for example, draw recognisable pictures of themselves and are starting to form letters correctly. Mostly, their letter formation is immature and teaching does not, in one class in particular, model good handwriting. A love of stories is promoted well. Teachers read enthusiastically and add excitement to the text by asking children to predict what they think might happen next. They successfully create an air of suspense as they turn the pages slowly; they build anticipation well and make learning fun. Opportunities for children to trace and copy teachers' writing continue and children's skills are developing well. Even so, and despite good teaching in both Nursery and Reception, by the end of Reception, not enough children attain the early learning goals for this area of learning securely enough to be in line with national expectations.

## **Mathematical development**

64. Teaching in this area of learning is good. In Nursery, there is always a good range of mathematical experiences set up to promote number and counting, such as bead threading, number jigsaws and computer number games. However, children's under-developed natural curiosity and desire to learn means that not many of them choose these activities unless they are directed to them. Adults tend to become more involved with the language and literacy activities and do not join in the mathematical ones as much and this does little to encourage children to choose them. Nevertheless, many children are able to make patterns with beads and attempt to count them when prompted, although not always accurately. They counted the number of small water containers they used to fill a large container, but only after an adult had joined them. They put things 'under' the table and 'in' the box, for example but do not use mathematical language naturally in their play. They have little fascination for numbers and do not, for instance, join in the song 'Five currant buns in a baker's shop' eagerly – many opt out of singing it and watch some of their classmates perform the actions instead. They show little interest in shape or making arrangements with objects unless prompted to and are unaware of similarities in shapes around them.
65. They make good progress throughout the year, however, and children in Reception can now find missing numbers in the sequence one to 10 and are beginning to add two numbers together to make a total of up to 10. They know, after some thought, that one more than eight is nine, but have difficulty working out, "If I have five sweets and eat one, how many have I got left?" They compare 'heavier' and 'lighter' and 'longer' and 'shorter' objects accurately. They place five circles from the biggest to the smallest and order the numbers one to five correctly. Still, by the end of Reception, not all children are securely attaining all of the aspects of the early learning goals in this area, but most are close to them.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

66. Teaching and learning are very good in Nursery and good in Reception. Children enter the Nursery with limited knowledge and understanding of their world. In Nursery and Reception, they have a very good range of experiences, including visits and visitors, through which they learn well about people and events. They visit, for example, local farms and parks to learn about animals and natural wildlife. Their role-play areas are changed to reflect the different topics they are studying, such as a baby clinic following a visit to school by a health visitor. Children in Reception have an excellent awareness of other cultures and religious beliefs from looking at and talking about artefacts from, for example, the Sikh religion and following visits from different religious leaders. They watch musicians and artists at work and meet members of the police force and fire brigade and listen to them talk about what they do and how they help others. They work confidently with computers, particularly in Reception, using the cursor to move objects around the screen and 'drag and drop' shapes to make up pictures of, for example, 'Goldilocks and the three bears'. In one Reception lesson in the computer suite, children learnt how to use the number keys, following clear instructions from the teacher, and all children progressed well. By the end of the lesson, they could name certain keys, such as the space bar and return keys, and explain their effect. They cannot, however, use the print function and rely on the teacher to print their work for them.

### **Physical development**

67. Children's physical skills are taught and developed well through both indoor and outdoor learning experiences. Consequently, most children attain the early learning goals by the time they leave Reception. The outdoor learning area, shared by Nursery and Reception children, is excellent. There is a very good range of apparatus and equipment, which children use confidently and with developing co-ordination and control. They balance on narrow bars a little off the ground and throw beanbags, with increasing accuracy over time, into hoops. They guide wheeled toys between lines painted on the ground and negotiate climbing equipment well.

68. Nursery children have well developed co-ordination and move on the outdoor apparatus very confidently and competently, balancing and climbing well. They have a good awareness of space and negotiate 'tight' spaces well. They are very close to attaining levels expected for their age. In the classroom, they are learning to hold paintbrushes near to the end of the shaft and to stroke the paper rather than stab at it and, although they usually get glue all over, they cut and stick with developing control. They jump off, go under, and climb over the soft play equipment very confidently. They use glue spreaders well and are developing better cutting skills over time. Their pencil control is weak, however, and they find drawing, writing and colouring difficult.
69. Reception children move in different ways to music and watch each other's movements patiently, showing interest in how others are interpreting the music when, for example, listening to music of different tempos. They catch balls with increasing accuracy, guided by their teachers to hold their hands out ready to receive them. They dress quickly after physical education lessons, but adults help them too much to undress, in their eagerness to get as much time in the hall as possible. They cut and paste with much more control than when they were in Nursery and their pencil control is much improved.

### **Creative development**

70. Children's creative skills are taught and developed well and, because of this, are as expected for children of this age by the end of Reception. Children in the Nursery paint shades of blue, for example, by mixing blue, white and black. They know how to use sponges to get the excess water off their brush before dipping it in the powder paint. They make dough cakes for the role-play area and enjoy squeezing the sticky dough between their fingers! They make sponge print pictures and pasta collages.
71. Reception children sing enthusiastically and are already building a repertoire of songs; their voices are sweet and tuneful. They clap the rhythm of a song accurately and play instruments on the beat. Six children played a simple three note 'tune' showing good control of the beaters, a sense of pulse and enormous enjoyment. They have a good sense of rhythm and pitch and follow the conductor well, doing what she indicates. They mix colours to paint accurate skin colour on pictures of themselves, for example, and join things successfully using glue, tape and staples. They have lots of experiences to help develop their creative skills such as leaf printing and making 'dingle-dangle' scarecrows with moving legs and arms. They use clay to make clay candleholders, and paper and material to make collages of, for example, 'light' pictures to celebrate Diwali.

### **ENGLISH**

72. Pupils achieve broadly as expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards have, for some years, however, been below or well below both the national average and that of similar schools. In 1997, the school set about eradicating the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report, systematically and with determination. Pupils made steady if slow progress from a very low starting point, and results began to improve. This progress has accelerated over the last 18 months as the impact of the improvements began to show and pupils' learning rate is now good. These improvements include:
- much stronger assessment, leading to better grouping of pupils and matching of work, and very good support for a variety of special needs;
  - better teaching, which is now good overall and at times very good and excellent, leading to good progress;
  - a more rigorous approach to guided reading, leading to improved standards;
  - much improved resources for literacy, guided reading and study of play-scripts, particularly for the boys;

- better pace in lessons together with more challenging work;
- more opportunities for drama and the teaching of research skills; and
- a much wider range of writing styles with all writing being for a planned purpose.

73. Consequently, in last year's national tests, Year 2 pupils, for the first time since 1997, achieved better than the national and the local average in reading and writing. They were particularly successful at the higher level. The school focused much of its efforts, in the juniors, however, to improving reading, since in 1999 no Year 6 pupils gained the higher level. As a result, in 2001, reading results were similar to mathematics and science results and Year 6 pupils did as well in reading as most other pupils nationally. However, the lesser focus on writing during this time has resulted in a lower achievement in writing than in reading, and this is depressing the English test results overall. Although there has been a drive recently to improve pupils' handwriting skills, these have not improved enough, and are not yet impacting on pupils' presentation skills; work in English and other subjects is often insufficiently neat or accurately presented.
74. The work pupils are currently doing shows that standards being achieved by the present Years 2 and 6 are broadly as expected for this time in the school year in speaking and reading, and they are above the expected level in listening. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. The school is sensitive to meeting the needs of all pupils, whatever their background or ability. Those pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are particularly well supported in literacy lessons and so make similar progress to their classmates. This year, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, most pupils are likely to achieve the expected levels for their age in reading. They are likely to be somewhat below these, however, in writing, with few achieving the higher level. Although this represents good improvement from a low starting point, pupils could still do better if teaching concentrated more effectively on promoting correct spelling, the use of more adventurous words in story and report writing, and better handwriting.
75. Listening is above average throughout the school. Pupils listen actively and enthusiastically to their teachers' instructions and explanations and their classmates' suggestions and opinions. Year 2 pupils show that they listen well through comments and the questions they put to the teachers in return. Year 6 pupils listen to each other carefully. They take account of each other's views well. This is a key feature in the 'circle of friends' talks, where pupils help to influence each other's behaviour for the better. Teachers encourage good listening by providing many opportunities. These are most effective when the listening times are short, and the pace rapid. For instance, when Year 1 pupils, in some exciting lessons, listened to their phoneme bingo, they had to concentrate hard or they missed their cues. In some lessons, however, mostly in the juniors, these listening times go on for too long. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils listened to complex instructions for up to half an hour on how to use their writing frames to analyse story or poetry writing. Some pupils found it difficult to recall what they heard at the beginning, and a few lost interest along the way. At times listening is particularly intensive, and pupils' skills in this are clearly above average in Year 6. In an excellent lesson, the pupils were able to judge the quality of sounds they had used to declaim a Shakespeare speech in a dramatic way, and alter the effects until they got it right.
76. Speaking is in line with the levels expected for the pupils' ages. Year 2 pupils are beginning to show confidence in talking. Most explain their ideas clearly and use a growing vocabulary. Infant teachers arrange a wide variety of occasions where pupils can discuss their work, for instance in art lessons. With very good resources to stimulate them, pupils are moved to awe and wonder at, say, the delicacy of a leaf skeleton. The impact of their impressions comes out in imaginative language. Year 1 pupils come from the Foundation Stage with a limited idea of sentence structure and a weak vocabulary. All teachers introduce new vocabulary well, particularly the technical words connected to different subjects. However, in some lessons, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to speak in extended



sentences. They accept single word answers, or phrases, too readily. Apart from the articulate more able pupils, vocabulary is not extended sufficiently.

77. Year 6 pupils talk confidently in a wide range of contexts because the junior teachers provide many good opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking skills. Many pupils are comfortable talking to each other in general class discussions, or to visitors during religious education lessons for instance. Some are confident in the more formal settings like the school council, circle of friends, assemblies or classroom debates. The vocabulary of human feelings is well established, because pupils are immersed in it. The Year 6 teachers are currently introducing pupils to the more difficult skill of speaking Shakespearian language. They create very good learning conditions where the pupils themselves have to plan how to use sounds, effects, echoes and inflection. The teaching was stronger in the lesson where the objective was to build up to a full rehearsal in one session. The pupils, including those with special needs, achieved amazing results and made outstanding, rapid progress. Despite the teachers' emphasis on developing vocabulary, pupils have gaps in some areas. These occur when pupils need more abstract terms to explain their understanding and appreciation in music and art, for instance, and they cannot find the words to express their feelings or explain their thoughts.
78. Reading standards are broadly average throughout the school. The school's efforts have produced enthusiastic readers who enjoy taking their books home to practise. Pupils have favourite authors, and are well versed in how to use indexes and glossaries. Good teaching of basic skills on how to use letter sounds to work out new words enables pupils to make good progress through the years. Teachers use the big books well to model the expression needed to get the best out of stories and hold the attention of the listener. Many teachers enjoy acting, exaggerating the sounds of the language. This appeals to pupils. In several lessons, the infants could be heard savouring these heightened sounds themselves. Teachers use this skill often in the juniors. For instance, it was difficult to judge who enjoyed the Year 6 rehearsal of 'The Tempest' more, the pupils acting as 'the chorus' or the teachers in the leading roles. It is exhilarating teaching like this that gives pupils a real love for reading and classic literature. The most able readers, aiming for attaining the higher level by the end of the year, are developing an extensive range of interests. They explain genre and show how they are exploring several, but they do not refer directly to the text when making points. They have difficulty in finding the words to explain their impressions, express what the author is trying to say, and talk about differences in style.
79. Standards in writing are broadly as expected by the end of the infants. The pupils understand that writing has a purpose, for instance when they busily prepared the script for a puppet show. Year 2 pupils write stories with correct sentence structure and interesting ideas. The teachers explain the basic skills well, introduce pupils to the necessary vocabulary, and discuss ideas. Many of the lessons, however, run out of time, and pupils do not have time to write sentences even when this was the main objective for the lesson. The writing that pupils do for assessment shows a fluency of ideas, but does not develop a sufficiently adventurous vocabulary. Pupils know about phonemes and can talk about 'consonant-vowel-consonant' words, but do not spell accurately enough in English lessons or in other subjects. This is because teachers too readily accept mis-spelt words and pupils do not realise the importance of getting them right and so do not try hard enough.
80. Some of these features continue into the juniors, where teachers develop pupils' technical writing skills further. However, by the end of Year 6, standards are not high enough and not enough pupils attain the expected and higher level in writing. Pupils learn how to analyse the writing of different authors, and can explain rhyming patterns and how to write dialogue. The teachers go into considerable detail at the start of lessons, explaining the rules of spelling and grammar carefully, which demonstrates their good subject knowledge, but this leads to lengthy introductions to literacy lessons and leaves pupils with insufficient time to write. Teachers then do not have enough of the pupils' writing to discuss with them how they are progressing from level to level. Although some opportunities are provided for writing at other

times and in other subjects, such as science, geography and history, sometimes insufficiently high demands are made on pupils to record their work accurately, particularly at the first attempt; spelling is poor and the work is often untidily presented. Time is then wasted copying out or redoing work so that it makes sense.

81. Computers are used effectively to write letters, stories or reports and develop pupils' recognition of letters and words through word games. However, this is mainly restricted to work in the computer suite and not enough use is made of classroom computers for pupils to work on throughout the day, researching historical events, for example, or browsing on the Internet to find out about topics they are studying.
82. Teaching is good overall. It was stronger in those lessons where pupils had a clear target to be met that day, adding a sense of urgency to the work, than in the ones where the target was to be achieved by the end of the week. Teachers mark the longer pieces of work well and give pupils information about how they could improve. This is not possible to do with the shorter pieces. Teachers constantly encourage pupils to expand their vocabulary. Pupils have a positive attitude and try hard but, at times, they run out of appropriate words to express what they mean. Teachers do not have enough thesauruses of different kinds to use to develop pupils' breadth of vocabulary. In short, teachers:
- make pupils spend too long listening and analysing;
  - do not give pupils enough time to write;
  - do not place enough importance on correct spelling and good presentation; and
  - involve pupils insufficiently in evaluating their own work and talking about how to improve it.
83. The management team for English has raised the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject, and is beginning to meet its aim to instil passion into the teaching. By using its data about pupils' abilities well, it has targeted extra support to where it is most needed.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. Attainment in Years 2 and 6 is above that found in most other schools. This reflects the latest national test results and shows very good improvement from the time of the last inspection. The percentage of Year 6 pupils, for example, attaining the expected level has almost doubled since 1998. The greatest increase was between 2000 and 2001, however, when there was clear evidence of real change, with the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level and above increasing by 34 per cent.
85. Much of this improvement is due to better teaching, which was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It is now good, with particularly good sessions on mental calculations at the start of most lessons. These often move at a brisk and challenging pace that enthuses pupils to learn. They want to be part of the lesson and take delight in showing their skills at counting in particular. This was most noticeable in some lessons in Years 1, 2 and 6, where teachers demonstrated a secure knowledge of the subject in the way they carefully framed and targeted their questions to match the different abilities of the pupils. This ensured that all groups were included in the lesson and were able to contribute in a meaningful way. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher made sure that the least able pupils and those with English as an additional language were involved in the quick-fire questioning session by asking particular pupils to answer particular questions, when adding two numbers up to 20.
86. By the end of Year 2, more able pupils use addition and subtraction facts for numbers up to 20 in their mental calculations and have begun to develop an understanding of numbers up to 1000. Average and lower attaining pupils sequence numbers up to 100 and know that subtraction is the inverse of addition. All groups show good knowledge and understanding of

shapes and sort most shapes according to their properties, such as the number of sides and angles.

87. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a good understanding of number and shapes. Current work in data handling is not as well developed, but planning shows that it will be addressed in more detail later in the year. Pupils in Year 4 use negative numbers in counting backwards as well as forwards, and more able pupils in Year 3 put fractions in order of size. By Year 6, most pupils can cancel a fraction to its lowest terms and use a calculator to check their work. Pupils have gained further knowledge and understanding of shapes and all groups can construct shapes such as squares and rectangles accurately. These skills were used well in Year 6 lessons, when pupils drew and translated shapes in all four quadrants using co-ordinates. Very good use of an overhead projector was made during these lessons so that all pupils were able to follow the teachers' instructions. The good use of resources is a feature of the better lessons in mathematics.
88. The school has successfully adopted the National Numeracy Strategy and this has helped to improve planning and raise standards. Lessons are planned with clear ideas about what pupils are going to learn and these are shared at the start of lessons with pupils, so that they, in turn, are clear about what is expected of them. This enables them to settle quickly to their tasks and gives a good pace and purpose to their learning. Teachers encourage pupils to think carefully about the language they are using and to explain what they are doing by using the correct mathematical terminology. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the question, "What's the correct word when lines cross?" led to pupils' recalling the word "Bisect". Another notable feature of better lessons is the way in which teachers use discussion time at the end of lessons to check on how well pupils have learned. Activities are well planned and resourced, and carefully explained, and pupils are given appropriate opportunities to practise their new skills. Less successful lessons sometimes have too long an explanation by teachers, which restricts the amount of time available for pupils to work. In these lessons, the rate of learning is less than expected.
89. Pupils make good progress and do well as they move through the school. Very good use is made of pupils' previous learning by teachers, to focus on individuals and groups of pupils and raise their achievement. Questioning helps teachers to establish what pupils already know and can do. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher recapped what the signs are for 'addition' and 'equal', taught the lesson previously, to make sure all pupils had remembered, before moving on to the next activity. Some teachers have good marking systems that help pupils to know what it is they need to do in order to improve, but this good practice is not consistent across all classes.
90. Current management and leadership of the subject are good. The work of the co-ordinators is closely focused on continuing to raise standards. Resources are good and well targeted to support teaching and learning.
91. ICT is used satisfactorily to support work in mathematics, such as photographing shapes in the environment using the digital camera for work in Year 1 and plotting co-ordinates on four quadrants in Year 6. However, this is under-developed, mainly because not enough use is made of the classroom computers during mathematics lessons.

## SCIENCE

92. Year 2 pupils reach standards that are in line with those expected nationally by the end of the year. The work from last year's Year 2 pupils shows that most of them reached the expected level and above by the end of the year, and current work shows that the present Year 2 pupils are attaining levels broadly expected for their age. Standards at the end of the juniors are above average and many of the present Year 6 pupils are attaining the expected level or above for their age. This shows very good improvement since the last inspection, when attainment at the end of both the infants and juniors was below average. In the Year 6

2001 tests, results were well above the national average and very high in comparison with similar schools. These results show a significant improvement on those achieved by the school in previous years. They reflect not only the recently improved teaching and planning in the subject, but the effective steps the school took last year with regard to revision and to building up pupils' confidence in test procedures.

93. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in gaining scientific knowledge and understanding. Less able pupils, and those at an early stage in their English language acquisition, get good support in lessons from teachers and learning support assistants and the work they are given matches their needs well. With effective encouragement from teachers, other adults and classmates, these pupils make good progress. In one Year 2 lesson on electricity, for example, the teacher made sure that the pupils worked in mixed ability groups and that those pupils still learning English worked with sympathetic partners, who enhanced their progress effectively.
94. The teaching of science is good overall in both the infants and juniors and this is reflected in the considerable improvements that have been made in a relatively short time. The national subject guidance has been effectively introduced throughout the school. Good planning now ensures that pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding is built on and extended as they move through the school. Learning support assistants and other adults working in the classrooms are informed well about what pupils need to do and learn and, because of this, make a very effective contribution within lessons. The subject encompasses aspects of sex and health education and there are strong links with other areas of the curriculum. For example, a well-planned Year 1 lesson about the different ways in which people's bodies move was supported by the good use of a video of a class dance lesson. Each pupil had a picture of themselves at the top of their recording sheet. This gave pupils a sense of pride and encouraged them to take great care with their writing and not to spoil the page. Teachers use a wide range of scientific words and this helps pupils build up an appropriate vocabulary to use when talking or writing about work. For example, in one Year 2 class on electricity the word 'filament' was introduced, as well as the more usual words such as 'bulb', 'battery' and 'crocodile clips'. In a Year 3 class, the correct names of a wide range of rock samples were used, together with appropriate words to describe their properties, such as how they felt. Pupils were eager to examine these samples closely using a hand lens and were keen to talk about what they could see. Teachers introduce a wide range of resources into their lessons and the use of scientific equipment, such as thermometers and force meters, supports pupils' measuring work in mathematics. Some teachers use very good strategies to keep all pupils interested. In one very good Year 6 lesson, the teacher placed a small model of a figure on a globe to demonstrate the pull of gravity and, by using pupils to demonstrate different forces, introduced touches of humour that focused the attention of the whole class.
95. ICT is used sufficiently to support work in science. The school has recently purchased a collection of science videos and some teachers make their own to highlight key points in their lessons, such as taping a Year 1 physical education lesson to use in a science lesson where pupils explored the different ways the body can move. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils used an art program to design a poster showing the dangers of electricity and CD-ROMs to find out about different animals. However, most of the computer work goes on in the computer suite and only limited use is made of the classroom computers during science lessons.
96. A particular strength in the subject is the amount of investigative work now being carried out by pupils of all ages. Older pupils are well aware of what constitutes a fair test and that there is a need to predict a result before carrying out an experiment. For example, in one Year 5 lesson on evaporation, pupils knew that they had put the same amount of water into different containers and were able to make sensible predictions about the effect that a smaller or greater surface area would have on their results. However, due to the difficulties many pupils have with spelling key words correctly and recording their work neatly and accurately, their written work does not sufficiently reflect their growing scientific knowledge and

understanding. Boys and girls of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, experience these difficulties. Teachers are aware of the problem and often provide helpful lists of words to support accurate spelling, but these do not always have the desired effect and pupils are careless in their use. Even in Years 5 and 6, teachers ensure good recording methods by writing exemplars for pupils to copy from the board. Although there are good reasons for this practice, it limits opportunities for pupils to show initiative and write up experiments in their own way. In one Year 4 lesson involving the use of thermometers to measure the temperature of water in different circumstances, for example when ice is added, the pupils' previous recording of findings had been so poor that the teacher re-ran the experiment to ensure better work. This is a good example of how teachers continually evaluate their practice and adjust their planning accordingly.

97. Pupils throughout the school enjoy their work in science, especially if it includes practical tasks. In a Year 2 class working on simple electrical circuits, pupils showed great dexterity in joining up the different components to light up the bulb. They were intrigued by their success and could not wait to see if they could light up two or even more bulbs, using the equipment they had been given. Pupils use equipment sensibly but take less care with the presentation of their work. Many are eager to make suggestions and share ideas both in class discussion and in group work. They work collaboratively in pairs and groups, helping each other when necessary. Overall, pupils' behaviour in all lessons is good and this allows teachers to spend time on their primary task of teaching. Occasionally, when a teacher talks too much at the beginning of a lesson, the pupils lose interest and are inclined to fidget.
98. Due to the focus on implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, there have been fewer opportunities for the school to focus on familiarity and competency in teaching areas of science. However, the national subject guidance for science has been well implemented throughout the school. This has been very helpful in ensuring that all aspects of the science curriculum are taught appropriately, as well as raising teachers' knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject. During the inspection, the junior co-ordinator was absent and, therefore, some of the priorities and targets set out very clearly in the subject action plan have not been fully covered. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and reflects this lack of co-ordination. Some teachers write good comments, which lead to pupils making improvements to their work, whilst others only use ticks or write 'sp' beside spelling errors. There is good ongoing assessment of pupils' progress, including the use of an optional test at the end of Year 4 and tests of their knowledge and understanding at the end of each unit taught. These include good evaluative comments made by the pupils, for example about what they enjoy or find difficult. A useful portfolio of samples of pupils' work has been started and the school has recognised the need to develop this further to measure pupils' progress as they move through the school. There is a good range of educational visits, for instance to a farm, the local park, a power station and Sprotborough Canal. The local community policeman helps to run an after-school gardening club and the school has been allocated the use of a nearby allotment. These visits and activities further enrich this area of the curriculum.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

99. The attainment of seven and eleven year olds is better than that expected nationally for pupils of their age; pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve good standards in art and design by the end of Years 2 and 6. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the last inspection, due to good teaching that systematically builds on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding both in lessons and over time. What is particularly successful is the good progress the pupils make in close-observational work and in their use of colour.
100. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to mix paints to a desired colour and draw what they see, and these skills are built on well over the years. Due to the good guidance pupils are given throughout lessons, they draw with increasing accuracy and choose

shades carefully in order to colour things precisely as they are. For example, Year 1 pupils blended the correct crimson for their pictures of chrysanthemums and Year 5 pupils carefully chose shades of blue to illustrate their work on bottles. Teachers emphasise the importance of taking time to look very carefully at an object before starting to draw it. In one science lesson in Year 3, the use of hand lenses resulted in pupils producing good illustrations for their work on rocks. The quality of work produced by the oldest pupils is exceptionally high and their fine pencil sketches of feathers show a real flair for detail. In their figure work, Year 6 pupils use a partner, or video material of other class members, as models for their careful illustrations of movement. This helps them to achieve the correct proportions and position for parts of the body. Detailed sketches drawn by members of the art club during a visit to Doncaster Mansion House show that pupils know how to use pencil to simulate texture and that they have a good awareness of perspective. Year 5 pupils' understanding of colour is extended well in their work on animals in their natural habitats and how well these are camouflaged in their environment.

101. The quality of teaching is good. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and so are able to give effective ongoing support. They give pupils the responsibility of checking the accuracy of their work. For example, in one particularly good Year 2 lesson, when a pupil asked if a drawing looked all right, the teacher replied, "Well, does it match what you see?" Teachers introduce a very wide range of media, including different drawing and colouring materials such as oil pastels, charcoal, and pen and ink, and demonstrate how these can be used to the best advantage. They teach many art skills and techniques, including those involving fabric and clay work and printing. Teachers brief other adults working in their classrooms well so that they can effectively supervise groups carrying out tasks where more help is needed. For example, in one Year 2 lesson, the support of other adults greatly enhanced the quality of work produced by one group of pupils printing leaves and another sewing a fabric collage. Focused praise gives all pupils the confidence to 'have a go' and consequently pupils enjoy their work greatly and are very enthusiastic about what they are doing. Teachers are particularly good at making links with many other subjects. For example, work on shape and symmetry is introduced in support of mathematics. In Year 3, good drawings of Gainsborough Old Hall are used as an important reminder of Tudor buildings seen on an educational visit. In Year 4, artwork usefully illustrates pupils' work on the Celts and Romans and brings these topics to life. Teachers introduce the work of other artists to their pupils and there are some good examples of children using their different individual styles, for instance pointillism, in their own work. A good understanding of the art of other cultures, including Aboriginal art, is included in the curriculum.
102. Computer programs are used well both to draw pictures and to illustrate work in other subjects, but this mainly takes place in ICT lessons in the computer suite and not enough use is made of classroom computers during art lessons.
103. The pupils' artwork is displayed exceptionally well and its quality is enriched by the use of interesting artefacts, beautiful drapes and exquisite flower arrangements. The care that teachers take in presentation is reflected in the pupils' attitudes to their own work and their wish to do as well as they possibly can. Very good displays both in classrooms and around the school make this school an exciting and stimulating place in which to work. Art Club activities, visits, for instance to a local art gallery, and artists visiting the school, enhance this subject further.
104. The subject is managed well by two enthusiastic co-ordinators who are successful in their leadership of the subject. They have managed not only to maintain, but also to improve the profile of art within the school's curriculum despite the national focus on English, mathematics and science over the last few years. A useful recent addition to the co-ordination team has been a part-time teacher, who is particularly interested in display. The school has implemented the national subject guidance, and so all staff are clear about what they are to teach and when they are to teach it. This ensures that pupils are set progressively more challenging tasks over time. Although useful portfolios of exemplar work

have been compiled, currently it has not been possible for co-ordinators to monitor what is happening during lesson time in colleagues' classrooms. The school has recognised the lack of such a system and, together with the introduction of some form of assessment, this is one of the co-ordinators' priorities for the coming year, in which it is planned to place an even greater emphasis on the creative arts.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

105. Attainment in design and technology is likely to be above the level expected for the pupils' ages by the end of Years 2 and 6 this year. The school supports those pupils with special educational needs well to enable them make the same good progress as their classmates. There has been good improvement in design and technology since the previous inspection, as teachers have become more confident and plan more effectively using the new teaching guidelines. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand how their designs lead to successful constructions. By consistent progress through the juniors, Year 6 pupils use the skills they have gained to attempt ambitious projects involving moving parts, gears, cams and followers.
106. Strengths in the subject are:
- the curriculum which gives equal attention to designing and making in all four strands;
  - the encouraging of pupils' problem-solving ability and their questioning approach;
  - the good quality of teaching and learning; and,
  - the strong links with literacy, numeracy, ICT and other subjects.
107. Areas for improvement are:
- the teachers' confidence in teaching large groups in the food preparation area; and,
  - the role of the pupils in evaluating their own standards.
108. The quality of the pupils' work in the books from last year, and the finished products, indicate that good teaching takes place. In the two lessons seen during the inspection, the teaching was good. The very thoughtful planning, backed by high quality resources, created very good opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their designing and making skills, and develop a good problem-solving approach. For instance, the Year 5 pupils had to think logically to figure out how the cam axle would fit into the chassis box. They had to draw on their mathematical skills of measuring and halving to mark off the exact position of the hole. In finding the solution, they learned key scientific facts about levers and forces. Teachers explain clearly and effectively, and use challenging questions well. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher's good subject knowledge was conveyed to the pupils by detailed explanation, so that all pupils fully understood how cams and followers worked. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were helped to find out about strong and weak shapes by questions such as, "What happens if you push the square shape?" By trying the suggestions for themselves, they understood that a triangle makes other shapes stronger. This made what they had seen on the play park video real for them. The links with geography and science increased their learning further.
109. The pupils listen well because the teachers present interesting activities for them to work on. They behave well because they are eager to finish their models, so that they can be tested. They are proud of the models they have produced, explaining clearly how the designs helped them, and how successful they have been. Their written evaluations are in a special style to extend their range of writing skills. The co-ordinators have raised enthusiasm for this subject in pupils and staff. Construction kits are used effectively to make structures and the school plans to raise standards further by improving the range and quality of these kits for the

younger pupils, and by providing a computer link system to allow Year 6 pupils to control their models electronically.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

110. No geography lessons were observed during the inspection. However, the scrutiny of pupils' past work, examination of teachers' planning, and discussions with teachers and pupils in Years 3 and 6, show that at least satisfactory provision is made throughout the school. Standards are broadly in line with those found nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. However, because many pupils find writing difficult and cannot set down their thoughts easily, their work does not fully reflect their geographical knowledge or understanding. Discussion shows that pupils have a better knowledge of geographical facts and skills than their recorded work shows. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a fair understanding that places differ – for example, that the countryside differs from a town and that life on a small island would be different from life in their hometown. They know that food comes from all over the world and that many fruits come from hot countries. They clearly found this particular topic interesting. Year 6 pupils had weaker recollections of last year's work than did those in Year 3, but remembered with obvious pleasure their trip to Flamborough Head and what it taught them about coastlines. The work portfolio shows good, if rather untidy, work on mountain environments where pupils have interpreted tables and made deductions from known facts.
111. Because no lessons could be seen, no judgement can be made about teaching overall. Teachers have marked some of the work in the sample well, giving praise but also pointing out how it could be improved; they have looked at other work less thoroughly, showing some inconsistency in their approach to marking. The portfolio of work is at an early stage of development and needs more annotation as an aid to measuring pupils' learning and gauging their progress. It is unclear, for example, how difficult the pupils found the work, or how much support they were given. It does, however, contain some good pictorial evidence of pupils engaged in geography activities.
112. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The geography development plan shows that the curriculum leader intends, as time allows, to observe lessons, but currently monitoring is through looking at teachers' planning and informal discussion with colleagues. Geography alternates with history on the timetable. There is too long a time between some units of geography and so pupils forget not only facts but also, without more regular reinforcement, the skills needed for future work. ICT is used satisfactorily to support work in geography. Floor and screen robots are programmed to move in different directions, for example, around the classroom and around four quadrants on the screen. However, little use is made of computers in the classrooms to, for example, browse the Internet to find out about life in different countries or to research geographical topics.

## **HISTORY**

113. Standards of work in history are broadly in line with those found nationally at the end of Year 2 and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. Junior pupils have a slightly better grasp of historical research skills than do many pupils of their age in other schools. Pupils understand the different ways in which we find out about the past, such as through photographs and films, and by listening to elders. They also realise that some accounts are going to be different from others because they are related by different people.
114. Year 2 pupils had clearly gained much from the talk given by one pupil's grandfather about World War II. The teacher linked it well to social and moral issues through discussion of 'proud moments' and 'sad times'. Pupils' ideas shown through their writing were good but not all of pupils could set them down successfully. This reflects difficulties with writing rather



than a lack of understanding in history. The discussion here, as in the other class seen, gave pupils good opportunities to extend their speaking and listening skills.

115. Research skills showed well in a Year 3 lesson where pupils discussed what a large, coloured picture of King Henry VIII told them. They tackled this well and, again, the work offered help with English skills. Similarly, Year 4 pupils knew how to take information from the many books they had been given to look at to find out about life in Roman Britain. Year 5 pupils understood, from their practical experience of making a census in class, how the Victorians made the first ones and why. They understand that much can be learned from analysing the data collected. Year 6 pupils showed a good recollection of their work on Victorian life and remembered well the importance of artefacts in their study. All pupils take a full part in lessons and those with special educational needs are included in all of the activities.
116. Teaching is always at least sound and some of it is good. Teachers prepare well and organise lessons effectively. They encourage pupils to look at pictures and artefacts to find things out, which develops their historical research skills well. Tasks are appropriate and interest pupils. Year 5 pupils had clearly enjoyed the census experience and Year 4 pupils were very keen to be 'hot seated' and answer their classmates' questions. Year 6 pupils remembered their work from last year with obvious enjoyment. Because pupils enjoy their work and because they are acquiring good research skills, they learn well and their achievement is secure. Some work is well marked. Teachers show how work can be improved as well as praising and encouraging what pupils have done. Other work, however, has less comment and help, showing an inconsistency in teachers' approaches to marking, and results in some pupils being unsure how to improve.
117. The curriculum co-ordinator leads the development of the subject well. She has introduced a wide curriculum and varied teaching methods and activities. Pupils visit many places to enrich their learning, including Gainsborough Old Hall and Cusworth Hall in connection with their study of the Tudors and the Victorians respectively.
118. The school has made good progress in its teaching of history. Pupils use a range of computer programs, including art packages, to make, for example, their artwork linked to the Great Fire of London more exciting. They use CD-ROMs satisfactorily to find out about different historical periods, but too little use is made of classroom computers. Many of the displays around the building are very good; they are lively, colourful and informative. Teachers have displayed good collections of artefacts, some of them borrowed from the local museum service.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

119. The issues identified in the last report regarding the provision for and teaching of ICT have been successfully addressed. Standards are rising because teaching is now good and better resources in the computer suite are being used well to teach ICT skills to pupils of all ages.
120. Attainment by the end of Year 2 is now in line with that expected for pupils of this age. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is, however, still below the nationally expected level, but this represents good improvement from the last inspection when attainment was well below average. Progress across all year groups is now good. These improvements are due to the good work of the co-ordinators, the increased confidence and competence of teachers, new resources, and the good direct teaching of ICT skills using the new computer suite. Teachers are helped by the use of subject guidance based on national guidelines, and all of the requirements of the National Curriculum are taught.

121. The ICT work pupils do in the computer suite develops their skills and techniques well in using computers. The computers in the suite, and sometimes those in the classrooms, are used effectively to support work in English and mathematics, but too little use is made of the computers in classrooms to help pupils with their work in other subjects. For example, in mathematics, Year 1 pupils have used a digital camera to take photographs of shapes in the environment. During the inspection, lower attaining pupils in Year 2 used the computer to complete a 'hundred square' jigsaw that helped to reinforce their understanding of numbers, and Year 6 pupils made use of a computer program to develop their understanding of plotting co-ordinates. Although word-processing skills are developed satisfactorily in the infant classes to, for example, change the style, size and colour of writing in stories of the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff', they are not used enough in junior classes. There is no evidence, for example, of writing in the form of newspaper reports in older pupils' work.
122. Pupils are introduced to computers at an early age and respond eagerly, showing good enthusiasm for their work. They are excited by the new computer suite and concentrate well in there. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are aware of the use of information all around them in their everyday lives. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to look at how designers make posters eye-catching by asking them, "What is it about this poster that makes you notice it?" The pupils picked out, "The bold colours" and how the designer had, "Put bits into different coloured bubbles and put pictures with them". They noticed the effective use of capital letters and how the text and pictures were arranged on the page. They then used what they had learnt to create posters to warn about the dangers of electricity. They have used CD-ROMs to research their topic on animals and have produced a simple picture graph of their favourite sandwiches and drinks. Pupils have recorded their movements in physical education lessons on a grid and then programmed a floor robot to copy the same patterns of movement.
123. This good progress is continued in the junior classes, and standards in Years 3, 4 and 5, in particular, are rising rapidly. Pupils in the Year 3 classes combine text and graphics to produce a front cover for their history topic book on the Tudors. In doing so, they change the style, size and colour of their writing and move pictures around the screen. Year 4 pupils sequence a series of commands to move a screen robot in a set pattern of movements, and Year 5 pupils use the tools of a graphics program to create designs using rotated shapes, colour and resizing. In doing so, they compare its use with a previous program they have been using and discuss its advantages or otherwise.
124. The development of a widening range of skills is the result of good teaching through well-planned activities that focus clearly on specific skills to be learnt, and then the provision of opportunities for all groups of pupils to practise and refine these skills. This results in pupils of all abilities, genders and backgrounds making good progress as they move through the school.
125. However, the effects of good teaching and improved resources have not had sufficient time to impact on the level of attainment of the oldest pupils because they have further to catch up in terms of what is expected for their age. This means that Year 6 pupils are working on a similar range of skills in presenting information in graphical form as their younger schoolmates, such as making similar shape collages to those made by Year 5 pupils. Whilst their skills are developing well, pupils in Year 6 are mainly working at the level typical of Years 4/5 pupils in this and other schools. For example, with some support, most Year 6 pupils:
- use drop-down menus and change font style and size;
  - add to and amend graphical information showing appropriate awareness of their audience;

- access a program and save their work to disk;
  - amend and add to their work as it develops; and,
  - select, 'drag and drop' shapes, overlap, resize and rotate them, and fill them with colours.
126. Year 6 pupils' past work shows that they have used ICT to create pamphlets following a visit to the Dome, presented information in spreadsheet form and used computers to draft and redraft play scripts. However, this work has been mainly supported by adults. Pupils' ability to work independently, using classroom computers to support their work in other subjects, is under-developed. They have limited experience of control, monitoring and simulation, using the Internet, e-mail and other ICT equipment, fairly new to the school, such as the digital camera. For example, although some use is made of CD-ROMs for researching topics in history and geography, very limited use is made of the Internet for this purpose. The school has begun to look at establishing links with other schools but as yet makes no use of e-mails. Better use is being made of the digital camera in the infant classes, but older pupils have not yet begun to explore its possibilities.
127. Teachers are aware of the differences in levels of skills, for example between those pupils who have access to computers at home and those who do not. They are careful to target their support accordingly and this enables most pupils to achieve well during lessons and over time.
128. The subject is led well by two co-ordinators, who have worked hard to raise the profile of the subject across the school. Their work in supporting colleagues, planning the use of the new resources, and encouraging the use of ICT across the curriculum, has contributed to the improving standards now becoming evident. They are aware of the need to develop further the use of computers in the classrooms to support teaching and learning in other subjects and are seeking to expand their present use, which is currently mainly in literacy and numeracy. New assessment systems are being implemented in order to give a clearer picture of what pupils can and cannot do and inform future planning better. The school is well placed to continue its improvements to teaching and learning in ICT.

## **MUSIC**

129. Pupils' attainment at the ages of seven and eleven is above the nationally expected level. Pupils sing well in the choir and Year 6 pupils sing very well, using 'singing voices' as opposed to 'speaking voices' to produce clear, bright sounds. In assembly, pupils sing boldly and substantially in tune. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils sang a difficult song with words from a Shakespearean play, and tackled two-part work successfully. A small group of recorder players is preparing for a grade two examination and pupils' playing is well advanced for their age. No composition was seen but a graphic score made by Year 6 pupils showed work of at least the nationally expected level. Younger pupils play classroom percussion instruments well. In Year 1, pupils know short and long sounds and can control instruments to make them. Throughout the school, pupils' sense of pulse is good and one Year 4 pupil maintained a steady beat holding back all those about her who rushed – an extremely difficult thing to do! Year 3 pupils can read simple rhythms from traditional notation, many of them securely and well.
130. Pupils enjoy their music making. They sing readily and, in the lessons seen, were very keen to play percussion instruments. Choir members arrived promptly for a lunchtime rehearsal and had learned their words well. The recorder players obviously enjoyed their work and Year 6 concentrated well through a long singing session. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in music.
131. Teaching is good and in some sessions very good indeed. Several teachers have good musical skills and two of them sing with local adult groups. This gives pupils fine examples of singing and the enthusiasm for music of interested adult musicians. In some lessons

seen, teachers were not as confident but the curriculum leader gives informal help and advice. She also looks at all planning and shares good ideas and practice. Teachers plan lessons and manage pupils well. This makes for calm lessons in which pupils learn effectively. Lessons in most year groups, however, are taken with all the pupils together. Despite teachers' obvious skills, pupils do not derive maximum benefit within these very large groups. Where a long time is given to a lesson, it cannot always be used efficiently. One lesson seen went very well for most of its course but, as teachers and pupils tired, became less effective. For Year 6, the most of a long lesson was spent singing and, although this was excellently done, the overall experience for pupils was not as broadly based as it could have been. However, lessons move swiftly, have appropriate and interesting tasks, and give opportunities for pupils to make music together.

132. One parent is a professional Indian drummer. His input to the school is very valuable in terms of music and as a multicultural experience for pupils. Pupils' dancing and drumming during one assembly were very good, copying a model of high quality. Pupils are able to learn from a first rate example. The school also employs a pianist to help with lessons and assemblies. This provides not only good accompaniments for singing and instrumental work, but also flexible help in many aspects of music making. Her skills are valuable to teachers and enjoyed by pupils. She plays gentle piano music in assembly to set the atmosphere for worship and prayer. Pupils know that music makes a significant contribution to their worship.
133. The school has set out a good curriculum and extra-curricular provision is strong. This Christmas, as last, the choir will take part in World Music at the Sheffield Arena and sing in the local community. The curriculum co-ordinator leads the subject strongly and with clear vision about music in a large primary school. Teachers use resources, especially the valuable pianist, very well. They use ICT to tape the pupils singing and playing so that they can listen to it, evaluate how good it is and identify what needs improving and adapt it if necessary. They record their compositions using symbols or notation so that they can recall them at a later date.
134. There is a small hall set aside for music and other activities. This means that Instruments can be set out in advance so that no time is used for this in lessons. Instrumental lessons are available free of charge, enriching the curriculum for especially interested pupils.
135. The school has made good progress in music since the previous inspection except in singing where progress has been very good and is much improved in assemblies, where pupils now sing well.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

136. As at the last inspection, the attainment of seven and eleven year olds is better than that expected nationally for their age. The great majority of pupils, whatever their ability or background, make good progress and achieve good standards in physical education. A wide range of physical activities was seen during the inspection, including dance, gymnastics, games and extra-curricular activities. The pupils go swimming in Year 5 and, by the end of that year, most can swim at least 25 metres. They know that exercise increases the heart rate and understand the need for 'warming up' and 'cooling down' sessions. There are no inter-school sports events, but a high number of sports clubs enhances the physical education curriculum. These activities, attended by both boys and girls, include after-school sessions run by the local football and basketball clubs, Irish dancing, and a gymnastics club, as well as some lunchtime activities.
137. An improvement since the last inspection has been the development of more provision for outdoor and adventurous activities. These include simple orienteering exercises in the school grounds and a residential visit by Year 6 pupils to the High Force Activity Centre, where pupils experience such activities as rock climbing, pot holing and canoeing.

138. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures is enhanced by demonstrations given by visitors such as a Chinese dancer, and, during one assembly, a group of pupils danced to the music of an Asian drummer. Videos are made of physical education lessons, not only for pupils to see how they perform, but also to be used to support work in other subjects, for example, work on structures in Year 2 and figure drawing in Year 6.
139. Teaching and learning throughout the school are good, with some excellent teaching of dance in Years 1 and 2. In exemplary dance lessons, pupils achieve extremely high standards. Year 1 pupils listened carefully to a piece of taped music and made comments about how they should move to it. "Not too spiky", "Curly", "Twirly" and "Not very fast" were just some suggestions. They then interpreted the music with flair and imagination, exploring different ways of moving with lithe and expressive body actions. In one Year 2 lesson, using coloured bands of red, orange and yellow, the pupils flickered, twirled and twisted like candle flames. The very high expectations of the teachers are fully met by the almost spiritual imagery of the movements made by the pupils. The high involvement of both teachers and learning support assistants helps less confident pupils to model their own movements on what they see and in this way they achieve success. In Years 3 and 4, these early dance skills are channelled into more structured activities with an emphasis on creating, adapting and linking a range of dance routines both in pairs and small groups. The pupils enjoy improvising to catchy tunes such as the 'Hollykin Roundabout' and do this well. The teachers encourage pupils to watch demonstrations of other pupils' dance routines and make sensible comments about how these can be made better. In this way, good ideas are shared and improvements are made.
140. In gymnastics, teachers' very good planning ensures that pupils build on and extend their skills in this aspect of physical education as they progress through the school. In one Year 3 lesson observed, pupils sequenced their movements by gracefully moving along a bench, jumping off and landing safely on a mat. The teacher emphasised how, by pointing their fingers and toes and keeping their heads up, pupils could improve their performances. Expectations in Year 6 are high. In one lesson, the teacher asked pupils to do a forward roll, which they all did successfully. Throughout the school, there are good routine opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their movements to others and for suggestions to be made about improvements. Pupils are entirely comfortable about taking part in such activities and, as a result, the quality of their work is much enhanced. The very good relationships that exist in the school ensure that all pupils have the confidence to 'have a go' without the fear of failing and being ridiculed.
141. In games lessons, pupils take great care of equipment. For example, in one Year 2 class, the pupils collected the items they had used, including balls and hoops, and carefully and quickly stacked these in one corner of the playground before continuing with another part of the lesson. Games skills and techniques are taught in small groups, so that all pupils have the chance to fully participate. In Year 2, pupils devise their own group games, including simple rules, and, from an early age, learn about making fair decisions and letting everyone have a turn. In one Year 5 lesson observed, after an appropriate warming up class session, pupils worked with a partner on passing and receiving a rugby ball. Pupils found it difficult to understand the movements required for the ball to be passed back rather than forward. The teacher made an effective assessment of the situation and introduced a simpler exercise that was more successful.
142. Both co-ordinators are relatively new but are enthusiastic about the subject. The national guidelines for the subject are now being followed throughout the school and these ensure a consistency and progression in all areas of the physical education curriculum. There is a great emphasis on health and safety in the subject and teachers are very strict about wearing an appropriate kit and removing jewellery. So far the co-ordinators have not been able to observe colleagues' lessons, but it is planned for them to do this at a later date. Following on the system used in the Foundation Stage, the school has recognised the need

to devise a suitable class assessment grid that can be used to good effect throughout the rest of the school.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

143. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are securely in line with those expected for pupils of this age. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different world religions are better than expected. These judgements are supported by the examination of pupils' previous work and teachers' planning, discussions with the subject's co-ordinators and other teachers, and talking to pupils in lessons.
144. The quality of teaching seen in lessons was mostly good and this has been helped by the recent review of the religious education curriculum. The school's subject guidance uses material from the national guidelines as well as the locally agreed syllabus, and this has successfully raised the quality of teaching and standards. Lessons are well planned and very good use is made of resources to stimulate pupils' interest. The result is that the great majority of pupils across the school respond well, listen carefully, and show good concentration to complete their work. This was very evident in a Year 2 lesson about the festival of Diwali. Teachers have a good understanding of issues and themes of Christianity and other religions such as Islam and Sikhism. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on religious texts, both the viewpoints of a Methodist on the Bible and of a Muslim on the Qu'ran, were listened to with great interest and concentration. Pupils had been set homework previously to think of questions to ask afterwards, and these were used well by the teacher to lead a very good discussion of the different beliefs and customs that helped pupils to develop their own opinions and ideas. Similar sensitivity is evident in previous work on 'My box of treasures' by Year 6 pupils and in the work of Year 4 pupils on different places of worship.
145. The good teaching and learning in religious education are supported by a number of visits to local churches and other places of worship. For example, Year 1 pupils visited the church to enact a 'baptism' ceremony, and recorded their thoughts and feelings in a series of booklets. The local vicar has talked to Year 3 pupils about the different colours of the clothing he wears in church and what they mean. Very good use is made of artefacts to bring the subject alive for pupils of all ages, and teaching and learning is well supported by many bright, colourful and informative displays around the school. For example, Year 3 pupils have produced their agreed 10 commandments for their daily life in school. Across the school, all groups of pupils are encouraged to look at all aspects of different faiths, which results in pupils having a very positive viewpoint about other values and beliefs. ICT supports the subject satisfactorily when pupils, for example, study photographs of different religious artefacts.
146. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Both co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have helped to raise the profile of the subject across the school. The new policy and subject guidelines are providing a good framework for teaching and learning. Recent resources have had a positive impact on raising standards.