

INSPECTION REPORT

Hinchliffe Mill Junior and Infant School

Holmbridge, Holmfirth

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107658

Headteacher: Mrs B. Marshall

Reporting inspector: Mrs A. Soper
OIN 18148

Dates of inspection: 8th – 10th May 2001

Inspection number: 194376

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 5 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Waterside Lane
Holmbridge
Holmfirth
West Yorkshire
Postcode: HD9 2PF

Telephone number: 01484 222479

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs S. Wise

Date of previous inspection: 13th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18148	Alice Soper	Registered inspector	English Art and design Foundation stage Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
19335	Susan Dixon	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
29381	Anne Brangan	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography History Physical education Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
20692	Richard Evans	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hinchliffe Mill Junior and Infant School is situated eight miles from the town of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. The headteacher has been in post for less than one year. The catchment area contains private housing and a small council estate. The school is smaller than most primary schools. There are 92 pupils on roll, with slightly more girls than boys. Most pupils are from white backgrounds. There are no pupils who require support in learning English as an additional language. Thirteen pupils are on the school's register of special educational need. Of these, eight are in the later stages of the register, with three having Statements of Special Educational Need. This is higher than the national average. Children's attainment on entry is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, where standards are rapidly improving. There is a very good climate for learning, good teaching and very good leadership by the new headteacher. The governing body is proactive, providing very effective support for the school. The school's strengths and weaknesses have been astutely determined and there is an ongoing emphasis on further improvement. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- ◆ Standards are good and above average in religious education, history and physical education by the end of Key Stage 2.
- ◆ The quality of teaching is good in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- ◆ The curriculum is good at Key Stages 1 and 2, with very good extra-curricular provision. There is very good provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- ◆ There is good care for pupils and good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- ◆ The partnership with parents is very good.
- ◆ The headteacher provides very good leadership and the governing body is very effective.

What could be improved

- ◆ The provision for the foundation stage.
- ◆ The development of management roles by key staff, including the deputy headteacher.
- ◆ Standards in writing and information and communication technology.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997. Since then the school has had two changes in leadership and many of the issues raised have been, or are now being, addressed by the present staff, most of whom were not employed by the school at the time of the last inspection. Very good improvements have been made in the issues concerning teachers' subject knowledge of religious education and pupils' spiritual awareness, as reflected in

pupils' good development. The school has established good planning and tracking systems that ensure pupils, including those with higher prior attainment, are sufficiently challenged. The considerable improvement in the provision for information and communication technology is ensuring that pupils' achievements are improving, with attainment now being satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1. There has been a very good improvement in the quality of the school improvement plan, which now contains good detail. Governors now have very effective roles in the strategic management of the school. The teaching and learning policy is having a positive effect on teachers' practice, with most work providing good opportunities for pupils to investigate and to take responsibility for their learning. Issues from the last inspection have formed the basis for improvements. These have been skilfully extended following a careful audit of the school's provision and the school is well placed to effect further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	B	D	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	E	C	C	
Science	A	C	B	B	

The table shows that in 2000 pupils' performance at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics was satisfactory and in line with the national average and that for similar schools. Pupils attained good and above average results in science compared to the national average and that for similar schools. The table also indicates that there has been a variation in results over the last three years. Comparisons from year to year are unreliable due to the small numbers of pupils who undertake national tests each year.

Evidence from the inspection indicates that, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory overall in relation to their age and their prior attainment. A few pupils attain good standards, reflecting their higher prior attainment. There has been variable performance in national tests over the last few years. The impact of the school's drive to raise standards is reflected in pupils' good progress during the current year, particularly in writing, which is a continuing focus for improvement. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. Attainment in information and communication technology is improving through the school's greatly improved provision for the subject. Standards in some aspects have yet to reach a satisfactory level. Pupils attain well in relation to the agreed syllabus in religious education by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils have good knowledge of the Bible and life issues. Standards are good in history and physical education by the end of the key stage. Attainment is satisfactory in all other subjects.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain well in reading and satisfactorily in speaking and listening and writing. As in Key Stage 2, they attain well in history and in physical education.

Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory, with clear evidence of improvement being made due to the school's focus on its provision and the quality of teaching. At both key stages, there are good standards in observational work in art and in singing. In the foundation stage, children exceed the early learning goals in language and literacy and in early mathematics. They meet the early learning goals in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Most develop satisfactorily in the personal, social and emotional area of learning, but there are some weaknesses in the provision, which insufficiently promotes a balance between adult and child-initiated activities. This restricts children's growing independence and ability to make choices and decisions. In most lessons, some children have difficulty in maintaining concentration due to the organisation of lessons.

Good targets have been set, based on careful assessment. The school has introduced a system of projecting targets for individual pupils in English, mathematics and science and pupils' progress is monitored within this system. Across the school, pupils show increasing improvement in literacy and numeracy, which are identified priorities. History, particularly of the local area, is enthusiastically studied and pupils present their work well. Across the school, pupils achieve well in physical education, despite the limitations of indoor space. Similarly, pupils' singing is good across the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good overall. Pupils show respect and courtesy towards others.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. They have good relationships with each other and with adults in the school.
Attendance	Good. Some pupils are persistently late.

High expectations of behaviour and work are contributing effectively to pupils' achievements.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching is good in Key Stages 1 and 2. During the inspection, 21 per cent of teaching was very good, 45 per cent was good and 34 per cent was satisfactory. Teaching is consistently good in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The particular strengths in teaching include good planning and the effective use of time, support staff and resources. They also include good management of pupils and effective teaching methods that motivate and challenge pupils. In a

very few lessons, pace was insufficiently brisk and there was some ineffective management of some pupils. Across the school, literacy and numeracy are taught well.

Teachers use all opportunities to reinforce these skills across the curriculum. Assessment is used well to inform planning for pupils with differing prior attainment. There is good challenge for those with higher prior attainment and effective support for pupils with special educational needs. The strong emphasis placed on the quality of teaching and learning has a positive effect on pupils' achievements and on their improving standards. The quality of teaching in the foundation stage is satisfactory overall; learning is not always effective in the foundation stage for those children who are not yet ready to concentrate for sustained periods of time.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good quality and range of learning opportunities. There are very good extra-curricular activities that enhance learning. The foundation stage curriculum does not yet fully informed by national guidance.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Support is effective and individual education plans are good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is very good provision in this aspect. Pupils have a very good awareness of moral issues. Their social development is enhanced by many activities and they show good respect for feelings, values and beliefs.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is good care. All pupils are made to feel valued. Their achievements are celebrated. There are very good procedures for promoting good behaviour and good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic and personal development.

There is a very good partnership with parents. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Although clear messages are given to parents about the effect of holiday taking and lateness on their children's education, insufficient formality is given to addressing these problems. The foundation stage curriculum provides insufficient balance between adult and child-initiated activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a clear vision for school improvement. Co-ordinators' roles are being developed well. The deputy headteacher's management role is not yet fully established and this is a priority that is currently being developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They take a very active part in shaping the school's direction and have a very clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

The school's evaluation of its performance	There is good evaluation of performance. The school has accurately established areas for further improvement.
The strategic use of resources	There is good use of all available resources and the school has prioritised future development requirements well.

There is a good number of teaching and support staff. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, though there is a lack of storage space. The school hall has limited room for physical education and the computer suite and library areas provide limited space for learning. The headteacher's leadership is a strength. Supported by the staff and governors, the headteacher has established many initiatives aimed at raising the quality of the provision for pupils since being appointed. There is shared commitment to improvement and good capacity to succeed. The principles of best value are applied well and developments are efficiently managed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Their children like school. ◆ The school is well led and managed. ◆ Children are expected to do their best. ◆ The school staff are approachable. ◆ The school works closely with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A few parents feel the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and governors. Expectations are high and pupils respond well. Staff are approachable. The school works closely with parents, whose views are valued. Inspectors disagree with the comments about the lack of activities outside lessons. The school provides a wealth of such activities, including extra-curricular clubs and a wide variety of educational visits.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The previous inspection in January 1997 reported that standards of achievement were satisfactory in most subjects by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. They were stated to be satisfactory in English, mathematics, science, history and geography. Standards of achievement were seen to be good in music and physical education by the end of both key stages. Attainment in information and communication technology was unsatisfactory. In design and technology, design skills were unsatisfactory and attainment in religious education was also unsatisfactory. Attainment in art was good in the reception class and satisfactory elsewhere in the school. There were weaknesses in pupils' use of investigative skills and in developing independent learning. The key issues for improvement included raising standards in information and communication technology, religious education and design and technology. More challenge and improved opportunities for investigation and problem solving were seen to be required for pupils with higher prior attainment. At that time, the school was said to be beginning to address unsatisfactory attainment in information and communication technology and design and technology.

2. The school has had two changes of leadership since the last inspection and the new headteacher, with the support of governors and staff, has effected considerable improvement within a short time. There is clear evidence of rising standards in most subjects and the maintenance of good standards in physical education and in singing since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs now make good progress as a direct result of the good identification of their needs and effective support provided. Individual education plans show clear, measurable targets for success, with which pupils are familiar. This helps pupils to focus on objectives and to develop good self-confidence. Pupils with higher prior attainment, including more able pupils, now receive extension work that challenges their ability to reason and solve problems. Pupils show enthusiasm when posed with challenging tasks and develop independent learning skills effectively. They make good progress.

3. In the National Curriculum assessments in 2000, pupils' performance at the end of Key Stage 2 in English was unsatisfactory and below the national average, though average in comparison with similar schools. In mathematics, performance was satisfactory, in line with the national average and average compared to similar schools. Performance in science was good above the national average. It was good in comparison to similar schools. Due to the small cohorts, comparisons with national averages are unreliable. Over the last few years, pupils have achieved good standards in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 and sound standards in science by the end of both key stages. Over the same period, standards in English by the end of Key Stage 2 did not reflect expected results in relation to pupils' prior attainment. Mathematical performance was variable over the same period of time. Several factors influenced these results. These included the movement of pupils into the school in Key Stage 2, lack of appropriate guidance from schemes of work and low expectations of what pupils might achieve. The literacy and numeracy initiatives were not established. Following a careful analysis of performance in the current academic year, the school has appropriately identified areas in which pupils have been underachieving in literacy and numeracy. It has set effective procedures to improve standards, including focusing support and establishing literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology programmes. The religious education syllabus

is now firmly established. There is improved planning, teachers have higher expectations and there is an effective system for monitoring teaching and learning.

4. Evidence from the current inspection shows that pupils attain well and above levels expected for their age in reading by the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, some pupils with higher prior attainment achieve good standards in reading that are above those expected for their age, though standards are satisfactory overall. This reflects the prior attainment of the high number of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils make good progress in their speaking and listening skills, which are good by the end of Key Stage 2. Writing is satisfactory by the end of both key stages. Standards are improving as a result of the school's strong focus on ensuring that all aspects of the subject are given prominence across the curriculum. Pupils with higher prior attainment are challenged well and the quality of their writing is good.

5. In the lessons observed, pupils across the school achieved well in relation to their prior attainment as a direct result of well planned and delivered literacy lessons. Writing improvement is an ongoing priority and considerable success has been achieved since this was first identified at the start of this academic year. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, being fully included in all work. Those with Statements of Special Educational Need are successfully integrated and encouraged to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing. Their self-esteem is evident when they talk about their work with increasing self-confidence.

6. Standards in mathematics are satisfactory and as expected for pupils' ages by the end of both key stages. As for literacy, the school has only established the use of the numeracy schedule in the current academic year. Its impact is having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and on the improvement of standards. Pupils' achievements are improving, as seen from the scrutiny of work and their response in lessons is enthusiastic. Achievement in science is satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Pupils respond well to the improved opportunities for investigation and experimentation. Lessons often include imaginative and exciting scenarios that capture pupils' interest and enable them to develop secure understanding of concepts.

7. There has been a major focus on improving the quality of the provision for information and communication technology. All pupils regularly use the computer suite in the school hall. The scheme now ensures that pupils develop skills systematically. Teachers and the classroom assistant work closely together with each year group and pupils' achievements are rapidly improving. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain satisfactory standards, though these are not yet fully satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 2, due to the short time in which the provision has been put into place. The school has yet to ensure consistent use of information and communication technology in classrooms to enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum.

8. As another focus for improvement from the key issues of the last inspection, religious education lessons are now well planned and implemented, impacting well on standards. Pupils now achieve satisfactorily by the end of Key Stage 1 and well by the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have good knowledge of the Bible and listen attentively to others' views about life and its meaning.

9. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that attainment in art and design is satisfactory overall by the end of both key stages, with some examples of good and above average work, particularly in observational activities. The improved quality of display encourages appreciation of art and contributes well to pupils' creativity and cultural development. Design and technology

standards are satisfactory by the end of both key stages and show improvement since the last inspection. The improvement plan indicates that further work is to be undertaken to raise standards. Pupils' achievements are sound and they show secure understanding of the design process. Some opportunities are still missed for independent designing skills, such as where younger pupils all use a template for making puppets.

10. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in geography, showing secure knowledge of places and in-depth studies of features, such as rivers. They have good knowledge of the features of their own area, supported by visits to nearby places and lessons provided by visitors with a wealth of local knowledge. Pupils have a keen interest in history, including that of their own area. They achieve well by the end of both key stages. They know that there are different sources of information and the younger pupils in Key Stage 2 are becoming increasingly aware of the need to look critically at sources, to determine fact from opinion.

11. Pupils' achievement in music is satisfactory overall, with pupils displaying good singing ability. Their achievements reflect the school's commitment to providing a strong interest in culture and the specialist teacher's enthusiastic teaching. There is good scope for music to become a strength of the school. Resources are adequate, though instruments are of insufficient quality.

12. Physical education standards are good across the school. This is commendable, considering the limited indoor facilities. To compensate for the lack of space for gymnastics, pupils are encouraged to join the gymnastics club, where small groups can be accommodated. Pupils are fit and show good agility. They understand rules and play safely. Their response to lessons is good and they work hard to improve their performance in all aspects of the subject, including swimming.

13. Standards are improving in all subjects as a direct result of the commitment of all staff and governors. A considerable amount has been achieved within a short time, following the headteacher's appointment. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

14. Children in the foundation stage have a wide range of prior attainment and their development is good in some areas of learning. Overall, attainment on entry is satisfactory. Children are encouraged to settle to school routines and most acquire a sense of security, making good progress in developing confidence. Standards are good in relation to the early learning goals in the areas of language and literacy and early mathematics. They are satisfactory in all other areas of learning, though the organisation provides insufficient balance between child and adult-initiated activities. As a result, children have difficulty in concentrating and lack sufficient opportunities to make choices, initiate and investigate. Those with secure confidence make good progress, responding well to work that is part of the Key Stage 1 programme of study. The school has yet to fully adopt the principles of national guidance for the foundation stage, though this is identified as an area for improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils have good and often very good attitudes to their work. They come to school eager to learn. This has a positive effect upon their learning and creates a purposeful environment. Pupils respond well to challenging and stimulating questions and, mostly, they provide full and confident replies. For example, this was seen in a Year 5 and 6 religious education lesson where pupils offered imaginative and mature responses to issues surrounding inequality and

injustice. Pupils listen well to their teachers and to each other and instructions are followed quickly and quietly. Most pupils throughout the school work hard and maintain concentration throughout the school day. Most have satisfactory independent learning skills though they do not always have the opportunities to use these skills effectively. There are insufficient opportunities for children in the foundation stage to make choices. Pupils work together well as members of groups. The high value placed upon pupils and their achievements is seen in the attractive displays of work in the classrooms and when they share their work in lessons and assemblies.

16. Pupils behave well. This has a beneficial effect upon their learning and upon the school community as a whole. Pupils behave consistently well in lessons, assemblies and at break times. Pupils understand the school's expectations well and they proudly accept praise for good work and behaviour. Pupils treat the resources and equipment they use in a sensible way and take care when tidying up at the end of lessons. There is no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour. Pupils feel that there has been much improvement in behaviour recently and that any conflict that arises is effectively resolved in circle time and class discussion. One pupil has been excluded in the past year. This was supported by appropriate procedures.

17. The relationships amongst all members of the school community are very good. Adults in school present good role models and individual pupils are treated with care and respect. In turn, pupils are polite and helpful towards each other and to adults. Pupils of different ages work and play very well together. The "buddy" system that operates at lunch times provides good support for younger pupils. Older pupils adopt a mature approach to this role and display a caring and thoughtful approach to others.

18. Pupils' personal development is also very good. Pupils are encouraged to act responsibly and to consider the needs of others. They are given opportunities in lessons and assemblies to express their opinions and feelings and they grow in confidence as they progress through the school. A particular feature of the school is the close involvement of pupils in discussions about many aspects of school life, for example, with homework provision, changes to the school building and the development of the school grounds. Pupils are appreciative of this opportunity and are looking forward to further development of the school council.

19. Attendance rates are above the national average and are good. Most pupils usually arrive in good time although there is a significant amount of lateness by some pupils. Registration time is brief and efficient, leading promptly into the first lesson. Most parents provide the school with good information about absences that are largely due to childhood illnesses. There is a small number of parents who do not provide adequate explanation concerning absence and this has led to a rise in the number of unauthorised absences. For these pupils and those absent on holiday in term time, there is a detrimental effect upon their learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stages 1 and 2. It is satisfactory overall in the foundation stage, though a very good lesson was observed in language and literacy. Teaching was very good in 21 per cent of lessons observed, good in 45 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. Teaching is generally of good and very good quality in Key Stage 2, where teachers have secure subject knowledge. At present, the Year 1 and 2 class is taught by a supply teacher, whose valued support will continue until a new member of staff is appointed in the summer.

21. In the last academic year there have been changes of staff and reorganisation of responsibilities. One teacher has retired and another has moved from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. There have been three headteachers since the last inspection in 1997. The present headteacher has been in post for less than one year. Five teachers, including the present headteacher, from the total of seven teachers were not employed in the school at the time of the last inspection. At present, two part-time teachers are responsible for teaching the Year 5 and 6 class. The headteacher teaches groups of pupils from both key stages to support literacy and to provide teachers with opportunities for single year group teaching. A classroom assistant provides lessons in information and communication technology, supported by class teachers. The deputy headteacher teaches children in the foundation stage.

22. Strengths in the teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 include the consistency of approach towards planning. Since the appointment of the headteacher, a consistent approach to planning has been devised for both key stages to ensure continuity and progression. Lesson plans provide clear objectives, high expectations and reflect the school's aims of providing equality for all pupils. The careful audit of the school's provision has led to shared determination to raise standards of attainment and pupils' self esteem. The consistent approach used to motivate and maintain interest is inherent in planning. The literacy and numeracy strategies are now being used well as a basis for content, progression and continuity, though the school is in the early stages of their implementation. National guidance is being used well to support work in the foundation subjects. The good developments in planning are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils are enabled to use their prior knowledge and skills to acquire new learning. Those with special educational needs now have clear and measurable targets for improvement and their individual education plans are used effectively to inform teaching and learning. These pupils now achieve success in small, well-planned steps for development and their self-esteem and self-knowledge of their learning has been heightened.

23. Good use is made of time, resources and support staff in both key stages. Classroom assistants are fully aware of objectives and contribute effectively in most lessons. Time is managed well and pupils benefit from being given clear time limits for the completion of tasks. This contributes well to their developing self-responsibility. Most respond well to this challenge. For example, in the Year 5 and 6 class pupils responded enthusiastically when asked to devise more interesting scenarios from "dull" extracts of writing. Their achievements reflected their successful collaboration and effective use of the time allocated. Available resources are used efficiently, with particularly effective use being made of visits and visitors to enhance pupils' experiences. For example, professional rugby coaches contribute not only to pupils' learning in the sport but also provide encouragement to pupils to work hard in literacy, as a means of ensuring that they become efficiently literate adults. Pupils learn about their heritage through many visits, such as those to local art galleries and museums and through visits from local people who describe their earlier lives.

24. Teachers assess work carefully and use various methods of recording pupils' attainment and progress. These are effective in informing future work, though the school improvement plan has identified the need for further consistency in this aspect. Marking is good in the Year 5 and 6 class, providing clear guidance for ways in which pupils might improve their work. In some classes, opportunities are sometimes missed to guide further development, such as in highlighting more effective ways of connecting sentences. In Key Stage 2, teachers' good use of constructive comments encourages pupils to work to improve their performance. Examples include improving games' skills, where the Year 3 and 4 teacher encouraged evaluation and practice, resulting in good achievement by the end of the lesson. Similarly, praise was used well

to commend pupils with special educational needs' efforts in working towards their specific goals.

25. Pupils are generally managed well in both key stages. They respond well to the good use made of praise in most classes. Teachers show tolerance and good humour, which promotes good relationships and confidence amongst pupils. In a very few instances, pupils are less successfully managed such as in a Key Stage 2 science lesson, where a few continued to lack concentration and motivation. In the reception class, the management of children is often unsuccessful in maintaining concentration due to the organisation of activities. Although appropriate experiences are provided within most areas of learning, there is insufficient balance between child and adult-initiated activities, with limited use being made of foundation stage guidance to plan and organise experiences. This has a detrimental effect on children's ability to make choices, investigate and experiment from a wide range of both directed and selected tasks. Several children regularly become distracted and restless and make insufficient progress in some lessons. Whilst provision is appropriate for those children with higher prior attainment, who have developed confidence, the curriculum provided insufficiently caters for those who are not yet ready to manage the formality of some lessons.

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

26. The school's provision for the intellectual, physical and personal development of its pupils is good. The curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and religious education in accordance with the Kirklees locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2, religious education and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The allocation of time to the subjects is appropriate. This represents an improvement on the provision reported at the last inspection where weaknesses in information technology, the humanities and investigations in science were noted. The foundation stage curriculum is not yet fully informed by national guidance, particularly in providing appropriate balance between child and adult-initiated activities. There is insufficient opportunity for children to move spontaneously between indoor and outdoor play and there are limited large toys.

27. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The documentation of the planning of the curriculum is thorough and shows evidence of careful thought and collaboration between the staff and governors. The school has adapted well the nationally produced curricular framework. This ensures that the components of all subjects are taught and their inherent skills developed across the key stages. The curriculum is planned as a two-year cycle to accommodate the mixed-age classes. Although the year groups in each class follow a similar curriculum, teachers provide extension material appropriate for the older and higher attaining pupils. Teachers' planning of individual lessons shows clear objectives for pupils' learning and stimulating and often imaginative activities to overtake them.

28. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. A good policy for these pupils has been produced. The school has worked hard this year to accurately identify pupils' special educational needs and to ensure individual education plans are suitably detailed. These plans are readily available and reviewed every term. Parents are regularly invited into school to discuss the pupils' needs. An "open door" approach gives parents easy access to the headteacher and members of staff. The co-ordinator reports regularly to the governors and the special educational needs governor is very actively involved in supporting the provision.

29. The school has recently introduced a programme of personal, social and health education into the curriculum with its own scheme of work. This is taught both across the curriculum and in separate lessons. With the approval of the governors and parents, sex education is taught appropriately for the ages of the pupils. Parents will shortly be invited to review the materials the school will be using in this programme. Education in the use and abuse of drugs is also included in the scheme. Outside agencies are involved as appropriate in this work. The school is actively pursuing a "Healthy School" award. An arresting display in the hall demonstrates pupils' awareness of the danger to health of smoking.

30. The school improvement plan contains a detailed and costed programme of subject reviews and initiatives. There is also provision for staff development, including the monitoring of teaching, to raise teachers' expertise and confidence in teaching all subjects. This evidence suggests that the school is poised to make significant strides in raising the standards of pupils' achievement.

31. The school's homework policy is based on a weekly range of tasks. The school believes that pupils' own choice of non-school based activities is an important part of their development. Discussion with pupils reveals that they have a good diversity of homework tasks, that they appreciate the school's flexible approach and that their homework commitment is appropriate. There are close and supportive links with other schools, particularly within the "pyramid" structure based on the local high school. These help to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education. The schools liaise well in curricular matters and join together for activities such as the recent music project and sporting fixtures.

32. The school's good policy ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and opportunity to learn and make progress. The policy is strongly reinforced in the school's prospectus and in curriculum planning.

33. The school enriches the curriculum with a wide range of visits to places of historic, environmental and cultural importance. All classes have participated in the visits that have included Bretton Sculpture Park, Dewsbury Museum, Huddersfield Town Hall and Cannon Hall Farm. There have been many visitors to the school including storytellers, local historians, musicians, artists, theatre groups and the fire service. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, sporting clubs include gymnastics, football, rugby, rounders, cross-country, orienteering and dancing. The school participates in fixtures with other schools. Other school clubs include gardening, art, French, choir and instrumental group. Staff, parents and governors are all involved in these activities.

34. The last report criticised the school's provision for pupils' spiritual development whilst praising its moral, social and cultural development. The finding of the inspection is that overall the school's provision in all four areas is now very good. Assemblies fulfil all the requirements for acts of collective worship. The use of a lighted candle as a focus of reflection and pupils' reading of their own prayers gives them a strong sense of spirituality. This aspect of the daily assembly creates a receptive atmosphere for pupils' inner exploration. Religious education also provides spiritual development. In considering the parables of Jesus pupils readily transfer their meaning to their own experience. For example, after hearing the story of "The Prodigal Son", two young pupils apologised to each other for falling out. In their planning teachers note where opportunities for developing pupils' sense of wonder about the world should be taken.

35. Pupils have a strong understanding of the difference between right and wrong behaviour and relationships. Classroom rules agreed with the pupils are prominently displayed. The good relationships and behaviour in and out of the classroom demonstrate that pupils care for and respect the other members of the school community. Wider moral issues such as injustice and inequality form an important part of religious education. Environmental issues such as pollution are considered in the context of science and geography.

36. The school is a happy and inclusive community. Discussion with pupils indicates that they appreciate that in a small school close relationships are developed between pupils of all ages as well as with staff. A “buddy” system encourages older pupils to play with younger ones at playtime and lunchtime. The school council, with elected representatives from classes, enables pupils to put forward their views on the management and development of the school. Older pupils assume responsibilities willingly for such tasks as managing playtime equipment, preparing the hall for assembly, distributing registers and milk crates. There is a general willingness to be helpful in keeping the school tidy. The school fosters pupils’ sense of citizenship by organising such experiences as meeting the Mayor in Huddersfield Town Hall. In considering the culture of the Ancient Greeks in history pupils reflect on the introduction of democracy and what it means today. Visits outside school, especially the residential experience at Cliffe House, reinforce pupils’ social skills and interaction with each other and adults.

37. Local excursions and visits to the parish church give pupils an awareness of their own heritage. Members of the “sharing memories group” visit the school to share their own reminiscences of local history. The school’s emphasis on developing pupils’ musical and artistic skills encourages them to use their imagination and introduces them to the work of great musicians and artists. In religious education pupils learn about the culture and traditions of world faiths such as Islam and Judaism. Younger children, listening to a story from Kenya, learn about the animals, fruit and customs of that country. Pupils’ awareness of the multicultural society in which they live is being fostered by a link with a school with a large ethnic population. The school aims to arrange two-way exchanges with this school and establish “pen pal” links.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school has good arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils. In this small school, the pupils are all very well known and well supported by the very good relationships that exist. Health and safety procedures are good and these benefit from the close involvement of the governing body. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of their own safety and to act responsibly. There is a good child protection policy and appropriate written guidance is available for staff. All adults in school have suitable knowledge and awareness. Since the time of the last inspection the arrangements for the care and protection of the pupils has improved.

39. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils’ personal development are good. Pupils’ personal development is very well supported by the provision for social development and by the good opportunities offered to pupils to develop as responsible citizens. They are closely involved in discussions about school life and about their own feelings and achievements. Class teachers closely monitor each pupil’s personal progress.

40. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. Teachers are consistent in the use of praise and they provide clear messages about unacceptable behaviour, should any occur. Pupils understand the school’s expectations and rules well, reflecting their involvement in forming them. They are encouraged to

discuss their problems and resolve conflict in circle time. Pupils feel that the school's behaviour code provides them with security and that recently, behaviour has improved considerably.

41. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Attendance is closely monitored and the administrative arrangements are efficient. The school meets the statutory requirements with regard to the publishing of attendance figures and in the registration of pupils each day. There is an amount of holiday taking and lateness. Although clear messages are given to parents about the effect of this upon their children's education, insufficient formality is given to addressing these problems.

42. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Detailed records are maintained of test and assessment results for each pupil in the core subjects of English and mathematics. This information is carefully analysed and provides the base for the setting of whole school, class and individual targets. Each pupil's progress is carefully followed and expectations for the future are predicted. At present, assessment arrangements for the other subjects of the curriculum are satisfactory and are included in the school improvement plan's priorities for further development. Overall, good use is made of assessment information to inform the planning of the curriculum. The identification and ongoing monitoring of pupils with special educational needs is effective and efficient. At the time of the last inspection, the use of assessment information was inconsistent. The present situation represents an improvement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents' views of the school are very good. They are appreciative of the education provided for their children and of the many improvements that have occurred over recent months. In particular, they feel that the teaching is good and that their children are expected to work hard. Parents feel that the school is approachable and responsive and that it is well led and managed. Some parents are concerned about the adequacy of space in the school hall for the provision of physical education lessons. The inspection findings support all the parents' views.

44. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. Parents are welcomed into school and are closely involved in its life and their children's education. Despite some restrictions with the accommodation, parents are invited to regular celebration assemblies that are followed by an opportunity to see their children's work in the classrooms. Parents are invited to special events and workshops that provide good insight into the life of the school and their children's education. The relationships between the staff and parents are very good and all in school are readily accessible at the start and finish of each day. Parents have welcomed the increased opportunities that they have to be involved with the school and to provide their support.

45. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. Parents have responded very well to the many opportunities offered to express their ideas and opinions, such as with homework arrangements. A good number of parents offer to help in school, with class activities, swimming lessons, sports activities and extra-curricular clubs. Specialist skills are used well to enhance the curriculum. The Friends' Association provides strong support for the school. It holds a variety of fund-raising events that are well attended. Funds raised provide the school with welcome additional resources.

46. The quality of the information provided for parents is good. The school brochure, governors' report and newsletters are well written and keep parents well informed about the life of the school. Information provided to parents about the curriculum is conveyed through

workshops and regular opportunities to share their children's work. The day-to-day communication with parents is good. Information about pupils' work and progress is provided in satisfactory written reports and through consultation events. Written reports offer good information about pupils' achievements and areas for improvement in English, mathematics and science. At present, information about other areas of the curriculum and personal progress is brief. Plans to improve the amount and quality of information provided for parents this year are well advanced. This will include clear targets for improvement and pupils will make their own contributions to their reports.

47. The contribution that parents make to their children's learning at home and at school is good and has a positive effect on their progress. Parents receive good information about homework requirements and good guidance on how they can support their children's education at home. These arrangements are due to be reviewed, in consultation with parents, to bring further improvements to the school's partnership with parents. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The leadership of the headteacher newly appointed from September 2000, is very good in providing the school with clear education direction. The headteacher has undertaken a detailed audit of the school and is aware of what needs to be done to make further improvements. Literacy and numeracy are improving as a result of the school's focus on developing these. Staff work together well and have a shared purpose in achieving the school's aims and in providing pupils with a good quality education. Parents are pleased with the way these aims are reflected in pupils' achievements and personal development. The headteacher has established procedures for the tracking of pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy following classroom observations. The management role of the deputy headteacher is underdeveloped and the school is planning development training in management skills for her.

49. The school has established sound procedures for monitoring the curriculum. The distribution of subject responsibilities is not equitable, with the headteacher overseeing five subjects. Monitoring of the quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy has been carried out and monitoring of newly qualified teachers is established. Monitoring of teaching in other subjects is infrequent. Teachers' planning is monitored regularly by the co-ordinators. The headteacher is involved in teaching especially at Key Stage 2, providing additional sessions of extended writing to raise standards further. She also provides demonstration lessons in numeracy and encourages the classroom teachers to monitor the teaching to ensure productive dialogue.

50. The governing body gives very good support and is more actively involved in the management of the school than at the time of the previous inspection. The chair of governors is very supportive, working closely with the headteacher and making a very positive contribution to the life of the school. Together with the headteacher, governors have established clear intentions for school improvement and have put into place procedures that enable them to fulfil their responsibilities for strategic planning. There is an appropriate committee structure in place and there is a very good range of expertise among members.

51. The governing body is developing procedures for monitoring the work of the school, visiting lessons and observing teaching and learning. They feel well informed by the

headteacher, who discusses issues such as pupils' attainment and progress with them. Two governors are closely linked with the headteacher in setting and monitoring progress toward agreed objectives for performance management systems. Through their active involvement in school life they have very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school improvement plan is now an effective working document that provides for a regular audit and review of the work of the school and identifies appropriate priorities. This reflects a good improvement since the last inspection when the document did not reflect the school priorities and was identified as a weakness. All statutory requirements are met.

52. The school is well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. Staff development is managed well. Staff visit other schools to observe good practice and have built in reflection time to analyse future developments. The school has an effective system for performance management. Staff needs are identified and suitable provision is made for the professional development within the school improvement plan and budget.

53. There is a comprehensive policy of special educational needs and all the statutory requirements of the national Code of Practice are met. The funds allocated to support pupils with special educational needs are effectively used to meet these pupils' needs. Provision is well organised and covers all the various stages of need arrangements for referral. All staff are fully aware of these. The special educational needs governor liaises closely with the co-ordinator. Classroom assistants provide effective help and work well with the class teachers. Individual education plans are suitably detailed. The improvements in the provision are having a positive effect on the progress being made by these pupils.

54. Day-to-day financial administration is efficient and as a result the headteacher and governors have easy access to all the information necessary to ensure that finances are kept in good order. The budget is managed well and resources are carefully considered before purchase. The governing body is very effective in ensuring that all allocated money is spent well to fund the school's educational priorities and that pupils benefit. The finance committee of the governing body scrutinises the school's spending carefully and applies the principles of best value well in seeking services for the school. The school makes effective use of technology in its work.

55. Future planning to extend the accommodation has been approved. At present, the hall and mobile classroom used by upper Key Stage 2 are unsatisfactory. The hall is too small for whole school activities and limits some physical education lessons, for example, gymnastics. Overall the classroom space is adequate but there are few additional areas to support booster teaching. The library facilities are under used. Outside there are hard playing areas attractively marked with games for pupils of all ages. The grassed area is used extensively at playtimes and for physical education lessons. An attractive conservation garden is well tended by pupils, staff and volunteers. Pupils enjoy using this area for a quiet time.

56. Overall, learning resources throughout the school are satisfactory. There are few artefacts to complement religious education lessons and many library books are old. There are limited books for older pupils with special educational needs. Available resources are well cared for and easily accessible.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education provided, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- ◆ review the provision for children in the foundation stage by:
 - *using national guidance to improve the organisation and planning of activities;*
 - *providing improved balance between adult and child-initiated activities;*
 - *continuing to provide support for the teacher in developing these aspects;*
 - *improving resources and facilities to enable children to move spontaneously between indoor and outdoor activities;*

(paragraphs 14, 15, 25, 26, 58, 63, 64, 65 and 66)

- ◆ continue with the existing good programme for staff development by:

- *developing the management role of the deputy headteacher;*
- *further enhancing co-ordinators' roles in monitoring performance;*

(paragraphs 48 and 49)

- ◆ continue to focus on further raising standards in writing and information and communication technology by:

- *continuing to develop the existing good practice for improving pupils' skills;*
- *establishing a consistent handwriting scheme that promotes fluency from the early stages;*
- *developing the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.*

(paragraphs 7, 9, 15, 70, 75, 76, 83, 84, 86, 95, 98, 100, 105 and 120)

In addition to the key issues, the school should also include the following less important areas for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs: 11, 19, 41, 55, 56, 80, 113, 143 and 149:

- ◆ improved resources;
- ◆ procedures to improve punctuality.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	21	45	34	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	92
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

English as an additional language	Number of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	Number of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	4.1	School data	0.4
National comparative data	5.2	National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	8	4	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (90)	92 (90)	92 (90)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (90)	92 (90)	92 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

As the number of boys and girls undertaking the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were both less than 10 then only the overall school percentage results are recorded.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	6	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (55)	77 (58)	85 (75)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (67)	77 (67)	77 (75)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

As the number of boys and girls undertaking the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were both less than 10 then only the overall school percentage results are recorded.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	79
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.4 : 1
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	135

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	193,360
Total expenditure	187,910
Expenditure per pupil	2,292
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,113
Balance carried forward to next year	7,563

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	92
Number of questionnaires returned	39

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	18	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	72	21	5	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	31	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	38	5	0	8
The teaching is good.	67	33	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	33	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
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.	74	26	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	77	21	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	26	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	49	13	0	12

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Personal, social and emotional development

57. Children in the foundation stage are taught in the reception classroom by the class teacher. There is a great variation in pre-school experience. Early assessments show a wide range of achievement amongst the 11 children and overall their attainment on entry is average. All children begin school in September, with the youngest attending part-time for the first term. The school provides care and security and most children settle with ease into school routines. Older pupils are considerate and understanding with the youngest children and help them to develop confidence in their social skills, such as when including them in play at break times. The strong personal, social and health education programme helps children to consider themselves, rules, responsibilities and relationships. Children show independence in their personal hygiene and routines, such as changing for physical activities. They make choices easily when offered opportunities to do so. In these aspects, children's personal, social and emotional development is good.

58. Observations of lessons during the inspection showed that whilst most children develop appropriate confidence and self-control, some have difficulty in sharing, taking turns and in concentrating for sustained periods. For example, some children showed reluctance to share resources when investigating floating and sinking objects. Some frequently became restless and lost concentration during lesson introductions, such as in mathematics and literacy lessons. In some lessons, children had insufficient opportunity to discuss matters of interest or subsequent tasks. The organisation insufficiently balances opportunities for both child and adult-initiated activities. This has an adverse impact on children's developing independence, responsibility and skills of enquiry.

Communication, language and literacy

59. Children attain well in early reading and writing skills, exceeding the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. Most communicate their ideas, answer clearly and hold sustained dialogues with others. A few children have yet to develop confidence and to talk in clear sentences. Children recognise many familiar words and some read very well for their age. They understand and recognise the way words can be built by blending letters together. For example, they build three letter words confidently and begin to recognise patterns such as "ch" in some words. Good reinforcement of children's reading was seen during a lesson in information and communication technology, where they learned about the links between printed stories and an audio book. Children subsequently undertook role-play, which successfully reinforced their understanding of the links between spoken and written English.

60. Children who read aloud from their books to inspectors read accurately and showed good understanding of the story. Those with higher prior attainment read accurately and expressively and anticipated the meaning of unfamiliar words by using the context efficiently and effectively. Those with lower prior attainment recognised some familiar words and letters and retold the story, though their reading was hesitant. Reading is taught well. Children's letter and word recognition skills are systematically developed. The teacher uses resources, including big books, effectively to develop children's knowledge and understanding of different types of writing. Children respond well, showing enjoyment of stories and understanding of ways in which

information is represented in print. Books are regularly taken home and children are encouraged to read from a wide variety of reading resources, which contributes well to their good progress.

61. In their writing, most children form letters to make legible words and write a simple sentence. Those with higher prior attainment spell common words accurately and independently. They construct a few sentences to tell a simple story. Those with lower prior attainment begin to write familiar words to accompany a picture. The teaching of writing is mostly effective. Most tasks are appropriately adapted to meet children's differing prior attainment though in one instance, when using the story, "The Three Little Pigs" as a focus for labelling a "Wanted" poster, the task was too difficult for those with lower prior attainment. These children sought and received considerable help but some remained confused about what was expected from them. Several children in the class have yet to hold their pencils correctly to ensure a comfortable writing grip.

Mathematical development

62. Children achieve well in relation to the early learning goals in mathematics. They know and use numbers up to 20, count on in two's and begin to understand the concept of odd and even amounts. In a lesson observed, children confidently recited numbers of "fat sausages" forwards and backwards within 10 and show good understanding of "1 less" and "1 more". They were effectively motivated by activities such as calculating numbers of apples on a tree, working out how many were left when one fell off. Children understood pairs, such as pairs of socks and shoes and began to recognise that one left over is an odd amount. Most children recognise number patterns, simple two and three-dimensional shapes and match and sort similar and different objects. Those with higher prior attainment work confidently on tasks involving pairs and odd and even numbers. Children with lower prior attainment develop sound addition and subtraction skills using numbers up to 20, receiving effective help from the classroom assistant.

63. There is conscientious teaching with many strengths. Work is planned well for mathematics, using a recently adopted planning format that provides appropriate information to inform teaching. This includes clear adaptation of tasks that cater for children's differing prior attainment. Work is carefully built upon to ensure continuity and progression. Introductions are relevant and well planned but some children lack self-control and call out, rather than take turns to answer questions. Consequently, the effectiveness of explanations and discussions is often diminished by time taken to reinforce rules of acceptable behaviour. This is also seen in introductory work to activities in the other areas of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. Children have secure knowledge and understanding of the world, meeting the early learning goals for their age. They investigate materials such as wooden objects and are encouraged to use their senses to describe their features. For example, children felt hidden objects and described their shape, texture and size. They used sawdust, wood shavings and wooden lollipop sticks to make a collage and talked about their differences. Children understand the similarities between themselves and others and understand that human beings, animals and plants grow and develop over time. The school garden provides a good resource for children to learn about the natural world. Children are aware of technology, such as the telephone, washing machine and computers in the world about them. They understand that these are controlled and that they operate using electricity. Children know that a variety of tools are used for different purposes. Through stories, visits and visitors, children learn about different

cultures and beliefs. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Whilst the teacher provides a range of learning activities to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world, the classroom lacks a wide range of readily accessible investigative sources. Children's experiences are limited to those selected by the teacher. This restricts the extent to which children make choices, initiate and investigate.

Physical development

65. Children's physical development is satisfactory. They show good co-ordination and control when using small equipment such as quoits, for example to balance these on their elbows and knees. Children's movement is good as seen at play, where they display fitness and good co-ordination. They handle small tools, such as scissors and glue spreaders with appropriate dexterity. When given the opportunity to use water, children practise skills such as pouring and filling containers, helping them to become adept in other everyday tasks such as pouring their own drinks. Water is not available for daily use in the classroom. In an indoor physical education lesson observed, children demonstrated their skill in using small equipment but the lack of space in the hall severely restricted their opportunity to carry out energetic bursts of running. Some activities were inappropriate in relation to the space available and were insufficiently well managed. The aims of encouraging imagination and awareness of space were insufficiently achieved. Children lack facilities and large apparatus for outdoor play and opportunities for spontaneous movement between indoor and outdoor play.

Creative development

66. Children's creative development is satisfactory overall. In art and design children show good observational skills, such as seen in their drawings and paintings of branches of blossom and hyacinths. In a lesson seen, children successfully identified the different results produced by painting on various kinds of paper. The Three Little Pigs' house provides opportunities for children to undertake role-play, when time is provided. Children's creative development is supported well by the school's provision for music. The planning and organisation of activities insufficiently provides freedom for children to develop their own ideas, limiting their ability to integrate their creativity into their own work. Although new skills are taught effectively, there is insufficient opportunity for children to make choices or to benefit from an aesthetically interesting classroom environment.

67. The school is appropriately developing the provision for the children in the foundation stage. Good advice has been provided for improving planning and this is helping to provide clarity to learning objectives for children with differing prior attainment. Similarly, records are being maintained efficiently to highlight children's progress in the early areas of learning. As part of the school's improvement plan, the class teacher will also continue to receive support in developing her expertise in organising and managing the provision for children in the foundation stage.

ENGLISH

68. In 2000, pupils' attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 was good and above average and good in comparison with similar schools. Performance in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 was very high in comparison with the national average and compared to similar schools. In the same year, attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 2 was satisfactory and in line with the national average. It was average in comparison with similar schools. Comparisons with

the national average are unreliable due to the small numbers of pupils undertaking national assessments in Year 2 and Year 6. A study of results over the last three years shows that pupils' performance in reading and writing was good by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' attainment in English by the end of Key Stage 2 did not reflect expected results, in relation to pupils' earlier attainment. The school has identified factors including low expectations and lack of sufficiently clear guidance as having contributed to underachievement. Pupils with special educational needs were not sufficiently identified and those with higher prior attainment were insufficiently well challenged. The Literacy Strategy was not established. The school's careful analyses of pupils' performance have instigated several initiatives to improve the overall provision for English and to improve standards. Evidence from the inspection shows that these developments are having a positive impact on pupils' achievements.

69. At the time of the last inspection, pupils attained satisfactory standards in English by the end of both key stages. There were weaknesses in some elements, including Key Stage 1 pupils' lack of strategies for reading unfamiliar words and inability to locate books in a library. In Key Stage 2, pupils had limited understanding of drafting and editing work. Learning tasks lacked interest and challenge and marking insufficiently guided pupils and parents on ways in which to improve. There was a lack of consistency in the use of reading records, reading schemes and parental involvement in reading at home.

70. Evidence from the current inspection shows that Key Stage 1 pupils make effective use of a range of reading strategies. When faced with unfamiliar words, they use their knowledge of letter patterns and predict likely words by using the context. They know that there is a classification system, though the school has yet to develop systems for pupils to acquire efficient and effective retrieval skills through regular use of the library. Pupils in Key Stage 2 now have firm understanding of drafting and editing their writing. Reading records are used consistently across the school and parents are fully involved in reading homework. The reading scheme remains a focus for further improvement. The school plans to enhance the existing resources to provide a wider reading diet for pupils.

71. Since the last inspection there have been two changes in leadership of the school. The present headteacher has successfully established several initiatives to improve standards, with the full support of governors and staff. Evidence from the current inspection shows that reading is good by the end of Key Stage 1, with writing being satisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are satisfactory in English. In both Years 2 and 6, standards reflect the prior attainment of pupils. They reflect the high number of pupils with special educational needs and those who require and receive additional literacy support. Observations of lessons show that the strong focus on literacy is having a positive effect on pupils' progress, including that of pupils with special educational needs. The literacy schedule is still being established, having only been introduced in the current year, following the headteacher's appointment. Pupils with special educational needs have also only been effectively identified in the current year. Careful analyses of pupils' attainment are now being used to determine areas of focus.

72. Speaking and listening skills are satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Pupils answer questions clearly and read aloud to others with appropriate confidence. For example, in a lesson involving the study of information books, pupils confidently answered questions about use of the contents and index pages in books. During lesson conclusions, where pupils are encouraged to discuss their completed tasks, they express their views and share ideas effectively, such as in a mathematics lesson where pupils discussed their strategies for solving problems. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop good speaking and listening skills in most lessons, supported by teachers' consistent encouragement of reasoning and questioning. For example, Year 4 pupils listened

intently to introductory explanations about writing alternative endings to a story. They confidently shared ideas, discussing effects such as “cliff hanger” and “twist in the tale” and suggested a good range of effective vocabulary that would interest the reader. Older pupils sensibly discuss ways of linking ideas in sentences, such as when learning about persuasive writing. Those with higher prior attainment discuss phrases, techniques and ways of composing persuasive writing very well. Older pupils have yet to fully become confident in discussing matters that involve self-revelation, such as in some personal and social education activities.

73. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in speaking and listening. Teachers and classroom assistants ensure pupils are fully included in discussion, questioning and answering tasks. In one example, older pupils successfully analysed different kinds of writing layouts and talked about their purposes. Individual and group support is effective. Classroom assistants and volunteers encourage pupils with special educational needs to listen carefully. They guide, explain and use good questioning skills to ensure understanding.

74. In reading, pupils in Key Stage 1 develop good accuracy and fluency. They retell stories well and show increasing understanding of implicit meanings in a story. Those with higher prior attainment read aloud expressively and with good intonation. Pupils use a range of strategies to gain meaning, such as predicting and anticipating what might happen next. They know the differences between fiction and non-fiction and that information is presented in many different formats. For example, when reading the big book, “What was it like before Electricity,” pupils showed good understanding of its presentation by answering questions accurately. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to read a variety of texts for a range of purposes. They are acquiring good understanding of the ways in which writing is organised and methods used by authors to engage the reader. The good quality of the teaching is having a strong impact on pupils’ knowledge and use of effective reading and writing strategies. Pupils’ performance in reading is improving rapidly. Overall attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 2 reflects the high proportion of older pupils with special educational needs in literacy.

75. Pupils’ writing is satisfactory at the end of both key stages. This does not reflect lowering standards but the prior attainment of the pupils in Years 2 and 6. From the scrutiny of work and observations of lessons, pupils across the school make good progress in writing stories, with ideas being developed well. Pupils use punctuation with increasing accuracy and develop more complex ways of connecting ideas in sentences. This reflects the effectiveness of the priority being given to the development of writing skills over the last year. Pupils throughout the school write for an increasing range of purposes, using a variety of formats. In the early part of Key Stage 1, writing has yet to be consistently punctuated. By Year 2, those with higher prior attainment include dialogue, such as seen in pupils’ alternative endings for the story of “Little Red Riding Hood”. Most pupils use connectives such as “because, then” and “so” to extend sentences. Few have yet to use more complex methods of connecting ideas. Handwriting is still printed, though the school is introducing a scheme to promote improved fluency from the early stages.

76. At Key Stage 2, pupils are making good progress in writing for a range of purposes. They are learning effectively about layout, such as the use of paragraphs, and are benefiting from good, constructive criticism about the quality of their work. For example, younger pupils in the key stage were encouraged to consider their intended audience when devising a letter of complaint. The teacher’s clear introduction provided a good model for pupils’ subsequent task. Pupils learned to pay attention to the length of sentences, formality and their choice of appropriate vocabulary. The results reflected secure understanding of the task and most pupils

wrote appropriately. Punctuation is improving, though not always secure, and a few pupils continue to confuse tenses.

77. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 are similarly making good progress in most aspects of writing. Their improvements reflect the strengths of the teachers in developing skills systematically and in providing well-devised tasks with appropriate challenge for all pupils. Extension work is provided by the headteacher, concentrating on specific writing skills. A very successful example of promoting writing fluency was seen. Here, pupils studied narrative writing, considering ways in which the use of dialogue enhances mood, provides depth to a story and accordingly engages the reader. Pupils were encouraged to evaluate methods, work collaboratively and use their previous learning to contribute to their writing. This resulted in good use of various techniques, such as using alliteration to enhance their writing. Most achieved good results containing imaginative ideas. Similarly, in a lesson about persuasive writing, pupils responded well to the task of writing to a newspaper. They developed their argument well, using appropriate style and genre. Spelling, handwriting and sentence structure were satisfactory. A few pupils showed very good understanding of style, such as using rhetorical questions to enhance their work.

78. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in literacy across the school. Careful planning and support ensure that most pupils achieve successfully in well adapted activities. Additional tuition is effectively given by teachers, classroom assistants and volunteers. Pupils discuss their targets and are encouraged to develop independence.

79. The quality of teaching is good. The school is working hard to implement national guidance for literacy and planning shows appropriate content and progression across the school. Most teachers have good subject knowledge. Work is closely matched to pupils' prior attainment and teachers adapt work carefully to provide appropriate challenge for all pupils. Effective marking is undertaken in most classes, though the quality of constructive comments is at its best in the Year 5 and 6 class. Here, teachers highlight and describe clearly what needs to be done to further improve work. In some classes, opportunities to guide improvement are sometimes missed. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace and use a range of successful teaching strategies, including instruction, demonstration and questioning. In a very few lessons, there is less variety in methodology, resulting sometimes in pupils losing concentration and interest. Literacy is effectively promoted across the curriculum, particularly where teaching approaches include the effective use of discussion, reading and writing. Homework is used appropriately to reinforce learning. Pupils learn spellings and regularly read at home. Pupils' achievements are suitably monitored and recorded. The use of assessment is satisfactory and continues to be a focus for further improvement. Portfolios of work are being developed to provide further guidance on judging attainment.

80. The subject is led well by the co-ordinator who has had responsibility for English for less than one year. The whole school commitment to raising standards in literacy is supported by the effective use of good systems that have been recently established to monitor and evaluate practice. Many developments have been initiated successfully within a very short time. There are many good features, including the establishment of booster groups, additional literacy support and extension work and accurate analyses of the literacy needs of pupils with special educational needs. Classroom assistants, governors and other volunteers provide valuable additional support for pupils and teachers. There are clearly prioritised areas for further improvement, including the enhancement of reading resources and the further improvement of assessment systems. At present, the school has an insufficient range of books with high interest

and appropriate readability levels for older pupils with lower prior attainment in reading. Regular use of the school library has yet to be effectively developed as a resource for independent research. The improved quality of displays in the school contributes well to resources for promoting literacy.

MATHEMATICS

81. In the 2000 National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils attained very good standards that were well above the national average and well above that for similar schools. In the same year, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was satisfactory and in line with the national average and in comparison with similar schools. Small numbers of pupils undertake national assessments and comparisons with national averages are unreliable. Inspection findings show that attainment at the end of both key stages is satisfactory. Standards are rising due to the good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the priority given to the subject. Over the past three years there has been variation in performance but results are now improving. The school has set targets for improvement in pupils' attainment and is developing strategies to help achieve these targets. A tracking system has been implemented to help underachieving pupils improve.

82. Progress is good in most aspects of the subject across both key stages, including that of pupils with special educational needs. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements. The clear structure is helping teachers to focus pupils' attention on the important mathematical ideas. Pupils like this approach and bring positive attitudes to their work. This is an improvement since the last report where the progress of more able pupils was unsatisfactory. Those with higher prior attainment now receive good challenge.

83. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in acquiring an understanding of basic number and number patterns. They are able to sequence numbers correctly, recognise mathematical shapes and can measure appropriate units. They show skill when estimating, solving numerical problems, recording and interpreting data using graphs. They understand subtraction as the inverse of addition and division as the inverse of multiplication. They recognise and can name two and three-dimensional shapes and understand what a line of symmetry is. While most pupils are willing to try and answer the teacher's questions, a few have difficulty in understanding mathematical concepts and therefore lack confidence when explaining the reasons for their answers.

84. Year 3 and 4 pupils build on previous knowledge learnt at Key Stage 1. For example, they count in larger numbers up to 1000. They use a variety of methods when carrying out problems involving the four rules of number. Pupils enjoy their oral work. They are eager to answer questions and help demonstrate how to work out problems on the board. The older pupils in the key stage are gaining confidence in using more complicated numbers. They know how to work out percentages and understand the correlation between decimals, percentages and fractions. A very good lesson was seen where this correlation was demonstrated using a pie chart. Pupils know the difference between line and bar graphs and the importance of using line graphs for precise information. Information and communication technology is underdeveloped to support learning in mathematics across both key stages.

85. Pupils' work in mathematics makes a good contribution to their literacy skills as they learn to read problems and follow written instructions. Pupils enjoy mathematics, invariably work hard and sustain keen interest. This positive approach creates a good atmosphere for learning.

Most pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. They work well individually, in pairs and in larger groups. They use the available resources confidently and responsibly. Very good relationships are established in all classes between teachers and pupils.

86. The teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. It is good at Key Stage 2 with some very good teaching being seen in the later part of the key stage. All teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lessons are well planned, showing clear objectives and appropriate activities. Where the quality of teaching is very good, pupils are encouraged to recall prior learning and to discuss their work using suitable mathematical terms. For example, the older pupils use mathematical terms such as, vertical axis and consecutive integers, quite naturally when answering questions or explaining their strategies. Regular work in mental mathematics is a consistent feature of the teaching at both key stages and contributes to the good performance achieved by most pupils. Where teaching was less successful, pupils had difficulty in understanding the concepts and these were not always fully clarified by the teacher. Pupils' work is assessed conscientiously, with some very good marking being undertaken in the later part of Key Stage 2. This provided detailed comments on the quality of work and on ways in which pupils might make further improvements. To support assessment, the school is compiling portfolios in numeracy for further guidance.

87. The numeracy policy was approved by the governing body in March 2001. The scheme of work is based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Half-termly schedules showing teaching objectives are broken down into units of study. The subject is effectively co-ordinated with teachers' weekly planning being monitored. Teaching is regularly monitored by the headteacher. Good links have been established between the governing body and the staff. The nominated governor for numeracy has monitored lessons and reported back to the headteacher and class teachers. Many out of date resources have been replaced since last year and now the subject is satisfactorily resourced.

88. Numeracy workshops for parents were offered last term. Only a few parents came regularly to these workshops and benefited from learning about how mathematics is being taught to their children.

89. Since last September very positive changes in the school's approach to mathematics have clearly established a course for further improvement. The management, planning and monitoring of the subject have improved greatly since the time of the last inspection.

SCIENCE

90. In 2000, teacher assessments showed that pupils' achievement was close to the national average by the end of Key Stage 1. In the same year, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was good and above the national average. It was good in comparison with similar schools. Evidence from the inspection shows that at the end of both key stages attainment is satisfactory, reflecting pupils' prior attainment. In both key stages, significant numbers of pupils are achieving well. Pupils' achievements over the past few years have been similarly maintained. The small numbers of pupils involved in the annual national tests and teacher assessments make comparison with national statistics unreliable.

91. At Key Stage 1 pupils gain a good knowledge of how electrical circuits work. In an imaginative activity they join hands in a circle, with the teacher acting as a "battery" and a pupil as a "buzzer". The "battery" simulates an electric current by passing a squeeze from one hand to

the next, eventually activating the “buzzer”. When a “switch” loosens hands the pupils quickly recognise that the circuit is broken and “electricity” cannot reach the “buzzer”. The pupils successfully transfer this learning to the making of real circuits with wires, batteries, bulbs, buzzers and switches. They are very obviously pleased when their experiment works! Some pupils draw pictures of their circuits. Higher attaining pupils study diagrams of open and closed circuits and correctly decide which will cause the bulb to light.

92. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a good knowledge of the life cycles of plants. They understand the various ways in which seeds are dispersed and what is necessary for them to germinate. Examining different flowers, they correctly named the parts involved in the fertilisation and seed production, recognising those that have a male or female function. Year 5 pupils accurately draw and label diagrams of the flowers. Year 6 pupils write group summaries of their investigations, which they then carefully explain and demonstrate to their younger classmates.

93. Younger pupils in the key stage, also studying plant life, devise good investigations into what plants need in order to grow. For example, they plan a careful test of how much water a plant needs. Working in groups, they carefully measure different quantities of water which will be given to plants at regular intervals over the next weeks. They measure the plants so that their growth can be calculated. The pupils prepare a grid in which to collate and record their findings. They make predictions about the outcome of the experiment. The precise measuring of the water and plants makes a good contribution to their mathematical skills.

94. In all the lessons seen pupils achieved their learning objectives well. Pupils with special educational needs participated fully in all activities, contributed to discussion and produced results comparable with the rest of the class. Scrutiny of pupils’ books shows that they make sound progress across both key stages. The books demonstrate a good range of knowledge, reflecting the different aspects of the science curriculum. In Key Stage 1 younger pupils make satisfactory progress in recording their observations in pictures, diagrams and tables. For example, they sort animals into categories and draw diagrams of pushing and pulling activities in their physical education lessons. Older pupils write about their findings, for example, the sounds they heard on a “listening walk”. Most write in complete sentences.

95. At the beginning of Key Stage 2 there is good development in pupils’ recording of investigations, which they write up using a scientific format. Pupils show that they have acquired knowledge of what constitutes a “fair test”. They increasingly state their reasons for their predictions and ideas. Older pupils record their findings in various forms such as graphs and tables. There is no evidence of the use of computers to aid this work.

96. Nearly all pupils are very responsive and interested in their science lessons. A very small number of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 find sustained concentration and perseverance difficult but they do not distract others from their work. Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour are good. The emphasis on learning through investigation and experiment helps them to work with enthusiasm and purpose. Pupils enjoy this approach and are keen to see whether their predictions are borne out. They frequently work in groups, where they share ideas and equipment readily and sensibly.

97. The teaching of science is good. It is well supported by a good scheme of work based on nationally published material, well adapted to suit the needs of the school’s mixed-age classes. The previous report found that there was insufficient investigative learning by pupils. This deficiency has been thoroughly redressed. Teachers devise imaginative activities that often allow pupils to design their own investigations, such as in the plant growth experiment. Teachers

plan their lessons well, showing clear objectives and appropriate activities. Their planning is greatly assisted by the good assessment procedures that record individual pupils' ongoing attainment.

98. Teachers carefully prepare resources of materials and written work. For example, pupils studied the parts of flowers from real and artificial plants and an enlarged, sectioned model which clearly showed the various components. This thorough preparation has a strong impact on the effectiveness of pupils' learning. Teachers successfully manage their lessons. The good pace and balance of activities maintains pupils' concentration and interest well and ensures that no time is wasted. Although the pupils in the mixed-age classes follow a common curriculum, teachers provide extension work for older pupils and those of higher attainment. This is not sufficiently developed through pupils' written work. The classroom assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. They very effectively help the pupils in their practical and written work, enabling them to achieve good results.

99. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator oversees the teachers' planning and compiles a record of teachers' evaluations of the topics. She plans to monitor teaching later this term. The stock of resources is being steadily extended. The co-ordinator's aims are to consolidate the investigative approach to teaching and learning and to integrate the use of information and communication technology as pupils' skills develop.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

100. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is satisfactory and in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is not fully in line with national expectations, although some individual pupils have well developed skills because of access to computers at home. Most pupils have yet to understand how to interpret and questioning findings. The improved provision is having a positive effect on raising standards though these pupils are still working to reach levels of work that are appropriate for their age. At the beginning of Key Stage 2, pupils are achieving satisfactory skills and results.

101. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of how to retrieve information. They know how to use the index of an information book and have learned that key words can similarly be used to locate information from a computer database program. Given a number of questions on electricity and nature, the pupils successfully decide on the key words and locate appropriate information which they read to the class. Their keyboard skills are good and they understand and use correct vocabulary such as, click on, CD-ROM, linking icon and quick search. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and assistants in developing their understanding and skills. They make good progress in the lesson. Younger pupils in the key stage also learn how to sort and classify by using key words. In an imaginative game, pupils used key words to classify and distinguish different groups in the class.

102. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in learning about spreadsheets. Recalling previous learning they show good understanding of how to create a spreadsheet, using terms such as, column, cell and formula. In a good lesson they successfully used a spreadsheet to solve a problem involving addition and subtraction of amounts of money. Pupils quickly and correctly entered the variable data on to the spreadsheet and, using the formula they had learnt, totalled the various columns. One pupil devised a further, similar formula for adding up all the columns. Younger pupils in the key stage know how to store and successfully retrieve

information from the computer. They understand and use terms such as, file and field. They correctly devise questions with which to elicit the information they require and to eliminate unwanted information.

103. The practical approach and interesting tasks stimulate pupils' motivation. They work hard and are anxious to learn and make progress. Their attitude and behaviour in lessons are consistently good. Pupils are making good progress in their lessons so that during this year, there has been a marked acceleration in their computer skills and understanding of the computer as an information resource, a calculating tool and an aid to literacy.

104. The previous report found that pupils' attainment in all aspects of information technology capability was below average, with too few opportunities to learn and practise skills. The school has worked very hard to ensure that pupils develop their skills and knowledge and receive their full entitlement to the whole information and communication technology curriculum. Recent innovations have accelerated the effectiveness of teaching and learning. These have included the development of a comprehensive scheme of work, based on nationally available material, training of the headteacher and a classroom assistant and the establishment of a computer suite. Every year group now receives a weekly lesson in computer skills, ensuring that each pupil has the opportunity to spend a good proportion of time at the computer.

105. The quality of teaching seen was satisfactory overall. The teaching is a shared process between the trained classroom assistant and the class teacher. This opportunity for the adults to work with small groups of pupils is an important factor in their good progress. Supported by the good scheme of work, teaching is well planned and securely delivered. The good progress made by pupils in developing their computer skills is not yet effectively deployed across the curriculum. The school recognises this and has made it a priority in the information and communication technology action plan. The school also plans to improve the accommodation for the computer suite, which is currently housed in very cramped conditions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

105. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the expectations of the Kirklees agreed syllabus. At the end of Key Stage 2 it is above the expectations of the syllabus. This finding represents a significant improvement since the previous report which found that standards of attainment were below national expectation throughout the school.

106. In a good lesson in Key Stage 1 pupils discussed the parable of "The Prodigal Son". They knew that the parables told by Jesus were stories with an underlying moral meaning. The pupils considered the feelings of each person in the story. They went on to discuss their own experiences, for example, of friends falling out and making up.

107. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils discuss the American civil rights leader Martin Luther King. This work forms part of their study of the lives and work of various missionaries, including St. Paul and Mother Teresa. The pupils show a good understanding of what issues were involved in the segregation of races in America. In a very good discussion the pupils analysed the feelings of both the privileged and underprivileged people in American society before the civil rights campaign, led by Martin Luther King. The pupils argue very strongly for justice and equality of all people. They read extracts from his famous "I have a dream" speech with passion and conviction. One pupil describes the speech as containing "powerful language", whilst another uses the word "emotive".

108. Pupils with special educational needs participate fully in discussions. They are well supported in lessons by the special assistants and make good progress in their knowledge and understanding and in recording work.

109. Scrutiny of their books and discussion with pupils shows that they make good progress, particularly at Key Stage 2. Pupils have a good knowledge of Christian festivals, as representing various stages in the life of Jesus. Key Stage 1 pupils write and draw pictures about various celebrations such as birthdays, baptisms and harvest. They write their own versions of the Christmas story and parables. The quality of their work is satisfactory. A good display of work at the lower end of Key Stage 2 shows pupils' understanding of the events leading up to the Crucifixion of Jesus and Easter Day. Older pupils compare worship buildings and practices from Christianity, Islam and Judaism. All pupils compose prayers that are often used in assemblies. Pupils have a good understanding of the Bible as a collection of different books and write effectively about Jesus' parables and teaching.

110. Pupils' willingness to discuss the issues raised in lessons and the quality of most of their written work shows a positive interest in the subject. In their discussions they demonstrate that they have strong moral principles about injustice and right relationships. They listen carefully to each other and value each other's views and opinions. Their attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good and sometimes excellent as in the lesson discussing Martin Luther King.

111. The teaching of religious education in the lessons observed was good and sometimes very good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, prepare resources well and make the lessons interesting and enjoyable. This motivates the pupils and produces strong and individual responses from them. Teachers skilfully use good open-ended questioning and prompting of discussion to involve all pupils in expressing their ideas. Lessons have clear objectives, often written on the board so that pupils know what they are going to learn and discuss. The lessons are well structured and move at a good pace. These factors help to maintain and encourage pupils' interest and motivation.

112. The scheme of work based on the local syllabus and nationally produced material is comprehensive and currently being further refined by the co-ordinator. The increasing confidence with which teachers are approaching the subject is reflected in the good progress of the pupils. Resources are still inadequate to fully support the curriculum. The school is aware of this and plans to supplement its resources as finances allow. The local vicar and minister are regular visitors to the school. The co-ordinator aims to arrange visits by pupils to places of worship other than the church and to invite other religious leaders into the school. The school has made good progress in its provision for religious education, which now offers a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experience and development.

ART AND DESIGN

113. No lessons were seen during the inspection week due to the organisation of the timetable. Evidence from the scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils show that most attain satisfactory standards by the end of both key stages. Observational work is often good. This reflects the judgement at the time of the last inspection. Significant progress has been made to redress the lack of materials to support art appreciation from other times and cultures. The history of art is now an integral part of the curriculum. Art and design is often linked well to topic work.

114. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop sound knowledge and skills involving colour, shape, line and texture. They have painted portraits, mixing colours well. The still life pictures, such as those of a leaf and a vase of flowers, show care and close observation. As part of their science work, pupils have produced "Danger" posters with imaginative illustrations. Sketchbooks are used successfully and pupils willingly evaluate their work. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop good observational skills. For example, their landscapes of the local area show careful use of colour and tone along with good understanding of perspective. Some good examples of imaginative work were seen in designs made for wallpaper borders.

115. Evidence from pupils' sketchbooks indicates their interest in the subject and their desire to further improve their work. Displays of pupils' work enhance learning in most classes by providing information and exemplars. The school corridor contains several attractive displays that convey information about particular styles and techniques. For example, the area dedicated to pattern provides information about artists such as William Morris and also encourages pupils to think about mathematical and scientific links. Examples of pupils' work are framed and displayed prominently, showing the value placed upon pupils' achievements. The new policy for art and design establishes a good philosophy for the school, promoting the subject's contribution to creativity, self-esteem and confidence. At present, the school is using national guidance as a basis for its work. This will be evaluated at the end of the current year. The scheme of work is planned for completion by the end of 2002. Assessment is informal.

116. The school is successfully raising the profile of art and design and its important contribution to pupils' creative and cultural development. Examples of work are kept in individual portfolios and some work is framed, indicating the school's appreciation of pupils' efforts. Each year pupils who are leaving the school produce and donate examples of their work. The locality is used well to support pupils' learning. For example, pupils contribute to and visit local art exhibitions. Visiting artists bring their expertise, including some published examples of their work. The school surroundings provide a wealth of opportunity for observational work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Lessons in the subject were seen in one class. Judgements are based upon teachers' planning, the scrutiny of pupils' work displayed about the school and in classrooms, photographs and discussions with pupils, the co-ordinator and staff. Evidence shows that attainment at the end of both key stages is satisfactory and in line with national expectations. Standards have improved since the previous report where attainment was below average and skills of designing were unsatisfactory.

118. During the two lessons observed pupils used a range of different stitches, identifying those most appropriate for specific purposes and drew a simple design specification for a money container. A programme of work based upon the nationally prescribed scheme has been implemented and is providing teachers with guidance for their lessons. The pupils benefit from work that is interesting and appropriate, helping to ensure that they make satisfactory progress.

119. Pupils' understanding of how to construct and use designs develops systematically as they progress through the school. Key Stage 1 pupils have designed puppets, linked to familiar stories or themes, such as Queen Victoria and Mr. Wolf. All use templates, which restricts their ability to solve design problems. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils are beginning to develop the skill of choosing appropriate materials, tools and techniques.

120. Year 3 and 4 pupils design and make money containers and identify the intended audience. They draw a simple design specification and consider whether it will serve its purpose. All attempt to write clear instructions in the correct order. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 design, make and evaluate slippers. They look at different types of slippers, disassemble them, choose suitability of fabrics and waddings and finally plan design specification and construction. Good evidence was seen of pupils designing and making biscuits. They followed the recipe for plain biscuits and used a product evaluation questionnaire, considering shape, colour and flavour. Then they added additional ingredients and considered how to turn the design into a finished product. All the elements of design and technology are in place from designing to final evaluation. Pupils know they have to select the materials to suit the purpose and recognise what level of planning is necessary before they start to construct.

121. The teaching seen at Key Stage 2 was good, promoting good progress. Pupils with special educational needs across both key stages make good progress. Teaching encourages the use of appropriate vocabulary, as seen when Year 4 pupils spoke about “components”. The teacher used this opportunity to explain the meaning of this word to the rest of the class. The teacher gave clear explanations about types of sewing stitches needed to make a money container and demonstrated techniques. Evidence from lesson plans, talking to pupils about their designs and models at Key Stage 1 indicate that pupils’ progress is satisfactory. Teachers give regular advice, encouragement and praise.

122. Most pupils are well managed, well behaved and listen well to teachers. Year 3 and 4 pupils are very good at collaborating, with the more able pupils sensitively helping those with lower prior attainment. In the work seen, all pupils settled down to the task quickly and sustained concentration throughout the activity.

123. The subject is effectively co-ordinated. The policy is in the draft stage and is in the process of being approved by the governing body. A commercial scheme of work is followed with some formal assessment. The school has highlighted the need to continue to improve the provision for the subject in its improvement plan. Resources are satisfactory and easily accessible.

GEOGRAPHY

124. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection due to the organisation of the timetable. Evidence from discussion with the co-ordinator, talking to pupils, the scrutiny of pupils’ work completed last term and displays across the school shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning across both key stages. These findings are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection.

125. Teachers make good use of the local environment, especially the Holme Valley. Key Stage 1 pupils study the Scottish Island of Coll and identify physical and human features of the place. This study is closely linked with literacy, on the fictional “Isle of Struay”, in the story of “An Island Home”. Effective mapping skills are introduced when pupils draw their route from home to school. Good mapping skills are seen in the Holme Valley map drawn free hand by the pupils. In conjunction with mathematics, the pupils understand and write their findings about a traffic survey. Pupils use their own ideas to suggest ways of improving road safety in the area. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to name and locate places in the United Kingdom and further afield as they follow the journeys of “Barnaby Bear” in Tokyo, Australia and New Zealand.

126. Year 3 and 4 pupils study the local area of Holmbridge and Holmfirth. They are familiar with physical and human features in their area. Very interesting guide books to the area have been devised by the pupils. Year 5 and 6 pupils' geography topic is linked with the history topic of World War II. They are becoming familiar with the map of Europe and know the allied, neutral and German influenced countries. Pupils locate cities in England most affected by bombing, such as Coventry and Liverpool. An in depth study of rivers is introduced by the journey of the river Holme and then develops to studying the River Severn as part of the topic "Settlements". Pupils know the names and location of the most important rivers on a map of Britain. They use terms like "meanders, erosion" and "deposition" with ease. Pupils' understanding of various and contrasting communities in England and the impact of development on the environment is in line with that which is expected of pupils of this age.

127. The quality of teaching seen was satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good. Most pupils stayed on task and collaborated well with others. Discussion indicated pupils' interest in the subject and their willingness to work hard.

128. The policy has been written recently. A commercial scheme of work has been amended and implemented by the staff to ensure it is personal to the school. No monitoring of teaching is in place. Assessment is undertaken at the end of the study units. Resources are satisfactory and are being replaced gradually. For example, new sets of atlases have recently been acquired for both key stages. The subject is effectively co-ordinated. The school values the contribution of members of the community, such as when a local resident described changes in the environment over the years.

HISTORY

129. History lessons were seen in Key Stage 2 but not in Key Stage 1 due to the organisation of the timetable. Evidence from the lessons seen, the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, photographs and discussion with pupils and staff show that pupils achieve well for their ages and make good progress across both key stages.

130. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have developed understanding of change over time by looking at toys from the past and comparing these with modern day toys. Year 1 and 2 pupils spent an exciting day visiting the toy museums in Dewsbury, enjoying the experience of using some of these toys, for example, wooden skittles. From this visit the staff and pupils organised their own toy museum, using parents' and grandparents' treasured toys from the past. Pupils began to realise that toys change over time for a variety of reasons. Parents and other visitors were invited for this special exhibition of toys, where pupils eagerly explained about the borrowed toys from the past and compared these with those of the present. Very positive comments about the exhibition were written by visitors.

131. Year 3 and 4 pupils are beginning to distinguish between fact and opinion and recognise that different conclusions can be reached, depending on sources. A local resident visited the class to retell the story of the 1944 Holmfirth floods. He described the local area fifty years ago and the main changes in its history. He explained how a local hero, who still lives in the village, was honoured for bravery during the floods and was awarded the George Cross medal. He illustrated his talk with photographs of the floods and many pupils gasped when they saw the familiar buildings, such as Bottoms Mill, under floodwater.

132. Year 5 and 6 pupils make deductions about life in Ancient Egypt by looking at pictures of the landscape and considering how life depended on the River Nile. Many pupils in this class confidently use research materials to select and link information. Last term the older pupils studied the Home Front during World War II. They learnt about evacuation and the feelings of children who were evacuees. They know about rationing and have a secure understanding of the passing of time. Visitors to the school shared their memories of wartime Britain. They told the pupils how iron railings were dismantled and sent to ammunitions' factories. They brought a selection of games from the past and sang songs from the War era, for example, "White Cliffs of Dover" and "Daisy, Daisy".

133. In the lessons observed pupils were very enthusiastic about the past. They are very good at working together and sharing information. Pupils willingly share their findings and some extend their knowledge, such as through researching papyrus and its use.

134. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen at Key Stage 2 was good overall and very good in the Year 5 and 6 class. Lessons are meticulously planned. All pupils are managed well and the pace is good. Pupils are very attentive to visitors and ask sensible questions. Teachers and support helpers ensure all pupils sustain concentration by interacting closely with individuals, groups and pupils with special educational needs.

135. The policy for history was written and approved by the governing body in February 2001. The subject is effectively co-ordinated and future plans include monitoring the subject by the co-ordinator through classroom observations. Assessment is undertaken at the end of each topic of study. Resources are sound and the school makes good use of the local library facilities to borrow books and artefacts. Good use is made of the community to share their experiences and bring history to life for pupils.

136. The subject has improved since the previous inspection where only "reasonable progress" was stated, where planning was seen to require increased precision and when the subject lacked an appropriate policy. All of these issues have been addressed.

MUSIC

137. Only one lesson in Key Stage 2 could be observed during the inspection. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 1. The judgement that music is well in line with national expectation is therefore based on the lesson seen, music in assemblies, choir practice, discussion with teachers and scrutiny of their planning.

138. In the lesson, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 explored the different kinds of sounds which can be produced from percussion instruments. Most did this with interest and imagination. Playing in turn round the class they produced an interesting kaleidoscope of sounds. Following this, the pupils worked in groups to compose rhythmic patterns to fit with a four beat pulse played by the teacher. They successfully played their patterns first consecutively and then together. All patterns fitted the pulse well and the activity formed a good preparation for a forthcoming visit of African drummers. Pupils with special educational needs participated fully in the groups and contributed to the success of the performance. During the lesson pupils listened attentively and appreciatively to each other's performance.

139. Pupils' singing is a strength of the school. Their singing in assembly is committed and of good quality. A whole school singing practice was enjoyed by all the pupils. They quickly

learned a new song that was sung with good tone and phrasing. The pupils sang a number of familiar songs with obvious enjoyment, producing a good quality of tone, clear diction and rhythmic vigour. The choir of about 20 boys and girls successfully learned a new song and performed "Land of the Silver Birch" as a three-part round, holding the parts well. A number of pupils learn to play a string, woodwind or brass instruments. They are taught by members of the local education authority's music service. The pupils rehearse regularly as an ensemble in school.

140. The lesson observed was very well taught. The teacher directed the pupils' activities with firm management but allowed them good opportunity to explore sound and rhythm. A very good feature of the lesson was that pupils accomplished much in a short time and no time was wasted. The same teacher directed the singing and choir practices. She used her expertise and communicated her enthusiasm well, so that pupils were motivated to learn, do their best and improve their skills. In her role as recently appointed co-ordinator she has prepared a good policy and scheme of work adapted from nationally available material. She aims to develop the skills and confidence of other members of staff.

141. Last term, pupils participated in a project with two other schools under the direction of the composer, Hugh Nankeville. They wrote words and songs and instrumental music based on the story of Orpheus. The project culminated in a very successful performance in a local middle school.

142. The previous report found that the school's musical standards were good. These standards are being maintained in the good range of activities in school, including concerts and church services. Under the direction of the co-ordinator there is potential for further good development. Resources for music are limited and some classroom instruments are in need of replacement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Games, swimming and tennis were observed during the inspection. Plans show that all the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study are met across both key stages. In the previous inspection report, attainment and progress were good but planning was weaker. Good standards and progress are still evident but planning and evaluation has improved since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress to attain standards that are high in comparison with pupils of similar ages.

144. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are improving their skills at throwing and catching a ball. Many throw up the ball to about head height and clap three times before catching it. They have good hand and eye co-ordination. Pupils know the rudiments of tennis skills; they hit the ball confidently using forehand and backhand actions.

145. Year 3 and 4 pupils are developing games skills, including creating new games, evaluating and improving their techniques. Pupils devise the rules well based on variations of cricket and rounders games. Pupils are fit, run well and show determination and energy to succeed in their devised game. Year 6 pupils make good progress in swimming because they receive effective teaching from the instructors. Eight pupils swim 400 metres unaided, attaining good standards for their age. The remaining four pupils swim at least 800 metres. Most pupils show good progress in developing the crawl style. They have confidence and control.

146. Pupils have very positive attitudes. They are keen to explore the tasks set and work successfully in paired or grouped activities. The younger pupils sustain concentration and listen carefully to instructions from the tennis coach. Year 3 and 4 pupils collaborate very well; they stay on task supporting each other, for example, when devising alternative games. Behaviour is very good at the swimming baths. Pupils work safely and co-operatively.

147. The teaching is good in both key stages. All teachers ensure that pupils are dressed correctly, maintain good pace to the lessons, exert control and are alert to individual needs. Changing and moving from classroom to the playground, field or tennis courts is handled efficiently. Good routines are established, with even the youngest pupils needing very little adult intervention. The swimming instructor makes effective use of the demonstration of some pupils' excellent style to illustrate good practice.

148. The policy has been rewritten and was approved by the governing body in March this year. The school has sound planning for all three areas of physical education. Assessment is mainly informal. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils discuss their improvements and amendments for their games with the teacher, who asks searching questions about the different group work. The subject is well co-ordinated and resources are satisfactory. The small hall limits the provision for some aspects of physical education, such as gymnastics, because at least a third of the area accommodates the library and the computer suite. Outside activities are effectively provided in the playground and playing field. Good use is made of community facilities, for example, the tennis club and the swimming baths.

149. There are very good extra-curricular activities including gymnastics, football, rugby, rounders, orienteering and cross-country clubs. A football club was observed during the inspection, which highlighted the valuable input from a parent and teacher. Last year the boys' team gained third place in the British Schools' Orienteering Championship at Nottingham. The school benefits from football and rugby coaching from ex professional players under the auspices of Kirklees Development Scheme. Overall, these worthwhile extra-curricular activities enrich the school's curriculum, promoting social and moral values. The tennis coaching for Year 1 and 2 pupils provides a very good introduction for these pupils to take an interest in the game. The coaches have identified a few pupils with natural talent.