

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **THORNSETT PRIMARY SCHOOL**

High Peak

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112600

Headteacher: Mrs Alice Littlehailes

Reporting inspector: Peter Kerr

23583

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 194511

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Aspenshaw Road  
Birch Vale  
High Peak  
Derbyshire

Postcode: SK22 1AT

Telephone number: 01663 744391

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Mark Williams

Date of previous inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23583	P. G. Kerr	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13786	S. Walsh	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?
27292	J. W. Calvert	Team inspector	Art English Geography History Provision for pupils with special educational needs	
10611	M. C. James	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Religious Education Equality of opportunity	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**

This small Community Primary School situated at the North Western edge of the Peak District has 146 pupils on roll aged four to 11. The pupils come from broadly average social and economic backgrounds. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. There are seven mixed-age classes. The numbers of pupils in each year-groups varies considerably from year to year. At the time of the inspection there were 30 children in the reception class. All the pupils are of white ethnic origin, and all have English as their first language. Ten per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Sixteen pupils (11 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs. This is below average. Most of the special needs are learning-related, with a small number of behavioural needs. There is one statutory Statement relating to physical needs. The site and building are very cramped despite extensions to the temporary classroom. There have been two changes of headteacher since the last inspection. The school aims to enable pupils to achieve well and to prepare them for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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

This is an effective school, maintaining above average standards in very poor accommodation. Teaching is sound overall, enabling most pupils to achieve to their potential. The new headteacher provides clear leadership and good management. She is supported by good teamwork in the school and by an active and committed governing body. The school provides sound value for money.

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

- Standards are well above average in science and above average in English and mathematics.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, enabling children to achieve well.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of good provision.
- Relationships are good, especially between adults and children.
- Parents provide good support for the school.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and is well supported by the staff and governors.

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

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), although rising, are still too low.
- Higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils do not make as much progress as other groups of pupils.
- The quality of teaching in some classes could be improved.
- Planning is not sufficiently informed by assessment.

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

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

Many improvements have been made since the last inspection in May 1997. Very good improvement has been made in provision for the Foundation Stage, which is now a strength of the school. Satisfactory improvements have been made in assessment procedures and the monitoring of the curriculum. These were the key issues. The school has also made improvements in the following areas:

- Provision for mathematics, science, geography and ICT and art and design throughout and for creative art in Key Stage 1.
- Library provision. This has only recently been established, and its impact is limited by its use as a classroom for much of the time.

Governors have done what they can to improve the accommodation, but it is still very poor and limits some aspects of the pupils' learning.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	A*	D	D
mathematics	A	A	C	C
science	C	A*	B	B

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

As the numbers of pupils from the school taking the national tests each year are small, results over a period of three years at least have to be taken together to establish trends. The school's results improved more quickly from 1999 to 2000 than results did nationally. The results dipped in 2001 because of the number of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. The effect of this was greatest on the English results. Fewer pupils attained the above average Level 5 in English than in the other subjects. This also reduced the average score for this subject. The school exceeded its target of 74 per cent Level 4 or above in mathematics in 2001, but fell far short of the English target of 89 per cent. The school has set challenging targets for 2002 of 85 per cent level 4 or above in English and 80 per cent in mathematics.

The inspection found that:

- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and reach above average standards.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in English and science and average in mathematics.
- Standards in English and mathematics are above average at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well in science. They have above average knowledge and experimental skills throughout the school. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in ICT are below expectations by the end of Year 6, despite recent improvements. In all other subjects, standards are in line with expectations in Year 2 and Year 6.
- In music standards are average overall and above average in singing.
- Levels of achievement across the school as a whole are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, especially in science in Key Stage 2.

Pupils with high levels of attainment do not achieve as well as other pupils. The school is aware of this and has plans in hand to provide more challenge for this group.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils come into school happy and cheerful and ready to start work. A significant minority of pupils in each class, usually boys, lacks self discipline, however. Children have very good attitudes in the Foundation Stage.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. Good in dining room and in practical or challenging lessons. Pupils are polite and friendly and helpful to visitors. Bullying is rare and is swiftly dealt with. There were no exclusions during the past year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships between adults and pupils engender a pleasant family atmosphere. Relationships between pupils are good, but are placed under pressure from the cramped space.
Attendance	Good. Above the national average, but with too many unauthorised absences

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, Year 2 and Year 6 and satisfactory in other classes. Thorough planning of lessons and good teamwork between teachers and Educational Care Officers are strong features of lessons throughout the school. A good understanding of how young child learn underpins a very good range of activities provided in the reception class, where the children learn through structured play in an enjoyable but challenging atmosphere. Teaching is good in science throughout the school, with good learning through practical experimentation. Good practical learning also occurs in art and design and design and technology. Singing and games are taught well, with the help of outside specialists. Progress in singing is especially good in response to very challenging lessons.

Lessons meet the needs of most pupils well, except that higher attaining pupils do not have enough opportunities to fulfil their potential.

Sound teaching of English and mathematics lessons ensures satisfactory development of literacy and numeracy skills. The teaching of these skills is particularly effective in Year 6, where high expectations and flexible teaching strategies are used to keep the pupils interested and learning at a good pace. The following are areas for improvement in lessons where learning is rather pedestrian:

- To use a greater variety of teaching methods and resources so that pupils do not have to sit and listen to the teacher for too long.
- To make better use of assessment information to provide more challenge for higher attaining pupils. In many lessons, these pupils accomplish the set tasks with ease.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in Foundation Stage. Satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Good links are made between subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils receive good support with individual educational plans to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for pupils' moral and social development is rooted in the very good relationships established between adults and children. Satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development. Overall, provision is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of the pupils. There are good procedures for child protection and monitoring of personal development. Assessment information is not used well enough to inform planning.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents	Parents support the school well, particularly through fund-raising and have reasonably positive views about it. The school is welcoming and provides some good information.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good educational direction. The deputy head and subject co-ordinators support her well, giving the school a good capacity for continuing improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are conscientious and well organised, and fulfil all their legal obligations. They keep a close eye on the budget and have a good view of how well the school is doing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Current priorities reflect good monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, providing a sharper focus on raising standards. The school is aware of a need to focus more on higher attaining pupils.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of available resources. The school is well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers and Educational Care Officers, and is satisfactorily resourced. The very poor accommodation has a negative impact on many aspects of learning. The school effectively applies the principles of best value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school is very approachable.</li><li>• Their children like school.</li><li>• The school helps the children to make good progress and become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homework</li><li>• The range of activities provided outside lessons.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by parents, and found that homework was satisfactory and that the school provides a good range of activities outside lessons.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Overall, standards have improved since the last inspection. There have been particularly good improvements in standards in the Foundation Stage and in science throughout the school and in mathematics in Key Stage 2. In addition, pupils with special educational needs make better progress than they did relative to their prior attainment. Of particular note is the way in which at least average standards have been maintained in many aspects of physical education, despite the severe constraints imposed by the very poor accommodation. Very good progress and above average standards have also been achieved in singing due to expert teaching from a visiting specialist.

2. The school's results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have varied greatly from year to year. This is due to the small number of pupils taking the tests and differences between cohorts. One year there may be many pupils with special educational needs, as was the case in the Year 6 cohort<sup>1</sup> that took the tests in 2001. Other year groups may contain an unusually high proportion of more able pupils, as was the case of the Year 2 pupils who took the tests in 2001. When all these factors are evened out over time, the results in the national tests show that pupils at Thornsett primary school achieve well overall in English, mathematics and science to reach above average standards. However, there are variations between the subjects and between the two key stages.

3. The school's results in the end of Year 2 tests were very high in 2001 because this cohort was exceptionally able. All the pupils attained at least Level 2, the average level. The results were better in reading and writing than in mathematics, however, because more pupils attained Level 3 in these subjects. When the Level 3 results are taken into account to produce an average points score, the results in reading and writing place the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally (A\*). In mathematics, the average points are above average (B). This suggests that the more able pupils achieve better in English at this stage than in mathematics. There are no national tests for science at this stage, but schools undertake their own assessments against agreed criteria. The school's results in these assessments were very high in 2001, with all pupils attaining at least Level 2. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 3 was also very high, except in experimental and investigative science, where no pupils attained Level 3. However, the inspection found that attainment in this aspect of science is as good as in other areas. In the English assessments, the pupils performed equally well in speaking and listening as in reading and writing. In mathematics, the weakest area was shape, space and measure.

4. The school's results in the end of Year 6 tests in English, mathematics and science have improved at a greater rate than nationally. Taking the three years 1999 to 2001 together, the school's average points exceeded the national average in each subject. The best performance was in mathematics, where the school was 1.5 points ahead – equivalent to one and a half term's work. This is largely because of particularly good results in this subject in 1999. Science was 1.3 points ahead and English 1.8 points ahead. Results in all three subjects dipped in 2001 from well above average to below average for English, average for mathematics and above average for science. This is because of the exceptionally high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this cohort, including two pupils with statements of special educational needs. The significantly better results in mathematics than

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<sup>1</sup> 'Cohort' is the technical term for a particular group of pupils of the same age. It can apply to the school, locally, or nationally.

in English reverses the Key Stage 1 trend. The inspection confirms that standards in mathematics are higher than in English at this stage, but that standards in science are better still. The school's targets for the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in 2001 were 89 per cent for English and 71 per cent for mathematics. The school's results exceeded the mathematics target by three per cent, but fell short of the English target by fifteen per cent. The English target was set by the preceding headteacher. The explanation given for it being so high was that this was in response to pressure from the Local Education Authority. The targets for 2002 are for an improvement to 85 per cent in English and 80 per cent in mathematics. The school recognises that these are very demanding targets in view of the number of pupils in this cohort with special educational needs, some of whom joined the school relatively recently.

5. There is a gender imbalance in the results of the end of Year 6 tests taken over the three years 1999 to 2001. Boys in the school score significantly higher in mathematics and science than girls do. This is against the national trend. Nationally, girls and boys do equally well in science, while in mathematics, boys are only slightly ahead of girls. In English, boys are slightly ahead of girls in the school over this period, whereas nationally, girls have a considerable advantage over boys. It therefore appears from the test results, that boys do better than girls in all three subjects at the school, especially in English. The inspection found no evidence of bias in favour of boys or against girls in what the teachers were providing. However, in some lessons, the poor attitudes and behaviour of some boys took up too much of the teacher's time. The school had not noted this trend from its own analysis of the test results, and acknowledges that more could be done to monitor equality of opportunity by gender.

6. The inspection evidence broadly confirms the trends in standards in English, mathematics and science that are suggested by the test results in both key stages. Standards are above average in English and science at the end of Year 2 and broadly in line with the average in mathematics. This is because the teaching of English and science is more effective than the teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and mathematics, and well above average in science. Standards in the current Year 3 cohort, that performed so well in the 2001 end of Year 2 tests, are very high in all three subjects. However, the most able pupils in this cohort are not achieving as well as they might. The inspection found that this is true of all year groups. The school is planning to introduce a skills based curriculum aimed at giving these pupils the opportunity to progress more rapidly towards their potential.

7. Children enter the reception class with broadly average attainment overall. This includes language and communication, mathematical understanding and knowledge and understanding of the world. These are the three areas that form the foundation for the National Curriculum in English, mathematics and science respectively. The children make good progress through the Foundation Stage. They exceed the early learning goals in these, and in the other three areas of learning for children of this age, by the time they begin the National Curriculum in Year 1.<sup>2</sup> The above average results in the end of Year 6 tests therefore reflect satisfactory progress for pupils over their time at the school. In all other subjects except ICT and some aspects of music and physical education, standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils also make satisfactory progress throughout the school in design and technology to reach standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 that are in line with national expectations. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. In geography, a structured programme to develop mapping skills through the school has led to clear improvements in standards.

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<sup>2</sup> These areas of learning are: personal and social development; creative development; physical development.

8. In ICT, a lack of provision has meant that standards have fallen to below average over time. Resources and expertise have been greatly improved, and pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress. However, the poor accommodation continues to restrict pupils' access to computers. The school is aware of the problem and continues to work within the constraints of the building towards improving pupils' skills and enabling them to use ICT as a tool for learning. In music, standards of singing are above average, largely due to the input of the leader of the local 'Kinder Children's Choir'. Standards in composing and performing are below expectations, however, because pupils have had insufficient experience in this aspect of music. In physical education, standards are in line with expectations overall, reflecting good teaching, especially in Year 5 and Year 6, and especially in games skills. The pupils' progress in games' skills is greatly enhanced by the input from outside specialist coaches. In athletics, standards are below expectations because a lack of facilities prevents adequate progress.

9. Levels of achievement are good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 overall. Strengths in standards in the Foundation Stage include:

- Good speaking and listening skills, reflected in the children's conversations.
- Emergent writing skills, evident in the children's writing as they 'play'.
- Higher-attaining children's ability to add three numbers.
- Confident use of computers to produce pictures.

10. In English, mathematics and science, the following strengths emerge over the school as a whole:

- Good speaking and listening skills, a good breadth of literature read by pupils and competent library and research skills, despite the shortfalls in provision.
- Good writing at length in Key Stage 1, with developing use of correct punctuation and grammar and the use of paragraphs in Key Stage 2.
- A good proportion of pupils working towards Level 5 in mathematics in Year 6.
- Above average experimental skills in science at the end of Year 2 and well above average knowledge, understanding and skills at the end of Year 6.

11. Pupils achieve well in science throughout the school, and in Key Stage 2 in mathematics. Achievement is also good in singing and in some aspects of games, which is a great credit to the school given the very poor accommodation. Pupils of average and below average attainment, and those with special educational needs, make better gains in learning than higher attaining pupils in most classes. This is because the starting points for lessons are usually more suited to the average and lower attaining groups.

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

12. Overall, the pupils have positive attitudes towards school. Most are brought to school by their parents, who are conscientious about getting them to school on time. They generally arrive happy and cheerful and ready to start work. Many pupils were recovering from coughs and colds during inspection week and were therefore feeling tired. This affected their levels of energy and enthusiasm and their ability to concentrate.

13. Children in the Foundation Stage have very good attitudes towards learning and their behaviour is very good. They respond well to the pleasant supportive manner of the teacher and Educational Care Officers. The children are provided with good opportunities for developing independence. They relate well to one another. They like to help each other and take turns. This all helps their learning. For example, during story time, the children listened with rapt attention, gaining much from the experience in terms of imagination and language development. They also joined in enthusiastically when singing number rhymes, re-enforcing their knowledge and understanding of the order of numbers

14. Although most pupils in the rest of the school work hard and try their best, a significant minority in each class lacks self-discipline. These pupils are usually boys; they call out interrupt the teacher and limit the opportunities for other pupils to contribute in lessons. Teachers then have to spend too much time correcting this behaviour and this slows the pace of the lessons. As a result, the pupils do not make as much progress in these lessons as they should and therefore do not achieve as well as they should over time. It may well be that girls are more affected than boys because of the lack of teacher attention, in which case this would contribute to the lower test results for girls in the end of Year 6 tests.

15. In the most effective lessons, pupils demonstrate the ability to work independently, either individually or in small groups. In some lessons, however, the pupils' inability to do this slows down their learning. For example, during a literacy lesson, a small group of pupils was asked to work on the computers. Although they did not misbehave, only one pupil completed the work satisfactorily. A lack of independence was also noted in a Year 5/Year 6 music lesson where pupils needed a lot of supervision to keep their attention focussed on the task of composing music.

16. Pupils are generally respectful of other people's feelings, attitudes and beliefs. Although their direct experience of other cultures is limited, the inspection found no evidence racist views or negative stereotyping. The pupils respond positively to the positive presentation in lessons and assemblies of different lifestyles.

17. Pupils make an effort to behave well when moving around the school. The poor accommodation has a negative effect on behaviour, however. Both playgrounds are very small, making it difficult for pupils to run around and let off steam. Corridor and cloakroom areas are extremely cramped and narrow and movement is difficult even when pupils behave well. The hall serves as a classroom for Year 1 class, which often has to move to accommodate physical education lessons. The young children find this difficult to cope with. They take time to settle to lessons and this impedes their learning. Behaviour in the dining room is usually good and there is a pleasant family atmosphere during lunchtime. Pupils are polite and friendly and helpful to visitors. Parents report very little bullying and there have been no exclusions during the past year. There is sometimes falling out and name calling but the school carefully monitors these situations. An undercurrent of chatter was noted in over-long assemblies that do not actively engage the pupils' interest.

18. Relationships between pupils and adults who work and help in the school are very good. All members of staff know the pupils well and are very supportive of them. This helps pupils to gain confidence. Relationships between pupils are good, but they are working together in a building that is far too small. Occasionally, this causes tensions between them. Although pupils mature as they move up the school there are insufficient opportunities for them to develop the ability to work independently without constant direction from the teacher.

19. Attendance is good. Attendance rates in the school year 2000/ 2001 were above the national average. However, the number of unauthorised absence in the same year was higher than the national average. This is related to the school's very informal approach to following up absences rather than to truancy or unnecessary absences condoned by parents.

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

20. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, when one in seven lessons were judged unsatisfactory. In this inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory in all of the 32 lessons seen. Teaching was good or better in 17 of the lessons, which is a higher proportion than before. In three of these lessons, the teaching was very good. During the inspection, one of the full time class teachers was absent. This meant that a number of lessons that were observed were taught by teachers not familiar with the class they were taking. On occasions this resulted in more time being taken than would normally be the case in settling the pupils down to work. As a result, not as much learning took place in some of these lessons as in many of the other lessons observed. This is taken into account in the judgements about the effect of teaching on the pupils' learning over time. The evidence base includes pupils' written work and conversations with them about what they have been doing in different subjects, as well as lesson observations.

21. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good, enabling the children to learn well. They therefore make good progress and exceed all the early learning goals before they leave the reception class. This is a big improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching in this part of the school was heavily criticised. The following are some of the main features that make teaching effective in the reception class:

- The teacher and Educational Care Officer have a secure understanding of the social, emotional and educational needs of the children. This enables them to provide a secure yet challenging learning environment.
- Planning is very thorough, incorporating a good range of activities that stimulate learning through talk and play.
- Good teamwork ensures plenty of personal attention for each child, leading to enthusiastic learning. The children are keen to please and try to produce their best work.
- The children are provided with plenty of opportunities to develop independence. They work well on their own or within a group.
- Very effective use is made of the limited classroom space available. This ensures that all the areas of learning are well provided for, including creative expression and physical development.

22. A mathematics lesson in which the children were learning to count up to ten illustrates the impact of this good teaching. The children performed a follow-my-leader parade around the classroom as dinosaurs. An extra child joined on as the numbers in the song increased. The children thoroughly enjoyed making frightening noises at the appropriate part in the song to signify the imminent arrival of another dinosaur. The Educational Care Officer supervised one child at a time writing down the numbers as another child selected the appropriate large wooden numeral to display. Every single child in the class was fully engrossed in the whole activity, which promoted not only mathematical, but also language and communication, musical, physical and social skills.



23. In Key Stage 1, teaching is sound overall and good in Year 2. In Key Stage 2, teaching is sound overall, and good or better in Year 6. Important strengths in the most effective lessons in both key stages include:

- Thorough planning, catering for the full ability range in the class.
- Good or very good relationships and high expectations, facilitating good attitudes and a good work-rate.
- Good teamwork between teachers and Educational Care Officers.
- Good questioning that makes the pupils think for themselves.
- Thorough marking of work which is up to date and relevant, with comments to help the pupils improve whilst celebrating achievement.
- Good support for pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress towards their learning targets.

24. A particularly successful English lesson in Year 6 exemplified many of these attributes. The pupils made very good progress in identifying the characteristic features of 'impersonal writing' through skilled questioning about well-chosen examples. The higher attaining pupils made very good progress along with the rest of the class because they were challenged to use and extend their own ideas. This provided very good models for the other pupils to learn from. Excellent relationships coupled with a good insight into how to motivate pupils of this age underpin some very good teaching in this class.

25. In some lesson in which teaching was judged satisfactory, learning was rather pedestrian. The main areas identified for improvement in such lessons are:

- The use of a greater variety of teaching strategies and resources to interest and motivate the pupils.
- More interaction between pupils and between teacher and pupils as they work, providing opportunities to assess understanding and ask probing questions.
- Better use of assessment information to guide planning so that all the pupils, including the higher attainers, engage in activities that challenge them.
- Making it very clear to the pupils what the purpose of the lesson is so that they can judge their own success to some extent.
- Ensuring that the marking policy is consistently applied so that marking shows pupils how to improve in selected areas of their work.

26. The management of the pupils is a concern in some of these lessons. Occasionally, this is due to negative attitudes on the part of some of the pupils - mainly boys. However, the choice of uninteresting teaching methods also contributes significantly to the problem in many cases. When teachers spend too much time talking to the pupils, some begin lose concentration, fidget and eventually misbehave. It was noticeable that the pupils' attitudes, behaviour and learning were all better in practical lessons in subjects such as science, design and technology and art and design, when the pupils had plenty to do.

27. English and mathematics are taught effectively, enabling pupils to make sound progress overall in their literacy and numeracy skills as they move through the school. Lessons reflect the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy. The arrangement for the pupils to be divided into year groups for these subjects ensures that each pupil covers all the necessary ground each year. Pupils with special educational needs in English and mathematics are well supported and therefore learn effectively. This leads to good learning over time. In both subjects, the most effective teaching and learning occur towards the end of each key stage. The quality of teaching in English is similar in both key stages, whereas in mathematics, it is more effective in meeting all the pupils' needs towards the end of Key Stage 2 than lower down the school. This finding reflects the pupils' better performance in mathematics than in English in the end of Year 6 tests. They perform better in English in the end of Year 2 tests. In both subjects, the

information that is available about the pupils' attainment is used to provide challenging activities for the average and lower attaining pupils. It is not used so effectively to stretch the higher attainers. Learning for this group is therefore slower than for other pupils.

28. The teaching of ICT skills is now satisfactory, following in-service training for teachers. They plan for the use of ICT in some subjects. Where this happens, the pupils make good progress, both in their computer skills and in the subject they are using them in. For example, they combine text and graphics to produce illustrated writing of a good standard. However, the limited access the pupils have to the computer suite reduces the extent to which teachers can plan for this to happen. The pupils therefore do not use computers as effectively as they could as a tool for learning across the curriculum.

29. Lesson plans generally pay due regard to pupils who have special educational needs related to learning difficulties. The pupils' individual learning plans contain realistic, attainable targets and are regularly updated. The pupils therefore learn effectively and make good progress towards their targets. Teachers are careful to include pupils with special educational needs in whole-class lessons with suitable questions and with tasks that are closely matched to their attainment levels. When that they are withdrawn from class to be taught in small groups, for example, the literacy support groups, the pupils receive good teaching pitched at the right level. The teachers and Educational Care Officers know the pupils well and are aware of their individual learning needs. This ensures good continuity in learning for these pupils. Arrangements to support pupils with behavioural needs, usually boys, are less effective. These pupils do not have clear targets for behaviour improvement. This leads to inconsistent management of their behaviour between teachers and other adults dealing with them. Their own learning is affected at times because they do not join in activities. On other occasions, they disrupt learning for others by taking up an undue proportion of the teacher's time and energy through inappropriate behaviour.

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

30. The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school are good for children at the Foundation Stage and satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 2 and in Years 3 to 6. All statutory requirements are met. Significant improvements have been made in the curriculum for children at the Foundation Stage, since the previous inspection.

31. The curriculum for children in the reception class is good. A detailed scheme of work is now in place, which successfully incorporates all the areas of learning that should be taught to children before they enter Year 1. Lesson planning is detailed and children have access to a wide range of suitable activities and learning experiences. The 'carousel'<sup>3</sup> sessions are used well to enhance the overall quality of the curriculum. The school has a secure outdoor play area, and the children are provided with regular opportunities to use outdoor play items, such as wheeled vehicles.

32. The curriculum in the main school is appropriately broad and balanced, and a suitable provision is made for all subjects. Taking into account the very limited and cramped accommodation available, the school does well to deliver all subjects adequately. The science curriculum has been enriched the development of the scientific enquiry aspect of the subject, especially for pupils in Years 3 to 6. This contributes significantly towards the good progress and high standards now being achieved. ICT is not yet used in all subjects, but it is being used successfully on occasions in subjects such as English, mathematics, science

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<sup>3</sup>In a 'carousel' session, a number of activities are set up in the classroom. The pupils move round them in groups. Eventually every pupil completes all the tasks.

and history to enhance the quality of pupils' learning. A strength of the curriculum is the way in which links are often made between subjects. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, made diva pots, which successfully benefited their learning in design and technology and religious education. The length of the school day and the time allocations for individual subjects are both satisfactory.

33. Appropriate and relevant policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. They contain detailed and extensive information to provide for a full coverage of all subjects. The schemes should ensure a steady and progressive development of each subject through the school. At present, however, the schemes emphasise the knowledge content of the curriculum, and do not adequately emphasise the skills that also need developing in subjects. The school has successfully adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Numeracy has been most effectively implemented, with, in particular, a most appropriate use of mental activities in lessons. Appropriate use is also made of mathematics in other subjects, such as science and design and technology. In Literacy many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their reading and writing skills, both within English itself and across the range of curriculum subjects, such as in history, geography and religious education.

34. Teachers' good quality curriculum planning helps to ensure the steady and effective development of pupils' knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. It also makes suitable allowance for the needs of pupils with special educational needs, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' equal access to the whole curriculum, with the staff making sure that all the pupils are involved, as far as possible, in a full range of activities. In making suitable efforts to include pupils in all appropriate activities the school allows most pupils to achieve as much as they can. The needs of higher attaining pupils are not always fully met, however. On occasions the work provided for them lacks challenge and this limits their progress.

35. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. Netball, football, recorders, drama, French and games are among the items on offer to the older pupils, and a recorder session is soon to be started for younger pupils. The school welcomes many visitors, including the police, nursing staff, poets, artists, the local band and local clergy, as well as drama and music groups. A wide range of educational visits is arranged to places such as Manchester Museum, Hatton Hall and the heritage centre in New Mills. The older pupils undertake residential visits to places such as Whitby and Scarborough. These activities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development, as well as to their learning in various subjects.

36. The school has satisfactory links with the local community. In particular it regularly makes use of the area around the school, in subjects such as history and geography. Links made with a local business have benefited pupils' work with computers, and the local band allows the school use of its facilities. Links have been forged with the local church, and local residents visit the school, for example, to talk about the history of Thornsett. Satisfactory links have been established with other schools. The school has close sporting ties with the local primary schools, as well as cordial relationships with nearby nurseries. Links with the neighbouring comprehensive schools are also well developed, with, for instance, curriculum areas regularly being discussed by staff. These close ties help pupils when they move from one school to another.

37. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education, with aspects of sex and drugs education being fully covered within lessons. Other aspects of healthy living, such as the contents of a healthy diet, are also carefully considered in science

lessons. The school is developing a policy for this aspect of the curriculum to improve its practice further.

38. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development, and satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development. Overall, provision is satisfactory.

39. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies are well planned and thoughtfully delivered, and they meet statutory requirements. Pupils are helped to gain some knowledge and insight into their own, and other peoples', values and beliefs, and in particular they are encouraged to respect and value the opinions of others. On occasions, however, assemblies are rather long, and the message is lost, particularly to younger pupils. Moments of quietness are sometimes provided for pupils to reflect on what they have heard, although on occasions these opportunities are missed. Few opportunities are planned for pupils' spiritual development in the subjects of the curriculum. However, on occasions, pupils are provided with interesting and thought provoking experiences, such as when they encounter some of the wonders of science during practical lessons.

40. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils are encouraged to develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and to treat staff, visitors and other pupils with courtesy and respect. The headteacher and staff, as well as providing good role models themselves, regularly remind pupils of the correct forms of behaviour and give reasons for them. Discussions often take place in lessons and rules of conduct are clearly displayed around the school. The school has suitable expectations of pupils, and they are regularly praised and rewarded for maintaining standards. Pupils are keen to collect the stamps that lead to the awarding of certificates, reflecting the success of this initiative. However, a small number of pupils, mostly boys, bring negative attitudes to lessons and occasionally disrupt learning for themselves and others, despite the school's expectations.

41. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. This is an improvement since the previous report. Pupils are encouraged to form good relationships with each other, their teachers and other adults. As they progress through the school pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, to take turns and to share resources, such as when taking part in experimental work in science, or in working together on computers. Older pupils are particularly caring of younger ones, and they relate well to them, particularly during their 'shared reading' sessions and during meetings of the school council. Suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to take on responsibilities within their classrooms, and they carry them out most effectively. Older pupils have a limited range of responsibilities, but they carry out those provided with both care and efficiency. The social development of pupils is further enhanced by their involvement in fund-raising and the quality and range of the school's extra-curricular activities.

42. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. They are taught about aspects of British culture in subjects such as English and history. An appropriate emphasis is laid on their knowledge and understanding of other cultures during assemblies and during lessons in subjects such as art and design, geography and religious education. The school makes some provision for making pupils aware of the multicultural society in which they live, by considering the different forms of worship, ritual and life-style in other religions. However, there are few relevant displays around the school, and there is only a limited range of suitable books in the library. Overall, this aspect of the school's provision for pupils is underdeveloped.

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

43. The school provides a supportive environment for its pupils. There is a warm friendly atmosphere and relationships between pupils and adults are very good. All members of staff are kindly towards the children and look out for their welfare. Teachers complete records on pupil's personal development on a regular basis. This enables them to keep track of each individual pupil's progress and emerging needs.

44. Arrangements for child protection are good and the school complies with locally agreed procedures. The secretary takes responsibility for health and safety and does a sterling job. The school building creates extra health and safety concerns such as overcrowding in the playground, the close proximity of the road to the playground, and the narrow corridors. The school recognises these problems and is extra vigilant.

45. The school's monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. Through the use of its computerised registration system, the school identifies regular non-attenders and reported them to the Education Welfare Officer. Most parents are very conscientious about sending notes to school or telephoning the school when their children are off ill. However the school does not have a formal system in place to promote regular attendance, and makes few enquiries about absences. When parents forget to send in notes, or the children misplace the notes, absences are simply recorded as unauthorised. This results in relatively high rates of unauthorised absence, which is not the appropriate procedure.

46. The school's procedures to promote good behaviour are satisfactory. The school's behaviour policy is out of date and does not reflect current practice in the school. The school has recognised the need to improve behaviour management and has introduced a system of assertive discipline. This has involved more rewards for good effort and behaviour, which the pupils appreciate and respond positively to. However, the system is not used consistently enough to help secure good behaviour in lessons throughout the school.

47. Assessment procedures have been improved since the last inspection. Tests are used each year to measure the pupils' attainment in English and mathematics and good records are kept of this information. Less formal records are kept of attainment in science, but the way the curriculum is organised and taught has been successful in ensuring that pupils build on their knowledge and skills each year. A start has also been made on measuring and recording the pupils' skills in ICT, involving them in tracking their own progress (self-assessment). Currently, there are no systems in place to measure and record the skills pupils have in other subjects to guide teachers in planning future work. This is an area the school has recognised as an area for development, linked to the improvement of curriculum planning by placing more emphasis on study skills.

48. The available assessment information is used effectively to identify and support pupils with special educational needs related to learning and those who are not making enough progress. High attaining pupils are also identified through their consistently good test scores. However, nothing further is done with this information to ensure that these pupils are challenged to work towards their full potential. Pupils with specific talents are also overlooked on occasions because there has been no policy to guide teachers in identifying and providing for such individuals. The school recognises these areas for further improvement and is currently developing a policy for more able, gifted and talented pupils.

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

49. Parents are generally satisfied with the quality of education offered by the school. They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. They feel their children are happy at school and appreciate the caring family atmosphere. Parents appreciate that their children are expected to work hard and do their best, they perceive their

children make good progress. Parents are concerned about homework and several parents feel that there is not enough homework. Some parents would like the school to work more closely with parents and even more would like to see an improvement in the information they receive about their child's progress. The inspection team generally agreed with parents positive viewpoints but found pupils progress to be satisfactory rather than good. The inspection team did not feel that homework is an issue but agreed that improvements could be made to pupils' reports. Some parents thought that the school did not provide sufficient activities outside lessons. The inspection found that the range and quality of activities was good for the size of school.

50. Parents give good support to the school and to their children's education. The active parent's association has raised significant sums of money during the last school year. This contributes significantly to the pupils' education. A group of parents has recently been established to develop an understanding of the literacy strategy. The participants in this initiative are beginning to recognise how they can support their children's progress in English. A good number of parents and other local people provide teachers with valuable support in the classroom. There used to be a parent's forum, but those parents involved decided not to continue with it. The general feeling is that parents have easy access to the school and governing body should they wish to make their views known. However, some parents feel that the school could work more closely with them. Parents' views on the leadership and management of the school are largely positive, with some reserving judgement on the most recent changes.

51. Information for parents is of satisfactory quality overall. The prospectus is of good quality and reflects the happy cheerful atmosphere in the school. There is lots of informal contact with parents, many of whom come into school in the mornings and after school. Annual reports for pupils in the Foundation Stage are of good quality. They often tell parents how they can help their child. Other reports are satisfactory, but variable in quality. Some English reports are good but others are too brief. Mathematics reports often focus on how hard children have worked rather than what they know understand and can do. Some reports give parents specific advice about how they can help their children but others are more general. The school is aware that all pupils in a year group receive very similar reports on non-core subjects such as geography, history and music and has taken steps to make the comments relate more to individual subjects.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. Since the previous inspection, there have been two changes of headteacher. The current appointment was made in September 2001 following a two-year tenure. The school is therefore adjusting to a third style of leadership in four years. The strengths identified in the leadership of the school at the previous inspection have been maintained. The key issue of improving monitoring of the curriculum has been satisfactorily addressed.

53. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school. She is fully supported by the deputy head and the whole staff. The head and deputy head form an effective senior management team. They are working purposefully towards developing a meaningful role for the deputy in leading educational developments, exemplified by the plan to introduce a skills based curriculum. The teachers responsible for co-ordinating subjects throughout the school have an improved role to play. They each draw up a subject action plan. These are then used as the basis of the emerging school development plan. The previous plan was not so securely rooted in full consultation, and was not therefore as wholeheartedly embraced by the whole school as the current plan is.

54. The school strives to fulfil its main aims of enabling the pupils to achieve well and preparing them for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The warm, friendly ethos in the school, which reflects the dedication of the staff, is much appreciated by parents. It enables the pupils to feel secure in their learning environment. However, although the pupils' attainment is above average, their levels of achievement are as yet only satisfactory. This is partly because of restrictions imposed by the accommodation. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching also reduce achievement levels, especially for higher attaining pupils. Despite recent improvements, the pupils' ICT skills are still not as good as they should be. However, the commitment of the teachers guided by the vision of the headteacher, gives the school the capacity to move ever closer to fulfilling its aims.

55. The headteacher has established clear management roles for the staff, and is intent on providing the time and support for these to become fully effective. The focus of their work is directed towards raising standards. The deputy head is taking advantage of the opportunities now being provided for the development of his distinctive role in this endeavour. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance has been strengthened and is leading to improved performance. The pupils' results in the baseline and national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are analysed to track pupils' progress throughout the school. This identifies those pupils who are making insufficient progress, enabling support to be targeted at them. It also identifies those pupils who make better than average progress, but this information is not used well to raise their achievement. A programme of monitoring to check the quality of teaching has also been established. This is beginning to improve the quality of learning, but has not been in place long enough to have a significant impact. The school still needs to identify what makes teaching successful in the good lessons and enable this good practice to improve learning throughout the school.

56. The governors fulfil their legal obligations well. They keep a close eye on the working of the school through a committee structure and through regular consultations with the headteacher and other staff. This works effectively. As part of an agreed strategy to improve monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, the time available for staff to do this has been increased. Governors are also embarking on a programme of direct monitoring, under the guidance of the school staff, to see for themselves how well the school is functioning. They have a good understanding of the stresses and strains of teaching and wish to adopt a supportive approach to monitoring that will respect the teachers' professionalism.

57. The governors' finance committee keeps a close check on the budget to ensure that all spending is related to the educational priorities in the school development plan. A budget surplus has been generated to manage the anticipated reduction in income over the next two years caused by two small year groups coming through the school. This is a sensible move to ensure stability in staffing levels without going into deficit. Uncertainty over the future of the building and the possibility of being relocated to a new site has placed some restraints on spending decisions. The governors have handled this well.

58. The school's targets for the number of pupils attaining Level 4 in the national tests in mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2001 were realistic and were achieved. The target for English was unrealistically high and was not achieved. These targets were set by the previous headteacher with guidance from the local education authority. The targets for 2002 are more realistic, though they are still very challenging. The headteacher has established wider targets to raise attainment in specific areas, for example for higher attaining pupils and in ICT. The school is taking appropriate action to reach these targets.

59. The school makes good use of new technology in the administration of its affairs. For example, computers have made the monitoring of attendance simpler and quicker (though this has not been used to clarify which absences are authorised and which not.) The secretary is very proficient in the use of the school's computer systems, having attended coursed to update her skills. Regular printouts of the budget are available, for example, to guide the headteacher's and governors' deliberations. All other aspects of the school's administration are carried out very effectively. This is all achieved in very cramped office accommodation that has to be used also as a staff-room and headteacher's office. The secretary also plays a leading role in carrying out health and safety checks and risk analysis, having received training in this area.

60. The school has a full complement of teaching staff, supported by a reasonable number of Educational Care Officers. Satisfactory procedures for the induction of new staff are in place. These have not been fully applied to recent appointments because of the need to prepare for this inspection. Although very understandable, the delay has led to inconsistency in the implementation of some policies such as behaviour management. During the inspection, this had a detrimental effect on teaching and learning in some lessons. Other members of staff, including the caretaker, the cook and her assistants and the lunchtime supervisors are all part of a strong team that ensures a positive ethos and good care and guidance for the pupils.

61. Resources for learning are satisfactory. ICT resources have been greatly improved so that pupils have opportunities to use computers during the school day. The pressure on space limits their use to some extent, however. Resources are used well in science, design and technology and art and design to promote learning through practical activities. The reception class has ample resources to support learning in the Foundation Stage. These are made good use of in the limited space available. In all other subjects, there area sufficient resources to support learning.

62. The accommodation is very poor. Although the small building makes for an intimate family atmosphere, it has many significant shortcomings, among which are:

- Insufficient teaching space. Currently, the hall is used as a permanent class-base for one year-group as well as to house the library and small computer suite. It is also used as a teaching base for literacy and numeracy lessons for much of each morning, as well as for dining. The class that is based here suffers constant distractions, which they put up with very well, but which nevertheless reduce their concentration and rate of learning.
- Lack of proper physical education facilities. Some lessons do take place in the hall from time to time, but this entails disruption to the class in the hall. The school's playing field



has been out of commission for some time, and in any event is a considerable distance from the school, so cannot be realistically used to best effect even if it were to become available. Each Key Stage 2 class travels to a neighbouring primary school by bus for gymnastic lessons for one term. They make good use of the facilities there, but valuable time is spent travelling there and back. Each of the two playgrounds is tiny, so cannot be used effectively for physical education lessons for a whole class in Year 3 to Year 6.

- Cramped conditions throughout the school. The narrow corridors and generally cramped feel to the interior of the building put pressure on the pupils, especially those with behavioural needs.
- A lack of proper office or staff-room facilities. One small, open area has to suffice as an office for the secretary and the headteacher as well as a staff-room. There is no room available for private consultations.

Extra safety concerns due to the lack of a footpath immediately outside the school gate.

The staff and pupils work hard to do their best in these difficult circumstances, but the inspection found that the quality of teaching and learning is nevertheless reduced because of them.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to continue improving standards and levels of achievement, and to fully implement the aims of the school, the headteacher and governors should:

- (1) Build on the good work that has been done in improving provision and raising standards in ICT by:
  - Providing more opportunities for pupils to use computers as a tool for learning in all subjects.
  - Ensuring that pupils have the necessary skills to cover all the programmes of study at a level appropriate for their age.(Paragraphs: 2, 28, 32, 85, 94, 102, 110, 112, 121, 124, 126, 128, 131, 141)
- (2) Improve provision for more able and gifted and talented pupils by:
  - Formally adopting and implementing the draft policy as quickly as possible.
  - Ensuring that more able pupils have tasks that will interest them.
  - Identifying pupils with specific talents so that they can be offered guidance and support.(Paragraphs: 11, 27, 34, 54, 58, 89, 91, 113, 130)
- (3) Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - Identifying what works best in promoting good learning for all pupils in lessons and spreading this good practice throughout the school.
  - Encouraging the use of a wider range of teaching strategies to include more opportunities for pupils to interact with one another and undertake extended and independent research and investigation.
  - Proceeding with the plan to place more emphasis on skills in planning.(Paragraphs: 14, 17, 25, 26, 27, 33, 54, 55, 81, 83, 84, 91, 92, 99, 131, 135)
- (4) Further improve the effectiveness of assessment procedures by:
  - Using the data available from tests in English and mathematics to provide suitable programmes of work for all ability levels in each year group.
  - Developing workable procedures to track pupils' skills in all subjects so that suitably challenging starting points can be derived for lessons.
  - Involving the pupils more in evaluating their skills, setting attainable targets and monitoring their progress towards them.(Paragraphs: 11, 25, 27, 34, 47, 48, 55, 89, 91, 93, 94, 101, 105, 113, 131, 141, 110, 115, 120, 128)

In addition to the above key issues, the following minor issues should be considered by the governors for inclusion in their Action Plan.:

- To continue with their efforts to improve the accommodation offered to pupils.  
(Paragraphs: 8, 17, 44, 54, 57, 59, 62, 67, 86, 106, 123, 132, 136)
- To ensure that the school's behaviour policy is consistently applied.  
(Paragraphs: 5, 14, 17, 26, 29, 84, 92, 131, 135, 140)
- To monitor gender issues more closely.  
(Paragraphs: 5, 11, 14, 26, 84, 92, 131)
- To ensure that authorised and unauthorised absences are properly recorded.  
(Paragraphs: 19, 45, 59)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	14	15	0	0	0
Percentage	0	9	44	47	0	0	0

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

### 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)	146
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	9	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (84)	100 (80)	100 (84)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (84)	100 (92)	100 (80)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Where the number of boys or girls in the year group are ten or fewer the individual results are not reported.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	9	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	27	17	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (89)	64 (89)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	13	17	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (83)	74 (83)	87 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

*Where the number of boys or girls in the year group are ten or fewer the individual results are not reported.*

### ***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	146
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.9
Average class size	20.9

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	71.25

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	274 483
Total expenditure	263 979
Expenditure per pupil	1 737
Balance brought forward from previous year	24 566
Balance carried forward to next year	35 070

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

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	137
Number of questionnaires returned	54

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	39	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	49	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	44	5	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	37	24	7	4
The teaching is good.	39	47	10	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	45	19	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	22	6	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	45	4	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	38	49	8	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	44	37	4	2	13
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	47	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	43	13	2	9



## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

64. Children enter the school during the year in which they are five, with one group joining in September and another in January. At the time of the inspection there were 14 children in the reception class, together with a small number of Year 1 pupils. The majority of these children have experienced some form of nursery education. Children's attainment on entering the reception class varies considerably, but overall it is broadly in line with that expected for children of that age. Their personal, social and emotional development is also broadly as expected. During their time in reception the children make good progress. They are on course to exceed the expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they leave reception.

65. The overall quality of teaching in the reception class is good. This is a significant improvement since the time of the school's previous inspection. The teacher has a secure understanding of the social, emotional and educational needs of the children, and she plans a very appropriate range of activities. She has a pleasant, helpful and encouraging manner with the children, and gives them much praise for their work. The teacher and the Educational Care Officer complement each other very well in ensuring plenty of personal attention for the children. Planning is thorough. A suitable range of strategies is used in teaching the children, and very effective use is made of the rather limited classroom space available. The teacher is particularly successful in providing the children with opportunities to develop their independence, as they carry out a range of jobs and learning activities.

66. The children's response is nearly always very good. They listen carefully to their teacher and any other adult in the class, and they are keen to be involved in all activities. They set about their tasks with enthusiasm, and they persevere until they are complete. They work well on their own, and in groups, where they readily help each other if a need arises. They are well motivated, keen to please and generally try to produce their best work. They are happy in seeking advice from adults, should any difficulties arise, and they are also confident in organising themselves, when the opportunities are presented. Their behaviour is very good.

67. The curriculum planned is broad and balanced, and is much improved since the last inspection. All statutory requirements are now met. A wide range of activities and experiences is provided to enrich children's learning. Children's abilities are assessed on entry into the school, and clear records are kept of their progress in all areas. The accommodation is colourful and well maintained, although space is very limited for the number of children involved. The appearance of the area is enhanced, however, by good displays of children's work. Resources are satisfactory in quantity, and are well used. The school has a secure outdoor play area, and the children are provided with regular opportunities to use outdoor play items, such as wheeled vehicles, to develop their physical skills.

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

68. The children are making good progress and are on course to exceed the expected level of attainment by the end of reception. They have settled very well into school life. They have learnt how to behave in school and be part of a social group. They are prepared to work with other children, take turns and share fairly. They are able to move confidently around the classroom, and the school, and they ask for assistance where required. They readily help their teacher in giving out materials and equipment, and then in tidying up at the end. They are eager to explore new learning, and they are able to concentrate on work being undertaken. They have a well-developed sense of what is right and wrong, and their behaviour is

consistently very good. Their attitudes to school, to other children, to their teacher and the Educational Care Officer and to their whole environment, are also very good.

69. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher and the Educational Care Officer know the children well, and they continually remind them about the importance of such things as sharing and politeness. The adults, as well as setting good examples themselves, have high expectations of the children, and the caring and safe environment they have created has a very positive impact on the children's progress in this area of learning.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

70. The children are making good progress and are on course to exceed the expected level of attainment by the end of reception. All children pay close attention to their teacher, listening with interest and concentration to stories, poems and instructions. Speaking skills are well developed, and the majority are eager to answer questions and offer opinions, sometimes at length. Children show a keen interest in books, and they handle them with care. They know which is the front of the book, and they clearly understand that print carries meaning. The majority of the class understand letter sounds and they are able to read a number of words in their books. Most of these children are on course to becoming fluent readers. Through practising their writing, the children are forming their letters correctly. All can write their names independently. With some help from adults, a majority of children are producing short pieces of writing, such as about their 'news', or when contributing pieces of text to add to class storybooks. The children successfully improve their writing skills informally during play. For example, some children wrote letters from Goldilocks to the Three Bears to say, 'Sorry!.'

71. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teacher reads an interesting range of books to the children, and this enhances the children's listening skills. Many opportunities are also provided for pupils to develop their speaking skills, both in front of the class and in the home corner. Children are provided with suitable reading books, and they are also encouraged to develop both their writing and handwriting through the provision of suitable activities.

### **Mathematical development**

72. The children are making good progress and are on course to exceed the expected level of attainment by the end of reception. Most of them clearly understand the concept of counting, and can count out an appropriate number of objects with confidence. They can successfully count to twenty, with some counting further. The children are familiar with counting games and rhymes, such as 'Five Currant Buns', and they can sort and sequence objects. In using water and sand, they understand such words as 'empty' and 'full', and in comparing weights they confidently use 'heavier' and 'lighter'. Many children successfully extend their mathematical vocabulary to name a variety of two-dimensional shapes. The children understand the concept of addition, for example, how to find 'one more'. Higher attainers successfully add two numbers, and some also add three. Most children are beginning to form their numbers correctly, with only a very small number occasionally reversing some digits. The children are also successfully developing their number skills through paying for items in the class shop.

73. The quality of teaching is good overall. The work is well planned and carefully matched to the needs of the children. Many opportunities are provided for the children to count, often within practical activities, such as counting money. A good provision of resources, such as water, sand and number games and number lines, helps children develop their mathematical language and understanding.

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

74. The children are making good progress and are on course to exceed the expected level of attainment by the end of reception. Most children are able to explain about past and present events in the context of their families. They talk confidently, for example, about some of the experiences older members of their family had when they were young. The children have studied aspects of the local environment, and many can talk confidently about, for example, roads and houses in explaining what they can see around the school. Children can name the main external features of the human body, and they have greatly enjoyed the work they have undertaken on plants, watching them grow and making records of that growth. They have been provided with opportunities to work with food, and they have successfully made items such as sandwiches and fruit salads. All children are given opportunities to use a computer, and they show considerable confidence and independence in using the mouse and keyboard to undertake a range of work. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Children have a good understanding of aspects of life in other cultures. For example, they speak with confidence about Hinduism and the native Americans.

75. Teaching is consistently good in this area of learning. The children are provided with a wide range of experiences, such as looking at pictures and photographs, being taken on trips around the school, using the computer and undertaking practical activities, such as working with food. The Educational Care Officer provides most effective help to the children in many of these activities.

## **Physical development**

76. The children are making good progress and are on course to exceed the expected level of attainment by the end of reception. In class children hold pencils and crayons correctly, and they show increasing skill in producing their writing neatly and colouring pictures carefully. Their dexterity in handling large and small items in the classroom is developing well, such as when they use construction kits and jigsaws, and thread small objects onto a string. The children's manipulative skills are good. They use malleable materials, such as 'Play Dough' and modelling clay, for example, to make models of small animals, diva lamps and letters and numbers. Children show appropriate control over such things as paintbrushes and scissors, and they cut out items with some accuracy. They use the construction toys with confidence, producing a range of houses, vehicles and figures. They have suitable opportunities to use larger outdoor play equipment to aid the further development of their physical skills.

77. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Both the teacher and the Educational Care Officer join in with the children, and demonstrate how to carry out different activities and develop various skills. A wide and varied array of activities is provided, and children are encouraged to 'keep busy' with them throughout the day. In particular, all adults emphasise the need for the children to carry out all activities safely.

## **Creative development**

78. The children are making good progress and are on course to exceed the expected level of attainment by the end of reception. They confidently sing songs and rhymes, clap a steady beat and perform an appropriate range of actions to their songs. They successfully use percussion instruments to accompany the rest of the class singing, and they listen carefully to a range of pre-recorded music. The children use a range of paints and crayons to produce pictures both from direct observation and from their imagination. They have successfully produced, for example, pictures of themselves, of robins, and winter scenes

and of the Gingerbread Man. The children have also used a computer program to produce a variety of pictures and used materials such as leaves to make collages. Their skills in making three-dimensional items are good. They have, for example, made models of tepees, some large enough to allow them to sit inside!

79. The quality of teaching is good. Through careful planning, the teacher ensures that all the children have opportunities to take part in all activities. Adults also encourage the children to develop their independence by arranging 'carousel' sessions, and allowing the children to move from one activity to another when they are ready. They also make sure, however, that the children experience all the activities, and that help is always available when it is needed.

## **ENGLISH**

80. At the time of the school's previous inspection, standards were average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. Since then, standards at the end of Year 2 have improved more quickly than the national trend, while standards at the end of Year 6 have kept pace with it. The pupils' attainment is now above the national average in speaking and listening, reading and writing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Whilst pupils throughout the school achieve appropriately overall, pupils with special educational needs continue to make good progress against their prior attainment. This is because of good teaching towards their learning targets coupled with good and sometimes very good support from teaching assistants. Pupils with higher than average attainment do not always achieve as well as other groups in lessons because the work is too easy for them.

81. Pupils through the school are capable of speaking and listening well. A small number of younger pupils in Key Stage 1 do not settle readily to listen to their teachers. However, once their attention is engaged, their responses show that they have a clear understanding of what they have heard. Most answer clearly and confidently, providing, on occasions, extended answers. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, a child explained what is meant by the 'setting' of a story with reference to a previous reading of 'Red Riding Hood'. Appropriate vocabulary was used to add details about how the setting moves from one scene to another. Older pupils, in Key Stage 2 generally listen carefully to the teachers' instructions in class and group discussions. Pupils have few opportunities to experience drama in lessons, so their attainment in this aspect of speaking and listening is limited. Most pupils are becoming articulate speakers, providing detailed answers, explanations and arguments when challenged to do so. They speak clearly and put their points confidently. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson on formal letter writing, where the teacher set high expectations of the pupils' ability to use technical vocabulary, they responded accurately and maturely to a range of very good questions. They explained precisely why a particular letter was written, for example, and demonstrated a very good understanding of the appropriateness of the style chosen. They also demonstrated a good understanding of the difference between an active and passive verb, as was demonstrated by their explanation of why the writer had chosen the passive option for specific emphasis.

82. Most pupils enjoy reading and are making good progress compared to their prior attainment. The school operates a very successful and popular paired reading programme. Twice weekly pupils join a partner of contrasting age for reading. Younger pupils gain much from the interest, concern, responsibility and especially the support shown by their older partner. Pupils successfully develop reading skills in the 'shared reading' sessions in lessons, in which they are encouraged to read fluently and with good expression. In Year 6, pupils are able to talk confidently about what they read, making very appropriate reference to characters and events in their story. The pupils also have good reference and library skills. When asked, for example, two pupils explained exactly how they would find both reference books for information and fiction books by specific authors. Many pupils select quickly and

confidently from reference materials to find relevant information. This shows that they are learning these skills despite the difficulties with library provision. The higher attaining pupils demonstrate good understanding and are capable of saying what they think may happen next in a story or what they have understood from information texts. The higher and average attaining pupils read independently, fluently and with consistently good expression. The lower attaining pupils are less confident and independent in the library and would rely upon some support from an adult to find information. However, their reading of a fiction book of their own choice is good. They understand the story well and demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the main character.

83. Writing is the least well-developed aspect of English in the school. Standards are above average in Year 2 however. Pupils write at length and with developing use of correct punctuation and grammar. For example, they have written extended stories about 'Babushka' which are detailed in content. The pupils' work demonstrates a sequential development of the order of events, as they retell the Russian story accurately in their own words. Standards are above average in Year 6, reflecting the steady progress the school is making. The school has recently focused its monitoring on writing with an emphasis on developing organisation skills and a sense of purpose. As a result, pupils are improving the quality of their writing through focusing on specific aspects of samples of good writing provided by the teachers. They respond well to the opportunities that are provided to write in a variety of settings, using a range of styles and techniques. For example, they use small white boards to write notes when they act as scribes during 'talking and writing partner' sessions. They use both prose and poetry in their writing, as, for example, when they described 'Fun in the Alps' in verse form as they aimed to persuade others to take their winter holiday there. A current display of written work reflects the sound progress the pupils are making in a range of writing. For example, they have written about what happened before hand in the 'Flashback to the Opening' from a given section of text where the character is in a particular situation. Using strategies and resources from the National Literacy Framework, pupils structure stories using a story plan, and tell them in different ways. For example, after reading 'Boy' by Roald Dahl, they retell the account through the eyes of the main character the 'Boy' himself. By the end of Year 6, most of the pupils attempt to divide their longer pieces of work into paragraphs and many use speech marks correctly. The standard of handwriting varies markedly, as the school continues to highlight it as a main area for further development. The samples on display are neat and legible, however, reflecting the care the pupils have taken over presentation.

84. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons where teaching is good or very good, the main strengths include:

- Effective planning based on the National Literacy Strategy.
- Good or very good relationships in the classroom facilitating good attitudes and a good work-rate.
- Good co-operation between teachers and teaching assistants so that all the pupils are well supported throughout the lesson and therefore learn effectively;
- Thorough marking of work which is up to date and relevant, with comments to help the pupils improve whilst celebrating achievement. This leads to good learning over time.
- High expectations, which result in a good attitude to the subject and a good pace of learning.

In some lessons however, learning is not as good as it should be because the teacher spends too much time persuading some pupils, mostly boys, to pay attention and settle down to their work. As a result, the rate of learning is slowed down for the whole class. The fact that girls appear not to achieve as well as boys do in the end of Year 6 tests may be related to this relative lack of attention from the teacher.

85. Teachers provide increasing opportunities for their classes to develop speaking and listening skills, both in English lessons and other subjects. Techniques used include question and answer sessions and discussions, both with the whole class and in pairs or small groups. Where this takes place it has a positive effect upon achievement. The use of extended writing in other subjects across the curriculum is also encouraged. For example, in religious education lessons, Key Stage 1 pupils wrote about Christmas celebrations and the visit of a shepherd to school, and in science they made booklets entitled 'All About Me'. Year 5 pupils linked their written English with history, geography and art and design when they described and illustrated myths and legends from various parts of the world. The school sees 'writing for a purpose' in other subjects across the curriculum as a strength, particularly in Key Stage 1. There is some evidence of the use of ICT to support the development of writing skills and to raise standards of pupils' work. Computers were used in Key Stage 1, for example, to write and compile an anthology of poems entitled 'In the Autumn' and to create a glossary for use in history and geography. However, there are limited examples of older pupils using word processing to present a piece of writing. This aspect of their communication skills is under-developed. The school recognises this as a priority for improvement and looks to further develop the use of ICT in the subject.

86. Since the last inspection the school has fully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and has introduced a formal system of assessment in the subject. This gives a clearer focus on the improvement of teaching and learning in order to raise standards even further. The school has recently established a library, which is a good improvement since the last inspection. However, it is situated in the hall, which is used continually as a teaching area. The school is currently considering how to get round this restriction on the use of the library for research and reference purposes. Efforts are being made to improve provision for drama. All pupils have the opportunity to speak publicly during the school's Christmas production, and an after school Drama Club has been started for Key Stage 2 pupils. However, opportunities for pupils to engage in role-play and dramatic speaking in lessons remain limited.

87. The experienced co-ordinator has an established role, which includes effective monitoring of the subject. She will now have opportunities to continue to extend this role, to influence teaching and learning and the overall development of English across the whole school. She is well placed to improve standards further by establishing a system to moderate pupils' work and to share well practice amongst staff. Other areas for improvement are to develop a policy for written homework and continue to develop skills in writing and the provision for opportunities across the whole school for creative and extended writing. The school acknowledges that resources are adequate but additional materials for shared reading are required to provide teachers and pupils with improved stimuli within the classroom, to meet the needs of all abilities.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. Standards in mathematics have improved steadily overall since the last inspection, when they were broadly average throughout the school. This inspection found that pupils in the current Year 2 are on course to achieve average standards, but that in Year 6, standards are above average. This finding is consistent with the pattern in test results over time. The end of Year 6 tests have stayed above average while the end of Year 2 results fluctuate from above to below average. The good quality of teaching in Year 6, supported by a sound implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, has much to do with the maintenance of above average standards. The pupils begin Year 1 having exceeded the early learning goals in mathematics, so the test results represent satisfactory progress over time.

89. In Year 2, most pupils have a secure understanding of tens and units, enabling them to order and add numbers less than one hundred. The higher attainers are beginning to order and use numbers bigger than this. For example, they double 137 in their head and explain how they did it. However, there is a big spread of ability in this class, with many of the lower attainers needing to use plastic cubes to find doubles and near doubles up to 20. This suggests that the end of Year 2 test results in 2002 will be lower than in 2001, when they were above average. Conversations with the current Year 3 group of pupils reveal that there are quite a few of them capable of high attainment. For example, some of them already understand elements of number that they would normally encounter in later years, such as working out that half of 2.5 is 1.25. The inspection found that the pupils capable of this level of mathematical thought are not being challenged consistently enough in order to fulfil their potential. This helps to explain why far fewer pupils reached Level 3 – the above average level – in mathematics than in reading and writing in 2001. A feature of the 2001 assessments was the relatively weaker performance in the space, shape and measure aspect of mathematics than in number. A scrutiny of the pupils' work in Year 1 and Year 2 suggests that there is insufficient emphasis on this aspect of mathematics, and on applying mathematics skills to practical problems at this stage.

90. Standards in Year 6 are above average. A good proportion of pupils are working towards the above average Level 5 in number, angular measure and data handling. They multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10, 100 and 1000, explaining clearly how they get their answers. They have a very good understanding of fractions, quickly working out equivalent fractions to help them solve practical problems. They measure angles to the nearest degree, convert metric to Imperial units of measurement and use line graphs and pie charts to represent data they have gathered. There was little evidence of extensive work on shapes, for example to link with creative art and design. In the lesson that was seen in Year 6, the pupils applied their thinking and number skills well to formulating problems of their own based on café menus. Many of them used quick and creative ways to solve these problems, reflecting good skills in using and applying mathematics. However, some pupils struggled with this exercise, finding it difficult to keep the overall problem in mind while working out individual parts of it. Their number skills were also below average. Some of these pupils had not been in the school long. The low test-score prediction for these pupils is what keeps judgement of the attainment of the group to above rather than well above average. A scrutiny of the pupils' work from Year 3 to Year 6 shows sound progress from year to year, apart from in Year 4. The difference in standards between the Year 3 and the Year 4 samples is far less marked than between other consecutive year-groups. This finding reflects this cohort's below average test results at the end of Year 2 in 2000.

91. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when some of the teaching was unsatisfactory. The teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy framework for planning lessons. They introduce the learning objective to the whole class, but do not always make this as clear as it should be. They then set work for the pupils to do according to their ability and bring the lesson to a close with the whole class. This is effective in covering the required ground for each year group, and is another substantial improvement since the last inspection. It is also effective in ensuring that pupils with lower than average attainment and special educational needs build steadily on their skills. The teachers provide suitable tailored work for these pupils and give them good support with it. They also provide more difficult tasks for higher attaining pupils. However, the provision for this group is less effective. Their starting points are usually the same as the rest of the class, with extra work provided if and when they complete the set task. This means that they often spend time practising skills they already have instead of extending them or applying them to interesting and challenging practical problems or investigations.

92. When given interesting and challenging work to do, the pupils respond well. They concentrate on the task in hand, behave well, co-operate with their friends and do their best to improve. In the good lesson that was seen in Year 6, for example, the pupils were involved for much of the time in the practical task of setting and solving problems derived from menus. The teacher brought them together from time to time to discuss progress and offer general advice and guidance, but was also free to move around and support individuals and groups. The pupils' work-rate was good and they made good progress in this lesson through independent and collaborative problem solving. In the lessons where they are expected to concentrate without interesting tasks or stimuli, they lose interest. Most pupils cope well with this and continue to do their best to follow the lesson. However, the behaviour of a significant minority, mostly boys, deteriorates in some lessons. The teacher then has to devote time and energy to managing this behaviour, to the detriment of learning for the class as a whole. Insufficient use is made of the various National Numeracy Strategy resources, such as digit cards and individual white-boards in some of these less successful lessons. These resources are intended keep all of the pupils actively involved and also allow the teachers to assess the pupils' understanding more readily. The under-use of them therefore inhibits good assessment and contributes to the behaviour management problem.

93. On one occasion the pupils' learning was significantly affected by their having to decamp to another classroom from their base in the hall to accommodate a physical education lesson that had to be moved from outdoors to indoors because of inclement weather. This further unsettled some already unsettled pupils and made it very difficult for the teacher to keep their attention.

94. The subject co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and has put a lot of effort into improving the curriculum and teaching methods. This has involved the provision of in-service training and a certain amount of monitoring and evaluating classroom practice. As a consequence, the curriculum is securely based on the National Numeracy Strategy. However, the impact of this work on current practice is limited. Some teachers new to the school or relatively inexperienced with the National Numeracy Strategy are not sufficiently supported to secure really effective learning in the classroom through the optimum use of the variety of resources and teaching methods available to them. The co-ordinator is fully aware of these issues, but has limited opportunities to fulfil this role as she is also in charge of the newly established Foundation Stage. Assessment procedures have been improved since the last inspection, and now provide a good picture of the pupils' progress through the school. They are used well to identify and support pupils who fail to make the expected progress through the various levels in a year. However, they are not used to such good effect in determining what is required to stretch the higher attainers, who already achieve expected levels of attainment. As a consequence, pupils in this group do not achieve as well as they might. Some use is made of computers, for example in compiling spreadsheets or making a robot draw shapes. However, the extent and level of the use of ICT to support learning in mathematics is still in need of improvement.

## **SCIENCE**

95. At the time of the school's previous inspection standards were broadly average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Since that time, standards have improved significantly to above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 to maintain above average standards from the end of reception. In the teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2001, the schools' results were well above average. The differences between the 2001 test results and the levels of attainment reported here do not represent a fall in standards in Key Stage 1, but rather illustrate the variation in standards that can occur with small numbers of



pupils in a year group. The well above average results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 represent the good progress that these pupils made in Years 3 to 6.

96. By the end of Year 2, pupils' experimental skills are above average. They have carried out experiments on many aspects of science, for example on sound in Year 2 and on the senses in Year 1. In Year 2, pupils successfully put forward their own ideas, carry out appropriate activities and then confidently record their observations. They readily explain the need to make their experiments fair. A very small number of pupils occasionally have difficulties clearly explaining the work they are doing. Most pupils successfully name the main external features of both the body and a flowering plant, and they confidently identify the items needed to sustain life. Pupils readily explain the requirements of a healthy diet. They understand that different animals and plants are found in different places. Most pupils recognise and name common materials, such as metal, plastic and wood, and they accurately describe their properties, as well as some of their uses. They explain the role of batteries, wires and bulbs in an electric circuit, and know that a circuit will not work if it has a break in it. The pupils are confident in explaining that light and sound come from a variety of sources. Most can explain why sound becomes quieter the further away it is.

97. At the end of Year 6, the pupils' experimental skills are well above average. They put forward their own ideas, select their own apparatus, organise their own experiments and make their own observations. They then compare their findings with their original hypothesis. Pupils in each year group successfully carry out a range of experiments. For example, in Years 5 and 6, they investigate gravity and air-resistance and in Year 4, they investigate friction and separate materials from mixtures. These skills underpin the pupils' very good knowledge and understanding in all areas of the science curriculum. In Year 6, pupils know many the functions of some of the main organs of the human body. For example, they explain accurately the role of the heart in the circulation of the blood. They also describe the functions of the various parts of a flower, distinguishing clearly, for instance, between the stigma and the stamen. The pupils accurately name a variety of materials, and describe their various properties. They have a good understanding of the differences between solids, liquids and gases. Pupils know that materials can be made into mixtures, and they describe in detail how mixtures can be separated into their components through processes such as evaporation and filtration. Pupils know that objects have weight because of the gravitational pull of the Earth, and they can explain that friction and air resistance are forces that slow moving objects. They know how to measure forces, and can identify the directions in which they act. Pupils know that sound is caused by an object vibrating, and that the vibrations travel through air and various materials to reach our ears. Most can explain how shadows are caused by an object blocking the light.

98. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when some teaching was poor. The main factors in teaching that promote good learning throughout the school are:

- Good planning based on government guidelines, ensuring full coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.
- Teachers' use and emphasise correct scientific terminology. This is having a beneficial effect on the pupils' overall learning.
- Clear instructions and helpful demonstrations informed by good subject knowledge. As a result, the pupils show great interest in the subject, displaying consistently good attitudes and increased confidence in practical work.
- Good use of practical activities to interest the pupils and stimulate enquiry.

In such circumstances, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

99. In Years 3 to 6, additional strengths, that promote especially good learning and progress, are apparent in the preparation and delivery of lessons. These include:

- Good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils, leading to a high degree of independence in carrying out their activities.
- Very productive use of class discussions to draw out what has been learned.

Throughout the school, the pupils' enthusiasm reflects that of the teachers. Pupils work hard, concentrate well and are keen to find answers to the problems they are set. The teachers and Educational Care Officers provide well-directed support throughout. The pupils' behaviour is good. They work well with other pupils in carrying out activities and are very aware of safety procedures. Most present their work neatly and carefully. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but few comments of support and advice are added to help the pupils develop their work further.

100. In lessons that are less successful, especially in Key Stage 1, the main drawback is planning that does not always make appropriate allowance for the range of ability in the class. Too often, pupils are all presented with the same activities, which results in higher attainers not being sufficiently challenged.

101. The school provides suitable resources to support the scheme of work. Careful planning ensures that all aspects of work are suitably covered, with the planning for practical activities now being extremely thorough, especially in Years 3 to 6. The co-ordinator has contributed significantly to the improvements that have been made in the subject. He is an enthusiastic and able practitioner who supports his colleagues well whenever necessary. He also has appropriate opportunities to observe the work being undertaken in the classrooms, to see for himself the standards being achieved. Good arrangements are now in place for assessing the pupils' work, with adequate evidence being kept to identify pupils' current attainment and the progress they have made. However, the information is not always used well enough to provide suitable future work for all pupils, especially those with above average or high attainment.

102. The written work undertaken by the pupils, especially the reporting of practical activities, provides support to the school's initiative in literacy. Counting and measuring activities in various aspects of the subject support the school's work in numeracy. ICT is also used, on occasions, to enhance the work in science, such as when pupils in Year 2 used a program on parts of the body, and pupils in Years 3/4 produced graphs to display the results of their experiment on friction. However, computers are not used as effectively as they could be to promote learning, for example through independent research using the Internet or CD-ROM. Pupils find science stimulating, especially when carrying out experiments. The excitement and wonder generated by the discoveries of science make a positive contribution towards their spiritual development. However, not much emphasis is placed on the contribution of different cultures and civilisations to progress in science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

103. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Judgements on standards are therefore based on evidence from an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with both co-ordinator and pupils. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is broadly in line with what is expected. The artwork seen around the school has been displayed thoughtfully and is well presented to celebrate pupils' effort and achievement. There is a reasonable variety of two-dimensional work in art and design on display. Pupils have used paint, crayons, pastels and pencils for example, and have made collages and felt hangings. Their skills in modelling, moulding, carving and constructing are not so well developed, however, because they have had less experience with these techniques. Examples of three-dimensional work on display include a three-

dimensional rainforest display in Key Stage 1 and three-dimensional flowers in Key Stage 2, which are of an sound standard. The last inspection identified limited access to colour printers, which restricted progress in the use of computers in art and design. The limited amount of computer-generated art on display is of a reasonable standard, but the pupils have not has sufficient experience yet to fully develop their skills in this area.

104. Overall pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in response to sound teaching. In the one lesson observed, however, in Year 4 and 5 class, the teaching was very good. The pupils made very good progress because they responded well to instructions and encouragement within the purposeful working environment. Most pupils sustained concentration and careful application in order to produce well-sketched representations of objects arranged in a still life by using different pencils. This was a re-arranged lesson taken by a supply teacher that did not suffer from the pupil management drawbacks of some other such lessons.

105. Planning and organisation throughout the school provides a range of activities to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has involved outside artists and drawn previously upon the expertise of the teaching staff to broaden the pupils' appreciation of art and design and widen their experiences. Some teachers have made good use of the local environment a resource for sketching and examining textures and shapes as pupils observe the local landscapes and buildings. Although leadership is sound the subject has yet to benefit from the school's policy to enable co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning, although opportunities are planned for the near future. Processes for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have yet to be established and there is no portfolio of work to track standards of achievement across the key stages. There are some good examples of cross-curricular work. For example in Key Stage 1, pupils' art and design is incorporated into their history and geography topic about the North American Native Indians. Similarly older pupils in Key Stage 2 develop lettering, drawing and colouring skills within their studies of European countries.

106. The accommodation severely restricts creative activities because there is insufficient room in many teaching areas and no convenient water supply in others. There is a shortage of accessible storage and working space to fully exploit the sound range of resources available in the school

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

107. At the time of the school's previous inspection, standards were below average at the end of Year 6. Significant improvements have been made since that time. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress throughout the school to reach standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 that are in line with national expectations. During the inspection only one lesson was seen, in Years 3 and 4. Overall judgements are therefore based on teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their work.

108. By the end of Year 2, pupils clarify their ideas for making a product through class discussion, and produce suitable pictures of the item they intend to make. They are confident in choosing the materials they need from a range provided by the teacher including paper, card, clay and fruit. They select appropriate tools, such as scissors and knives, to help them make their product. Pupils cut their components accurately, and join them together carefully in different ways, for example by using a sticky tape or split-pins. By the end of Year 6, pupils draw up appropriate plans for making a product, often generating their own ideas. Having produced their plans, pupils choose from a range of materials including wood, plastic, electrical components and food items. They use a good range of tools, including saws to measure, cut, shape and join the materials and apply appropriate finishing techniques, such

as painting where required. They confidently evaluate their work, both as they proceed and when they have finished.

109. Overall, both teaching and learning are much improved, and are now satisfactory. In the one lesson seen in the Year 3 and 4 class, however, teaching and learning were of good quality. Teachers' planning is now good, having improved since the time of the last inspection. Pupils are provided with opportunities to carry out relevant activities, develop skills at an appropriate level and work with a suitable range of materials and tools. Teachers also link the work in design and technology with that in other subjects, wherever possible. For example, in Year 1 and 2, some of the work produced is closely related to that in religious education, whilst in Years 4 and 5 the production of torches also benefits pupils' learning in science. Pupils clearly enjoy the subject. They readily discuss how successful their design has been and how it could be improved. The range of activities provided, the instruction received and the enthusiasm displayed clearly help pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory gains in a range of skills. Where teaching is good, pupils are given extended opportunities to disassemble commercially produced items, to discuss their work and to experiment with the making of their own products. Pupils' interest is engaged and their behaviour is good.

110. Planning is much improved. It is based on a suitable scheme of work derived from government guidelines. A much improved array of resources has also been provided to support learning in all areas of the subject curriculum. The leadership of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator has played a significant part in the improvements that have taken place since the previous inspection. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Although she has limited opportunities to observe lessons, she has a clear overview of the work that is being done in the school. At present assessment procedures are informal. The information available is insufficient to identify pupils' current levels of knowledge, understanding and skills. The writing activities undertaken in planning and evaluating work give support to the school's initiative in literacy. Measuring activities, such as cutting card and fabric accurately, support the work in numeracy. Little use is presently made of ICT, to enhance the work in the subject, although pupils in Years 3/4 did search the Internet to find information on different kinds of sandwiches! The production of items such as diva lamps contributes towards the development of pupils' cultural awareness.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

111. Standards are in line with what is expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils achieve appropriately and make satisfactory progress in their learning. However, pupils with special educational needs make good progress against their prior attainment.

112. Since the last inspection, a structured programme to develop mapping skills through the school has been introduced. This has led to clear improvements in attainment in this aspect of geography. By the end of Year 2 pupils can identify features of a settlement and use symbols and early mapping skills to discuss and subsequently plot their route across the specified geographical area. Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of atlases and maps. For example, they use keys and symbols to explain their own maps and use an index and grid references to locate places on commercially produced maps. They relate geographical considerations to different historical periods. For example, in their study of Ancient Egypt, they have explored why irrigation within the River Nile region was so necessary. In Year 5, pupils have used their geographical knowledge and understanding to research selected aspects of a particular European country. Year 4 pupils are able to locate European Countries and use a database and atlas to identify and locate capital cities and find other relevant information.

113. During the inspection only two lessons in geography were observed. They were both in Key Stage 2 and were of satisfactory quality. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1. From the available evidence, the main strengths in teaching are:

- The teaching of basic skills in the subject, especially those related to the use of maps.
- The use of studies in other subjects to re-enforce the learning and use of geographical skills. In Year 6, for example, pupils incorporate geography work in their history study of Ancient Egypt as they examine and discover why irrigation within the River Nile region was so necessary.
- The main areas for improvement are:
- Paying more attention to the prior attainment of different groups of pupils. Much of the work seen was similar in content between differing ability and age groups.
- The use of ICT to improve the quality of learning.

114. Curriculum planning makes a positive contribution to standards because it avoids repeated coverage of the same ground through a carefully thought-out cycle of topics. This is to be further enhanced by placing a greater emphasis on the development of broader study skills that will help the pupils to become more confident learners in geography.

115. The co-ordinator has begun to monitor performance in the subject. The outcomes of the monitoring form the basis of a sound subject action plan. Priorities that have been identified include the need to raise the profile of geography throughout the school and the incorporation of pupils' views and ideas. Procedures for formally assessing pupils' attainment and progress have yet to be established in order to provide clearer guidance for teachers on the level at which to pitch lessons.

116. Resources are adequate, although accommodation is most inadequate for practical activities on site. The school uses the local area regularly to enhance the curriculum. The pupils explore the immediate locality and visits purpose-built resources such as the New Mills Heritage Centre. The residential visit for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils adds interest to the curriculum by giving them the opportunity to study the contrasting areas of Scarborough and York first-hand.

## **HISTORY**

117. Standards are in line with what is expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Whilst pupils with special educational needs make good progress against their prior attainment pupils overall make satisfactory progress in their learning and achieve appropriately.

118. Pupils in Year 2 have sound knowledge and study skills. They learn about past times and begin to make comparisons with their own lives in the present. For example, they have looked at the way the Native North American Indians made use of buffalo in their daily lives and compared this to how people clothe and feed themselves today. They communicate what they have learned through labelled drawings and writing. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to place each period of history correctly on a time line, showing a good sense of chronology. They know about Queen Victoria's reign, for example, and are aware of her influence on their own times.

119. During the inspection only two lessons in history were observed. They were both in Key Stage 1 and were of satisfactory quality. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2. The main strengths in the lessons that were seen were:

- Good preparation and presentation of the lesson and clear explanation of the task.
- Active encouragement of discussion among the pupils.

120. Most of the pupils respond well to the clear expectations for good behaviour and show good attitudes to their learning. The main areas for improvement in teaching are:

- The use of assessment to measure pupils' current levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in order to plan lessons that will stretch all ability groups. Currently, pupils of varying abilities are usually presented with identical or similar tasks.
- The use of marking, which is inconsistent across the key stages. Comments sometimes acknowledge achievement and give praise for effort, but there is insufficient guidance for pupils on how to improve.

121. Planning of the subject provides appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum. Pupils have studied the Victorians in Year 4, for example, Tudors in Year 5 and are currently enjoying their work on Ancient Egypt in Year 6. There is evidence in the Year 3 and 4 class that ICT has been used to support teaching in the subject. For example, pictures and information on 'mummies' have been computer generated as a valuable resource. However, computers are not used as extensively as they should be to enhance pupils' learning

122. A monitoring programme has been established to improve standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of how this should be achieved. For example, she is planning to put more emphasis on skills in planning. Although pupils acquire a good range of knowledge in their history lessons, skills development is currently more limited.

123. Educational visits are an important part of a history topic in each key stage. Places visited include museums in Manchester and Chester and the New Mills Heritage Centre. The residential week for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 provides good opportunities for them to enrich their cultural development as well as historical knowledge and understanding through visits to historical sights in Scarborough and York. While resources are adequate, accommodation severely restricts some activities, such as role-play, investigation and research.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

124. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were reported to be generally in line with those expected. Since that time national expectations in the subject have significantly increased. Although improvements have been made in the school's provision, the overall standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are lower than they should be. Pupils are, however, making satisfactory progress towards appropriate standards, and all statutory requirements are met.

125. By the end of Year 2, pupils confidently name items of computer equipment, such as mouse, keyboard and screen. Most pupils successfully use a keyboard to type simple text, producing appropriate titles, phrases and short sentences. Many automatically place gaps between words using the space bar, and a number are able to introduce capital letters and full stops into their writing. A significant minority, however, need support in identifying the correct keys to use. Using an appropriate art package, pupils produce an interesting range of pictures, such as those of houses and people. Most pupils show suitable control in using a mouse, although a small number continue to find this difficult. Few pupils successfully undertake modelling activities, and most find it difficult to follow instructions presented on the screen. Many pupils explain clearly how to use a floor turtle, providing instructions to make it travel in different ways. With help from their teachers, pupils successfully access the menu to save their finished work.

126. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils show sound and much improved skills in word processing. They are confident in changing the font, colour and size of their work, and moving portions of text from one place to another. Pupils in Years 4 and 5, for example, have produced word-processed poems about the winter, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 have written a variety of letters. Most pupils produce various forms of art and design work, and higher attaining pupils merge their pictures with text. At this stage, pupils have good skills in directing a floor turtle to move in a chosen way. However, as at the time of the last report, most find it difficult to direct a screen turtle to follow a set course or produce their own patterns and shapes. Many pupils successfully undertake simple simulation exercises, and some produce spreadsheets. A number of pupils readily access the Internet, as well as a range of computer programs, to provide a variety of information. Year 4 and 5 pupils have also collected and recorded a range of data, such as on the effects of friction on speed, producing suitable graphs to display their findings. As with other aspects of the subject, however, a significant number of pupils need help from adults to carry out the required routines. Opportunities are presently limited for pupils to monitor external events or to use electronic mail.

127. During the inspection, no lessons in the subject were seen. However, observations were made of pupils using computers in their classrooms, samples of their work were studied and discussions were held with them. Based on this evidence, the overall quality of teaching and learning is judged satisfactory. Teachers throughout the school are keen and enthusiastic. They make the best use they can of the resources and accommodation available. At the moment, a number of teachers readily admit to some previous lack of confidence in teaching the subject. However, they have taken steps to remedy this through in-service training. Through careful preparation of lessons, they are providing pupils with appropriate learning experiences, in line with their present knowledge and understanding. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. They provide clear and careful instructions and demonstrations on how to use various items of hardware, as well as word processing and art packages. Pupils respond by showing good attitudes to the subject, and behaving well. They listen carefully, and, even though a significant number lack confidence, they settle well to all tasks, with good levels of concentration and developing levels of skill. Relationships are good, and pupils ask adults for help when required. They share computers amicably, and are careful in their use of all forms of equipment. Pupils clearly enjoy the subject and they work well, both alone and with a partner when necessary, teachers provide appropriate help and advice throughout, enabling their pupils to make steady progress.

128. The school has sensibly amended the government's curriculum guidelines to suit the school, preparing lessons aimed below the expected level for the older year-groups. The poor accommodation for ICT limiting the school's effectiveness in raising standards. For example, teachers cannot realistically provide whole class lessons in which all the pupils use computers at the same time. The resources that the school does have are used well. The enthusiastic co-ordinator is fully aware of what needs to be done to raise standards further, such as increasing pupils' confidence and independence in using equipment, and in providing more opportunities for pupils to undertake activities such as monitoring and e-mailing. The co-ordinator supports her colleagues informally, whenever a need should arise. Assessment procedures are currently limited, providing insufficient information to enable staff to identify pupils' current understanding, or to plan for their future needs. Through the work in word-processing, the subject is making some impact on pupils' literacy skills. Through the collection of data, and its presentation, for example in the form of graphs in Year 3/4, as well as its use in mathematics lessons, ICT is having a beneficial effect on the development of numeracy skills. ICT is currently having a limited impact on other subjects, although information has been collected in some subjects, for example history and science.

## **MUSIC**

129. Standards in music are in line with expectations overall at the end of Year 6. Standards in singing have improved since the last inspection, and are above average, due to the very good lesson provided voluntarily by the leader of a local choir. There was insufficient direct evidence to judge standards in other aspects of music. Discussions with pupils suggest that they have not had enough experience in this aspect of the subject to reach the expected standards in composing and performing music however. They have listened to a range of music representing a variety of different cultures, but there is little written evidence of their responses.

130. No music lessons were seen in Year 2, so no firm judgements can be made about attainment in most aspects of the subject at this stage. However, the pupils sing very well in assemblies, reaching a higher than average standard for their age. They sing a range of songs and hymns with confidence and skill, producing clear, accurate notes. By the end of Year 6, all the pupils sing in tune and with a good range of expression and volume. Pupils lacking in confidence in their singing voices do especially well due to the challenging, but very supportive, coaching they receive in weekly lessons taken by the leader of the Kinder



children's choir. In composing and performing, the pupils lack the experience they need to reach the standards expected for this age group. In conversation with them, it is evident that they have not had sufficient experience in selecting and using instruments to compose and perform group pieces of their own. Individual higher attaining pupils responded to the challenge of doing this during the inspection, performing to a good standard and demonstrating their potential. Some talented pupils are underachieving in this area because they are not identified and supported, as was evident listening to the skilful way the recorder was played by a pupil who was developing this expertise at home.

131. The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory overall, with excellent teaching of singing by the visiting specialist. These lessons proceed at a brisk pace, with humour, but with very high expectations for effort and performance. The pupils respond with a very high work rate and make very good progress. Even the most reluctant pupils in the group – generally boys – produce accurate clear singing notes a few minutes after giving the impression they cannot sing at all! The only lesson that was seen other than this with this age group was taken by a stand in teacher in the absence of the class teacher, who is also the subject co-ordinator. The teacher did not know the pupils and had to use the lesson to gauge their abilities. The main learning objective was achieved. The pupils played a four line pentatonic piece on tuned percussion instruments to a set rhythm and then composed one line to fit in with it. They learned the set rhythm well, but showed inexperience in playing to a given beat and listening to others playing at the same time. Behaviour was difficult to manage in this lesson because of the decision to keep all the class focused on the same activity for much of the time. The quality of teaching seen in Year 1 was also satisfactory, but it lacked imagination in the use of strategies to get the pupils practically involved in making and listening to sounds made by different instruments. Again, behaviour management became a problem because the pupils were seated for too long in one position having to listen to the teacher. Little use is yet made of ICT to enhance the pupils' learning.

132. The progress that pupils make in music depends on the opportunities they have to engage in a range of activities that develop their skills over the full range of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The cramped nature of the building works against this. Many classrooms are small and there are no other areas in which pupils can make music without disturbing others. Assessment is still not used to gauge the pupils' skills and to help teachers to plan lessons that will build on them. Much is left to the contribution of specialists, indicating a need to provide more support for teachers to deliver the curriculum themselves. Instrumental lessons are provided on clarinet and violin. Pupils have to pay for these, but the inability to pay would not debar any pupils from taking lessons, which are of good quality. The experience pupils have of singing in the local choir contributes positively to their personal and social development. The range of music they listen to in assemblies widens their cultural horizons and encourages reflection on the human spirit.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

133. Standards are in line with expectations in games in Year 2 and Year 6 and in gymnastics in Year 6. Observation of a dance lesson in Year 3 indicates average standards in this aspect also at Key Stage 1. The school's records show that most pupils can swim at least 25 metres before they leave the school and have at least the minimum knowledge and understanding of water-safety procedures. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on other aspects of the pupils' attainment.

134. Pupils have average ball control and team game skills in Year 2. Higher attaining pupils throw and catch a ball or beanbag accurately while average and below average attaining pupils increase their hand-eye co-ordination in practising this skill. They show an awareness of other pupils as they move around an enclosed space and follow simple rules of

a game. Year 3 pupils respond to music according to ideas suggested by the teacher to move like an animal of their choosing. They show good awareness of their bodies, using stretches and curls appropriately and making good use of the space around them. They collaborate well to combine movements in a group to tell a story. In Year 6, the pupils demonstrate good ball skills and good awareness of the rules of particular games. For example, they perform various permitted foot movements in basketball to avoid opponents and throw the ball to a team-mate. They also have good skills at lacrosse, because of expert coaching from a visiting coach. They hold the racquet correctly and compete with opponents to scoop the ball and score points. This is a very useful addition to the curriculum in view of the other restraints placed upon it by the accommodation. The gymnastics lesson seen was only the second one of the term. The pupils made good progress in exploring how the apparatus could be used to perform symmetric and asymmetric balances at different levels. Their performance at the start of the lesson was below expectations, but improved rapidly as the lesson progressed, indicating that by the end of the term, they should have average skills for their age. There was little evidence, however, of above average levels of performance.

135. The quality of teaching seen was good in Year 6 and satisfactory in other year groups. Lessons in Year 6 proceed at a good pace, with high expectations for performance and a sense of urgency. The teacher manages the pupils very well to get the best out of them during a lesson. No time is wasted on discipline. Good subject knowledge and good planning ensure clear learning objectives and smooth progression from one activity to the next to build up skills. The lessons observed in other years did not include enough variety of sufficiently challenging activities. In these lessons, the pupils lose concentration from time to time and need too much reminding about behaviour rules.

136. The very poor accommodation has a negative impact on teaching, learning and standards. Some parents suggest, and senior members of staff agree, that standards in athletics, as tested during local sports-day events, are lower than they should be because the pupils do not have ready access to a playing field. It would be difficult to argue that the severe restrictions on the use of the hall do not have an equally negative impact on standards in gymnastics and dance. The fact that the pupils achieve the standards they do in some aspects of physical education is a tribute to the skill and dedication of the staff in these very difficult circumstances.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

137. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress. The standards reported at the time of the school's previous inspection have been maintained. During the inspection no lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. Additional evidence was gained through a study of teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their work.

138. By the end of Year 2, pupils are familiar with two of the major world faiths, Christianity and Hinduism. They know some key facts about the important figures from both traditions, especially Jesus and Lord Brahma, and understand something of their importance to their followers. They recognise that religions have a variety of ceremonies and special occasions. They can, for example, explain the importance of Holi and Diwali to Hindus and Easter to Christians. Their understanding of the importance of "special things" in different faiths is illustrated by the specific examples they give, such as why Hindus venerate the lotus flower. Pupils recognise the importance of friends and friendship. They confidently describe what makes a "good friend", and they understand that many of their friendships are found within their own families. Many of the pupils spoken to understand the concept of bravery and recognise the significance of Poppy Day.

139. By the end of Year 6, pupils are familiar with the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths. They successfully identify and discuss similarities and differences between religions, such as in clothing and life-styles. They know that different religions have their own special buildings, such as the church, synagogue and the mosque, and their own special books, such as the Bible, the Torah and Qur'an. Pupils understand that religions also have their various ceremonies and special occasions, and they can explain, for example, the importance of the Five Pillars of Wisdom to Muslims. Pupils are confident in discussing a variety of issues, such as the importance of rules in all religions, as well as in every day life, and the need to understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, readily explain the importance of the Ten Commandments to both Jews and Christians. Pupils recognise the part that prayer plays in all religions. As well as having written their own prayers, pupils in Years 5/6 show that they understand the significance of prayer in other traditions and faiths. For example, they explain the requirement for Moslems to wash before they pray.

140. In the lesson seen in the Years 3/4 class, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. The other evidence provided shows that the quality of teaching and learning overall is also satisfactory. Lessons are carefully planned. Teachers provide interesting and thought provoking experiences, such as reading stories about people like Eric Liddel who made very difficult choices. They have sound subject knowledge, and usually provide clear explanations for pupils, enabling them all, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding. Occasionally, a small number of pupils are inadequately involved during the early part of the lesson, and the pace of the lesson slows as a result. Pupils generally find the subject interesting, and concentrate well on the tasks in hand. Most listen carefully, reflect well on what they have heard, and try hard to explain their feelings and views. They work well with other pupils when the situation arises, and their attitudes and behaviour are usually good. This helps them to make appropriate progress. Just occasionally, a small minority of pupils are less attentive than they should be. Pupils generally take care with the presentation of their work. Teachers always mark pupils' books, but few comments or advice are added.

141. The school closely follows the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The co-ordinator is capable and enthusiastic. She monitors the work being undertaken in the subject through her supervisory role as headteacher. As at the time of the previous inspection, no agreed assessment procedures are in place. Though informal assessment takes place during lessons, little information is recorded to either assess pupils' current attainment, or to help with the planning of suitable future work. The written activities undertaken by pupils successfully support the school's initiative in literacy. The work undertaken also provides suitable support for all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Little use is currently made of ICT to enhance the work in the subject.