

INSPECTION REPORT

PICKERING COMMUNITY INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Pickering

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121363

Headteacher: Mrs June Young

Reporting inspector: Barbara Crane
21227

Dates of inspection: 25th – 28th February 2002

Inspection number: 194461

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and nursery school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ruffa Lane
Pickering
North Yorkshire

Postcode: YO18 7AT

Telephone number: 01751 472620

Fax number: 01751 477653

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Johnson

Date of previous inspection: May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21227	Barbara Crane	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage, science, art, history, geography.	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
14141	Ernie Marshall	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
29989	Pauline Goodsell	Team inspector	English, music, religious education, special educational needs.	
19120	Derek Pattinson	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education, equal opportunities.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

SCHOOLhaus Ltd
 Suite 17
 BPS Business Centre
 Brake Lane
 Walesby
 Nottinghamshire
 NG22 9HQ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
 Inspection Quality Division
 The Office for Standards in Education
 Alexandra House
 33 Kingsway
 London
 WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This infant and nursery school is average in size and has 228 boys and girls between the ages of five and seven. Fifty-two children attend the Nursery part-time and nearly all transfer to the Reception classes. The school serves both Pickering and its surrounding area and a number of children come to school by bus. Twenty per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is broadly average. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Six per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. All of the pupils speak English as their first language and all but a very few come from white families. When children start at the school, a wide range of attainment is evident, but it is generally below average, particularly in language and literacy. The new headteacher started at the school in January.

The school has gained the Investors In People award and the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark. In addition, it is a School Centre for Initial Teacher Training and is involved in training five student teachers each year. The number of pupils at the school is rising and a new classroom is planned to accommodate the larger numbers.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with many very good features. Standards in reading, mathematics and science are better than expected by the time pupils are seven. The pupils' work in art is outstanding. The teaching and learning are good. The leadership and management of the school are good. The staff work well as a team; they put the pupils first and direct their efforts to improving the quality of education the school provides. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in reading, mathematics, science and art are better than expected by the time pupils leave the school.
- Children in the Nursery get off to a flying start because of the very good teaching.
- The pupils have very good attitudes to school because the teaching is lively and the lessons are interesting.
- The pupils get on very well together and learn to use their initiative and take responsibility.
- The school involves parents very well in their children's learning and they have a high level of confidence in the school.
- The staff are well led and work very well together as a team, with a tight focus on raising standards.

What could be improved

- The progress made by some lower attaining pupils in writing.
- The way in which the organisation in the Reception classes enables the pupils to practise the basic skills learned in literacy and numeracy.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since it was inspected in 1997. Standards are higher and the teaching is better. The curriculum is better planned and the few minor issues involving the accommodation have been resolved. The school's ability to look at what it needs to do next to improve is now very good. It has already identified that improvements are needed in writing and in the organisation in the Reception classes.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

The school's results in the 2001 tests were not as good as those in the previous year as just over a third of the year group taking the tests had special educational needs. The pupils achieved well to get these results. The school's results in 2001 were about the same as those in similar schools. Standards have been rising at this school, over time, with more pupils reaching the level beyond that expected for their age, year on year. This reflects the school's drive to improve what it provides for more able pupils. The school sets itself challenging targets and meets them.

By the time children start in Year 1, most reach the targets set for them in all of the areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy. Children in the Nursery make very good progress in all areas of learning. Reception children often make good progress, but sometimes their rate of learning in literacy and numeracy slows because they do not immediately practise the skills they have learned. All children make very good progress in their personal and social development. On the basis of the work seen now, standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science in Year 2. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well in these areas. Pupils read confidently and expressively. They are quick with numbers and are good at investigating in science. Standards in writing are average, but the lower attaining pupils should be doing better. Their progress is slower than other groups of pupils because the teaching does not always meet their needs as precisely. There is outstanding work in art. The pupils express their ideas individually and use their skills in a wide range of media. The pupils work competently with computers and reach the expectations for their age. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment is as expected and they achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils are keen to learn and take advantage of what is offered to them. They concentrate well and enjoy the lessons and other activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils behave well in the classrooms and at play. They are sensible and well mannered.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils enjoy using their initiative and pupils from different backgrounds and with different abilities get on very well together.
Attendance	Very good. The pupils arrive punctually and are ready to start work when they come to school.

The pupils respond very well to the trust placed in them by the adults in the school. They develop a caring attitude towards each other and notice what needs to be done in the classrooms. They are very good at tidying away at the end of lessons; good habits are encouraged from the earliest days and the pupils enjoy taking responsibility.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

The teaching is good, overall and there is some very high quality teaching in the Nursery. The teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes develop children's spoken language well, through good questions and using a wide vocabulary that the children pick up. Teachers know what they are teaching and have a very good understanding of their subjects. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage them well so that classrooms are calm and there is a hard-working atmosphere. All of the teachers are skilled in the direct teaching of skills in literacy and numeracy but this is more effectively built upon in the Nursery class and in Years 1 and 2 because the pupils here have more opportunities to immediately practise what they have learned in the activities that follow whole class sessions. The teaching and learning in reading and mathematics are good and the basic skills are taught thoroughly. The teachers do not, however, plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in real-life situations. Teaching is satisfactory in writing, and has some stronger features. For example, teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to write in styles to suit different purposes. Pupils with special educational needs and the average and more able pupils often make good progress in writing. The teachers do not, however, always plan work that meets the needs of the lower attaining pupils in writing and so they often learn at a slower rate. Teaching assistants provide good quality support and know what they are doing to support pupils' learning. There is some good guidance given, when teachers mark pupils' work, but this is not always the case.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for the Nursery and Reception children. Very good for the pupils in Years 1 and 2. The lessons are interesting and there is a good range of visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are well supported and make good progress. They have specific targets to aim at and parents are kept well informed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. The pupils have plenty of well-planned opportunities to learn what is right and wrong, how to work and play together and think about how they feel. They have good models to follow in the staff. The pupils' are aware of their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is good. The pupils' well-being is given a high priority. The school has developed a good system for checking how well pupils are doing, but is not using the information as well to promote some pupils' progress in writing.

The school teaches all of the subjects it should and there are good links between subjects and this makes lessons more relevant to the pupils. The activities in Reception classes are not always planned so that children immediately practise the skills that they have been taught in introductory sessions and so they do not always make the best possible progress in literacy and numeracy. The school has built a very good partnership with parents and gives them very clear information so that they can be involved in their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher is quickly gaining a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through careful analysis and checking on teaching and learning. She is well supported by the senior staff and subject managers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	All responsibilities are carried out well. The governors play a full part in planning for improvement and check that the school is on track to meet its targets for improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has a climate of self-evaluation and looks closely at what needs to improve. The right priorities have been identified.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses its money prudently in order to raise standards and provision for the pupils. The best value is sought for the money it spends. The school's staffing and accommodation are adequate and resources are good.

The staff work very well together and share their expertise. The school provides training for student teachers and this considerably enhances the professional development of the staff, who welcome the new ideas. New building is planned to accommodate the school's rising roll.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school and become more mature and responsible. • The teaching is good. • They feel that the staff are approachable. • Their children are expected to work hard and do their best. • The school works closely with them. • The school is well led and managed. • There is a good range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are differing views about the amount of homework given. • The quality of information about children's progress.

The inspection findings support all of the parents' positive views, but not their concerns. Homework is well organised, parents know how they can help and the work done at home supports pupils' learning effectively. The school provides a wealth of information to parents and makes them aware of each child's targets for improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's results in 2001 were about the same as those in similar schools but were not as good as those in the previous year. This was because just over a third of the year group taking the tests had special educational needs. The pupils achieved well to get these results. Standards have been rising at this school, over time, with more pupils reaching the level beyond that expected for their age, year on year. This reflects the school's drive to improve what it provides for more able pupils. The school sets itself challenging targets and meets them.
2. The children in the Foundation Stage (those who are in the Nursery and Reception classes) make good progress, overall, from a below average starting point. By the time children start in Year 1, most reach the targets set for them in all of the areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy. Children in the Nursery make very good progress in all areas of learning. Reception children often make good progress, but sometimes their rate of learning in literacy and numeracy slows because they do not immediately practise the skills they are taught. This is mainly because of the arrangements for outdoor play, which take a teaching assistant out of the classroom to supervise activities outdoors. This limits the interaction possible between the teacher and the children who remain, some of whom are not engaged in activities that build on what they have just learned. All children make very good progress in their personal and social development because the staff place a strong emphasis on developing the children's independence.
3. On the basis of the work seen now, standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science in Year 2. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well in these areas. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in literacy and numeracy because they receive good support in lessons. The targets that are set in their individual education plans focus on what they need to improve and the teaching is well directed towards these targets.
4. Standards in speaking and listening are average by the time the pupils leave the school. This represents good achievement as many start from a low point. Pupils read confidently because the basic skills are taught very thoroughly. They use good expression when they read, varying the tone of voice, for example, when characters in the stories are speaking. They enjoy reading stories and poems and quickly gather information from books. Pupils are good at tackling harder or unfamiliar words by looking at the whole sentence to see what makes sense. By the time they are seven the pupils know how to use dictionaries, contents pages, indexes and glossaries. The higher attaining readers are able to discuss the way that characters are built up and humour is used in stories. The school has recognised the better attainment of girls over time and has put in place a range of effective strategies that has successfully improved the level of reading by boys, so that there is now a little difference between their rates of progress, but this is narrowing.
5. Standards in writing are average, but the lower attaining pupils should be doing better. Their progress is slower than other groups of pupils because the teaching does not always meet their needs as precisely. By the age of seven, the pupils express themselves satisfactorily in their writing with an average number of pupils doing better than expected. The higher attaining pupils punctuate speech correctly and use question and exclamation marks appropriately. These pupils show imagination and flair in their writing and confidently select adjectives to help them write more exciting sentences. However, the lower attainers do not make such good progress; while they can form simple sentences and use full stops and capital letters, their sentences are often repetitive. Although they spell a reasonable range of simple words, the pupils do not often enough use their knowledge of spelling rules and letter strings to help them

spell less familiar words. Few use joined writing and some pupils' writing is untidy, with erratically sized letters with a mixture of lower case and capital letters being used.

6. In mathematics, pupils achieve well in their development of understanding of number, shape, space and measures, and in their ability to handle data. By the end of Year 2, many pupils understand the place value of digits, and sequence numbers beyond 100. They estimate, with increasing accuracy, the length of objects more or less than one metre. Pupils read weights on scales using standard measures, and start to classify two-dimensional shapes using reflective symmetry. They set out their findings, when they collect information, in tables and block graphs, and are increasingly using information and communication technology for this purpose. The pupils are quick with numbers when they calculate mentally. They can explain several different ways of arriving at an answer and decide on the most efficient way to work out calculations. The pupils competently solve problems but have too few opportunities to use these skills in everyday situations.
7. The pupils are good at investigating in science. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have a good scientific knowledge and use what they know to predict what might happen in investigations. They understand the properties of materials and describe these accurately using a good vocabulary, such as *flexible*, *transparent* and *waterproof*. Year 2 pupils explain why certain materials are more suitable than others for particular purposes, such as plastic rather than glass for the lenses in spectacles. The pupils have a good understanding of how plants and animals grow and what promotes healthy growth in themselves. They recognise that forces make objects move and identify forces around them in everyday life. The pupils can explain what they are doing when they set up tests because they have a good understanding of how to work scientifically and decide how they will record their findings.
8. There is outstanding work in art. The pupils achieve very well and their work is much better than expected for their age when they leave the school. The pupils express their ideas individually and use their skills in a wide range of media. The pupils work competently with computers; they make good progress and reach the expectations for their age by the time they are seven. They use the keyboard competently and know how to change the style, size and colour of letters. Pupils use drawing programs in art and data handling programs in science. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment is as expected and they achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The school's caring and constructive ethos contributes highly to the very positive attitudes and very good personal development of the pupils; this area is a strength of the school and has improved since the last inspection. There are very good relationships between pupils and adults in school. Pupils enjoy coming to school, behave well, show interest and try hard. Parents who returned the questionnaire and those at meetings with inspectors confirmed that their children enjoy school. There have been no exclusions, reflecting the school's strong emphasis on care and support.
10. In one-to-one situations, small groups and in class, the pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to contribute answers to questions and to fully take part in school activities. They try hard, concentrate well and are interested and involved in learning situations. They have very good relationships with the support staff and their class teachers.
11. The teachers provide interesting activities in the lessons and this enables all the pupils to develop very good attitudes to learning. The pupils look forward to taking part in whole class, individual and group activities; for example, they enthusiastically join in with reading the big books and with planning science investigations. They gain confidence in working independently and settle quickly to tasks and show a willingness to follow routines. They take care of their own needs, organise themselves and their equipment well and tidy up efficiently at the end of sessions. Pupils concentrate very well when working independently and share

equipment responsibly. During class discussions, they volunteer answers willingly and confidently offer suggestions.

12. Behaviour is good in class, when the pupils move round the school, and at lunch and playtimes. The school has clear guidelines for behaviour management resulting in the pupils knowing what is expected of them. Pupils are polite to each other and to adults. They rarely need to be reminded of how to behave because of the high expectations of the staff that they will behave well and the positive atmosphere created in the school. Each class has developed its own 'golden rules' and these give the pupils good opportunities to demonstrate self-confidence and maturity. The good range of games and activities provided at playtimes are well used and so these times are enjoyable and purposeful for all pupils. Pupils play well together, enjoying playing hopscotch, giant snakes and ladders, walking with stilts and building with wooden blocks.
13. The pupils' personal development is very good. The very good relationships are a strength of the school. They relate very well to teachers and support staff and in turn feel valued by them. The adults in the school provide high quality role models and this helps the pupils to show very good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. The pupils frequently applaud each other's achievements with spontaneity and delight and they show a mature understanding of the impact of their actions on one another. The pupils enjoy being given additional responsibilities; they conscientiously undertake helpful duties in classrooms and assist in the daily routines of the school such as taking registers to the office.
14. Pupils' attendance is very good and is better than the national average for primary schools. Unauthorised absence is rare. The school day starts and finishes punctually. Pupils like to come to school and their very good attendance makes a positive contribution to their learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and so the pupils make good progress in most aspects of their work. During the inspection, a third of the lessons seen were very good and eight out of ten of the lessons were good or better. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The needs of the higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are well met through careful planning.
16. All of the teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes have a very firm grasp of what these young children need to learn and how to teach it. The teaching in the Nursery is very good and has some excellent features. The warm, supportive atmosphere ensures that children settle quickly and get off to a very good start. There is a tight focus on the direct teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, which are practised well through the activities that are planned. The children's vocabulary is widened through very careful modelling by the staff. Teaching in the Reception classes is good and the same supportive atmosphere is promoted that develops children's independence and ability to co-operate very well. The very good, direct teaching and learning that takes place in introductory sessions in literacy and numeracy, is not, however, always built upon because of the way in which follow-up work is organised. The school realises this and the organisation of activities in the Reception classes is currently being reviewed. The groups of children working with the teachers make very good progress because their activities build directly upon the skills in literacy and numeracy that have just been learned in the whole class session. However, some children will not practise the skills learned until later in the day or even on the following day and this slows their progress.
17. The teaching in English in Years 1 and 2 is good and has some significant strengths. The National Literacy Strategy underpins the teachers' planning effectively. The basic skills are taught well, particularly in reading. Pupils quickly learn the sounds of letters and how to use the pictures to work out unknown words. They also learn to read sentences to see if they make sense, when they guess at unfamiliar words. Good use is made of additional helpers to support pupils in the part of the lessons when they work independently or in groups and this

enables the pupils to be presented with challenging texts and tasks. Teachers give pupils very good opportunities to talk, and encourage them to explore and share their ideas. As result, the pupils confidently answer questions and offer opinions. The teaching of some aspects of writing is good; for example, pupils learn to write in a good range of styles and skills are developed through writing for different purposes in other subjects. There are, however, some weaker aspects to the teaching of writing. The information gathered about the rate of progress by the lower attainers in writing is not always used to inform the teachers' planning or to make the pupils aware of what they need to learn next. Too often, pupils continue to make the same mistakes in spelling and handwriting and this is not sufficiently well monitored. As a result, these pupils do not make as rapid progress in writing as the average and higher attaining pupils.

18. Teaching in mathematics is good. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented very effectively. The teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, and their enthusiastic approach and good planning to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities ensure a good rate of learning. The first parts of the lessons are brisk and so the pupils are alert and eager to answer questions. All of the pupils are actively involved in lessons because teachers use resources effectively. Good questions probe the pupils' understanding and the teachers explain new work clearly. The teachers place a good emphasis on pupils finding different ways of arriving at answers and deciding which is the best way. Support staff effectively promote a good rate of learning by pupils with special educational needs because they maintain a close focus on what these pupils need to do to improve. The pupils use their mathematical skills well in other subjects but teachers plan too few opportunities for problem solving in everyday situations.
19. The teachers, together with the teaching assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator, plan the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs. The work is well matched to pupils' needs and identifies the small steps needed for them to make good progress; the plans are carried out with close liaison between the class teachers, the support staff and the special educational needs co-ordinator. The gains towards targets are regularly recorded and the plans are reviewed on a termly basis. Good quality support is given to pupils by the special educational needs co-ordinator and the teaching assistants.
20. Teachers have a very good knowledge of their subjects, plan interesting work and use resources very effectively to enliven lessons. Challenging work is provided for the more able pupils. They manage the pupils very well, maintain good standards of behaviour, and effectively use a range of teaching methods. This enables the pupils to make consistently good progress in most aspects of their work. The teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to use computers and teach the basic skills thoroughly. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support the pupils' learning and have a clear understanding of what they have to do. There are some examples of teachers' marking that gives good, clear guidance on what pupils need to improve, but this is not always the case. In the best examples, teachers' comments are encouraging but also help pupils understand what they specifically need to do to improve. Some marking is not as helpful, and simply praises work, whatever its quality.

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

21. The school provides a very good curriculum for its pupils and teaches all of the subjects that it should. Most of the work undertaken by pupils carefully builds on previous learning. Art, mathematics and science are especially strong and this is reflected in the high standards that pupils achieve in these subjects. Some subjects, such as information and communication technology, are better represented than at the time of the last inspection, and this is leading to the better standards. Other subjects, such as design and technology, geography and history have maintained their high status. These strong features help to ensure that pupils receive a rich, relevant, lively and often exciting curriculum, which serves to interest, involve and sometimes inspire pupils. The school has therefore further improved on the good quality and

range of learning opportunities provided for pupils at the time of the last inspection. In 2000, the school received a Schools' Curriculum Award in recognition of the very good quality learning opportunities provided for its pupils through the community.

22. However, a few areas of weakness remain. While approaches to improving the quality of pupils' writing have been successful, the lower attaining pupils' progress is not as well promoted by the teachers' planning. A further minor area for development is that pupils have too few opportunities to learn and apply mathematics through 'real-life' investigations to enable them to appreciate the subject's importance in their daily lives.
23. The curriculum places good emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented successfully and consistently, and are contributing to the picture of rising standards in English and mathematics over time. There are good opportunities in some subjects, such as religious education, for pupils to develop their ability to speak clearly and confidently and to listen attentively, and this contributes to their personal development as well as their learning. Skills in literacy and numeracy are developed well in other subjects, such as through writing for different purposes in history and science and data handling activities in information and communication technology.
24. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils at the Foundation Stage are good and take account of the early learning goals. Children in the Nursery take part in a wide range of thoroughly planned and carefully structured experiences, which give them a very good start to their education. In the Reception classes, the work is interesting and lively. However, the organisation of the activities in Reception classes does not always allow the children to immediately practise the skills that they have been taught in the very good introductory sessions and so they do not always make the best possible progress in literacy and numeracy.
25. All pupils are fully included in all that the school provides. Teachers make every effort in all lessons and activities that support the curriculum to ensure that the contributions of all pupils are celebrated and valued. The more able pupils are well catered for and provided with challenging work in English, mathematics and science. The curriculum is well organised to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and so they make good gains in learning. Work is well matched to their particular needs, and additional support is carefully targeted to help ensure that they make good progress.
26. The very good range of well-led and open-to-all clubs and activities appeals to the interests of many pupils and are well supported and much appreciated by them. These include recorders, art and craft, Green Gang, choir, French and country dancing. A very good range of educational visits, such as to Beck Isle Museum, York Minster and Scarborough, and a variety of visitors, such as grandparents and representatives from aid organisations, help to further enrich the curriculum. There are many opportunities to bring the curriculum to life for pupils by using materials which they can handle and learn from at first hand, such as in history and design and technology. Teachers give very good emphasis to pupils' personal, social and health education. They promote these areas actively and consistently as part of a carefully structured programme, which is embedded in the life of the school. For example, caring for others is given a high priority in regular discussions in all classes. The programme includes suitable emphasis, such as through physical education, on the importance of exercise for maintaining a healthy life style. Sex education is addressed as part of the school's agreed policy. Teachers constantly give praise and encouragement to enhance pupils' self-esteem. Pupils are given opportunities to become independent and responsible and to use their initiative from an early age. For example, they are encouraged to obtain resources and hang up their aprons. Pupils in all classes have specific tasks to perform, which they carry out conscientiously.

27. The community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning through the school's links with organisations, institutions and individuals. For example, a local hotel, private railway and supermarket give the school much support. Pupils carried out a litter pick during Tidy Britain week with materials provided by the local council. The Green Gang after-school group works on environmental projects often in association with the local civic society. The creation of the school pond, the dipping bridge and pergola were all the results of links forged with a local business in education partnership. There are good links with the school to which most pupils transfer at seven. There are very good links with the local colleges that send students to the school for experience and training.
28. The arrangements for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good, and a strength of the school. This continues to be a very strong area, as at the time of the last inspection.
29. The school promotes pupils' spiritual development very well. In assemblies and lessons, teachers consistently encourage pupils to recognise their own individuality and worth. Pupils have regular opportunities to join in prayers, to sing hymns, to reflect and to feel positive about themselves. A sense of thoughtfulness and spirituality is evident at assemblies. Pupils have opportunities to appreciate the various moods of music to help develop spiritual awareness. The school provides pupils with many insights into their own and others' values and beliefs through religious education lessons and whole school assembly themes. Teachers successfully promote pupils' awareness of beauty and wonder; for example, pupils in Year 2 gasped in amazement as they study 'thousands of sharp pieces' in a block of ice in a science lesson and pupils in assembly considered how a shrivelled bulb becomes a delicate flower.
30. The school fosters pupils' moral development very well. Teachers unfailingly recognise and encourage pupils' personal efforts both in class and in assemblies, where moral themes are given considerable emphasis. There is very good adherence to class and playground rules, indicating that pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong. There are consistent approaches by all adults to rewarding effort and good behaviour. Much of the school's provision is embedded in its everyday life and teaching. The headteacher and staff provide very good role models. They consistently treat all members of the school community and each other with courtesy and respect.
31. Arrangements for promoting pupils' social development are very good. Supportive and constructive relationships between teachers and pupils successfully promote pupils' self-esteem and social interaction. There are many opportunities in lessons for pupils to co-operate and collaborate effectively in pairs and small groups, such as when carrying out practical tasks in mathematics and design and technology, and almost all do so sensibly. Many pupils develop a sense of responsibility by acting as monitors. Day visits, after-school clubs and joint ventures, such as 'Lads and Dads', provide opportunities for pupils to work together and with others. These and other initiatives, such as a consideration of the qualities that make a special friend, have helped to develop their social skills and contributed to their personal development.
32. Promotion of the cultural dimension of pupils' development is very good. Pupils learn about their cultural heritage through their involvement with local groups. For example, the choir performs at the annual Ryedale Music Festival and a performing arts afternoon takes place. They develop cultural awareness through their topic work in history and geography. They benefit from visitors to the school, including theatre groups, and a programme of visits, such as to the local church and museum, which help to bring the cultural aspects of learning to life for them. Teachers successfully extend pupils' awareness of the work of famous artists, such as Miro, and composers, such as Vivaldi. They develop an understanding of the richness and diversity of other cultures in their religious education lessons and through assemblies, such as ones about Islam, which emphasise the multi-cultural dimension.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school promotes a sincere, caring and friendly environment in which all pupils are treated with respect. The teaching and classroom support staff know pupils as individuals and help them to quickly gain the trust and confidence they need. Nursery children are welcomed into a warm, supportive environment and the staff ensure these children are given individual attention to enable them to feel secure whilst away from home. Parents appreciate the level of care extended to their children.
34. The school and its governing body take a responsible attitude to health and safety requirements and ensure that routine inspections and safety checks are satisfactorily carried out. The school premises and equipment are well maintained. First aid arrangements are good, the school having a high number of suitably trained staff. Child protection procedures are properly in place and all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
35. Pupils' attainment is assessed shortly after entry and is then regularly checked through a range of tests. The analysis of the results of these assessments is generally well used to plan work for different groups of pupils. Pupils are set targets in literacy and numeracy. This has, however, not been as effective in promoting good progress by lower attaining pupils in writing. Assessments of writing have not been used as well to set specific targets for improvement and consequently these pupils have made slower progress.
36. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and have detailed individual educational plans. The pupils receive good support from staff within the school. The teachers and teaching assistants are committed to helping the pupils achieve their personal targets and there are good procedures in place for checking the pupils' academic progress and personal development. All statutory requirements with regard to special educational needs are carried out. As part of the annual reviews the pupils are encouraged to express their own feelings about their progress and what they need to do to improve further. There are good arrangements in place to make effective use of support from external agencies. A particular strength is the way in which the individual problems of the pupils with special educational needs are addressed. For example, work with pupils with literacy problems is matched to their specific needs and enables them to make good progress in their learning. Additional support is provided for pupils with physical, emotional and behavioural problems and they are well integrated into the whole range of activities provided for learning. Parents are involved in reviewing progress and agree the new targets set for their children. The provision and help given to these pupils enable them to take a full part in lessons and activities and achieve the same rate of progress as their classmates.
37. The pupils' personal development is checked on an informal basis through regular staff discussion. Teachers record their assessment of personal development on the annual report of pupils' progress. The school gives good support and guidance to pupils and makes good use of circle time to allow pupils express any concerns they may have. A member of the governing body who is a police officer visits classes to provide additional advice on pupils' personal safety matters.
38. The school has improved its procedures for monitoring attendance. A clerical assistant has taken enthusiastically to the task of inspecting registers daily and systematically following up any unexplained absence. Parents are made aware of their responsibilities in ensuring children's regular attendance and punctuality and they are discouraged from taking holidays in term time. The very good attendance rates achieved by the school show the effectiveness of the monitoring procedure and the good level of co-operation parents provide.
39. The school is watchful that the good standards of behaviour are kept up. The school promotes good standards through the implementation of its aims and ethos of 'Learning, Caring, Sharing'. The clear behaviour policy includes advice on anti-bullying. The school rules are drafted into a code of conduct which, in turn, pupils have drafted into their own sets of classroom and playground rules based on respect for the premises and for each other. Staff

lead by example. Behaviour in class is well managed by a quiet word or gesture. Good behaviour and pupils' efforts are rewarded by stars and stickers, and certificates that are awarded in assemblies that are attended by parents. Inappropriate behaviour is rare. Pupils' good behaviour contributes to their liking for school and contributes positively to learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school is a focal point of the community and parents are very appreciative of the care and facilities provided for their children. Some 80 parents, for example, attended the special assembly for Reception children held during the inspection. The staff and governing body strongly encourage parents to take an active part in the school's work and in pupils' education. As a result the school has an extensive register of approximately 30 parents who come into school on a regular rota basis, effectively deployed in classrooms. The school has provided a programme of practical advice and guidance for these helpers. A further group of retired people also come in regularly, providing help with reading and resource preparation under a scheme called 'Generation in Action. The school's computer suite is well used by the community under the guidance of the Workers' Education Association and this has the effect of bringing more adults into contact with the school and enhancing its reputation.
41. Parents are welcomed into school at the end of the school day to meet class teachers and discuss any concerns they may have in relation to their children's education. The new headteacher is presently conducting separate parent meetings for each class in order to get to know as many parents as possible and to obtain their opinions. The school is successful in securing active support and involvement from a significant number of parents and this results in positive enhancement of their children's learning.
42. There is a Home School Association comprising staff, parents and carers and other regular helpers. The association is engaged on the organisation and management of an annual programme of fund-raising events that are very well supported by parents and the community. Funds raised provide a valuable supplement to the school budget and have been spent on items such as computer hardware and software for the new suite, a scanner and digital camera and a range of non-fiction books.
43. Parents generally feel well informed about the work of the school and the progress made by their children, although some parents would like more information. The inspection found that the amount and quality of information provided for parents are excellent. The school issues two newsletters each week, one from the headteacher and governing body giving information on events and one from each class giving information on what will be taught the following week. Parents are advised on how they can plan their help and what resources may be required. The prospectus and governing body annual report are well presented and fully comply with requirements. The home-school agreement is concise and easily understood. Pupils' annual reports are informative and give information on future targets. Parent meetings with class teachers are provided each term and are supplemented by a wide range of parent workshops for such items as children's health, the foundation curriculum, use of the Internet, literacy, behaviour policy explanation, pupils' testing and assessment, and a demonstration on the use of circle time.
44. The school works very well in partnership with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator is available to talk with parents one afternoon a week. The parents are invited to the regular reviews of the progress their children are making and are kept informed as to the targets set for their children.
45. Some parents feel that homework is not at the right level, but the inspection found that this is well organised and supports pupils' learning effectively. The teachers give suggestions to parents about the support that can be given at home to extend the work being done in school; this is well carried out by the parents and contributes to the good progress of the pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The school is well led and managed. The new headteacher has made a quick start on getting to know the school's strengths and weaknesses through discussions with teachers, support staff, pupils and parents. The school's past strong commitment to looking at what it needs to do to improve is being sustained very effectively through the very clear direction that the new headteacher is providing. The school has made good progress since its previous inspection because it has worked diligently towards its targets for improvement. The professional development of teachers is well planned and targets have been set for all staff. Teachers who are new to the school are given good information and they are well supported. The senior staff and subject managers provide good quality support for school improvement. All have a clear idea of their roles and responsibilities and the part they play in taking the school forward.
47. The pupils are at the heart of the school's efforts and it is a lively place in which to teach and learn. New ideas are welcomed; all of the staff demonstrate a very good ability to reflect on their practice and commitment to improve. The school looks at its performance objectively in tests, and teaching and learning are monitored effectively. This has led to improvements in standards in writing and in the standards achieved by boys in reading. The staff work very well together as a team and willingly offer advice and support to each other. The school knows what it needs to work on next and has the right priorities in its good quality planning for improvement. The school has already identified the need to improve the progress made by lower attaining pupils in writing and review the way in which the activities in the Reception classes are organised to maximise children's learning in literacy and numeracy.
48. The governors provide good support for the school's work and they have a firm understanding of where its priorities lie and how improvement will be achieved. They fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities and ensure that the parents receive good information about what the school provides. The governors review the progress that is made towards the targets set in the school's planning for development. They seek the best value for money in their expenditure and assess whether money has been well spent by looking at the results gained from expenditure. For example, the investment made in the information and communication technology suite has been evaluated in terms of the improvement in standards achieved by pupils and also in providing links with the wider community. The governors ensure that financial planning supports the school's priorities. Additional grants are well targeted to ensure that there is maximum benefit to the pupils and the governors ensure that they get good value for their expenditure. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and there are good administrative procedures that allow the teachers to concentrate on their teaching. Information and communication technology is used very effectively in the school's daily work.
49. The school provides training for student teachers as a School Centre for Initial Teacher Training and for PGCE students on teaching practise. This involves teachers in mentoring up to five student teachers each school year. The school benefits from this enterprise by having access to new ideas, teaching strategies and thinking that the established teachers find stimulating and this enhances their professional development.
50. The special educational needs co-ordinator is committed to the quality provision of support for the pupils with special educational needs. Her approach to review procedures and documentation for the pupils' individual education plans is very well organised and effective. She makes very good use of her time to teach groups of pupils and ensure that the support provided by other adults is effective. For example, she meets with teaching assistants and discusses ways in which individual problems can be addressed. She checks that all members of staff are aware of procedures for identifying, assessing and providing for the pupils with special educational needs and that parents know who are their main points of contact in the school. The governing body is supportive of, and has a good overview of, the work done by the school with the pupils with special educational needs.

51. The school has an adequate number of staff, with a suitable range of experience and expertise. The teaching assistants are very well deployed to support pupils' learning in the Nursery and in Years 1 and 2. In the Reception classes, the efficiency with which the staff are used to support children's learning in literacy and numeracy is not as effective because of the way teaching assistants' time is planned. The school's accommodation is sound and well used. Improvements will be brought about by an imminent extension. Resources are good and contribute positively to the standards achieved. There are plenty of books for pupils in the library and good resources for numeracy. The information and communication technology suite is well equipped and used. The school environment is brightened by high quality displays of pupils' work and is well maintained.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Improve the progress made by the lower attaining pupils in writing by:

- making more effective use of the assessments made of the pupils' attainment to plan work that specifically meets their needs. *
(Paragraphs 5, 17, 22, 35, 68, 76)

Improve the progress made by the children in the Reception classes by:

- ensuring that children practise the skills that they have been taught in literacy and numeracy more immediately;
- reviewing the organisation of activities so that there are more adults in classrooms to support children who are practising these skills. *
(Paragraphs 2, 16, 24, 51, 52, 55, 57, 60)

* These issues are already highlighted in the school's planning for improvement.

In addition to the issues above, the governing body should consider the following when drawing up its action plan:

- ensuring that teachers' marking gives pupils more consistent guidance on what they need to do to improve; (Paragraphs 20, 70,81)
- planning more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems. (Paragraphs 6, 18, 81)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

46

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	14	23	8	0	0	0
Percentage	2	30	50	18	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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	228
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	46

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	5.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	36	39	75

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	30	35
	Girls	32	36	37
	Total	60	66	72
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (84)	88 (91)	96 (95)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	31	32
	Girls	33	35	37
	Total	61	66	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (88)	88 (94)	92 (88)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	181
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.75
Average class size	28

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26:1
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	493093
Total expenditure	483958
Expenditure per pupil	1855
Balance brought forward from previous year	31106
Balance carried forward to next year	40241

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	279
Number of questionnaires returned	144

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	35	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	44	3	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	47	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	46	11	1	15
The teaching is good.	65	31	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	40	12	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	30	6	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	44	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	40	47	7	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	51	38	2	1	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	46	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	33	1	1	15

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

52. The school has mostly sustained its good provision for children since the previous inspection. Most of the children who enter the three Reception classes have previously attended the school's Nursery. The teaching in the Nursery is very good. Children get off to a flying start because of the warm, supportive atmosphere and the tight focus on the direct teaching of basic skills. Teaching in the Reception classes is good and has many stronger features, but the effectiveness of the very good, direct teaching that takes place in introductory sessions is diminished because of the way in which follow-up work is organised. The teachers' planning for activities in the Reception classes changed in the last year and the school is currently reviewing its effectiveness. The way that activities are organised gives priority to the children being supervised for outdoor play in small groups and this means that a teaching assistant is required to be out of the classrooms for most sessions. As a result, children in the classrooms often lack timely adult intervention when they work on activities that are not directly supervised by the teachers or remaining teaching assistant. The groups who are working with the teachers make very good progress because their activities build directly upon the skills in literacy and numeracy that have just been learned in the whole class session. The activities for other children are often unconnected to what has just been taught. Some children will not practise the skills learned until later in the day or even on the following day. This slows their progress and teachers have to recap on the basic skills, which wastes some time. In addition, the layout of the Reception classrooms makes it very difficult for one adult to monitor the learning of groups of children who are working at the far end of the room.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. The children make good progress in this area of learning and most reach the expectations for their age by the end of the Reception year. The teaching is very good, in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Very good routines underpin the organisation of all classes. The children know what to do when they start activities, because of teachers' clear explanations. This builds children's confidence. They comfortably ask for help when it is required, but children develop a good degree of independence. Teachers have high expectations and children's politeness and good behaviour are rewarded. The children are expected, right from the start, to tidy up activities and take responsibility. They do so very well, and helping each other and looking for what needs to be done becomes a habit. Children in the Nursery, for example, wash their paint pallets after completing their work.
54. In the Reception classes, the children know where resources are stored and so tidy away quickly, without fuss or reminders. The children learn to share and take turns. Very young children shout out answers or questions but quickly learn to raise their hands, through the teachers' gentle guidance. All of the staff have the same approach and are equally skilled at managing the children's behaviour. This has a very positive impact on the rate at which the children learn to respond to others' needs and organise themselves.

Communication, language and literacy

55. Although the children make very good progress, often from a low point, in the Nursery and generally at least sound progress in the Reception classes, few reach the goals for their age by the time the end of the Reception year. Progress in reading and speaking is often better than in writing in the Reception classes. This is because the children do not often practise skills in writing as soon as they have learned them in lessons.

56. Teachers provide very good opportunities for the children to speak and explain what they are doing. In the Nursery, children's language is often very limited, but questions such as "How have I folded this card?" encourage the children to use the vocabulary that they have learned earlier. In a Reception class, the teacher skilfully extended a child's reply by modelling an extended sentence in one lesson where children were asked to use a group of words in a sentence. The Nursery and Reception classrooms are rich in written language and there are plenty of opportunities for children to enjoy books.
57. The children make rapid progress in learning to read in both the Nursery and Reception classes. In a good lesson, in a Reception class, the children were looking at characters from a book and finding words to describe them. Initially, their responses were restricted to the characters' appearance but the teacher led them on by questions such as "Why do you think he looks sad? See if you can tell me why you think he looks cuddly." A group of children followed this activity by acting out a scene from the story using puppets of the characters and were well supported by the teaching assistant. A great strength in the teaching in the Reception classes is the link made between the sounds of letters and the way in which words are spelled. In one lesson, when a Reception teacher was scribing for the children, they successfully built up the word supermarket from the sounds they knew. The impact of the very good teaching in this whole class, introductory session was, however, lessened because the activities that followed did not all build on what the children had just learned. In an excellent lesson in the Nursery, the teacher worked with a group of children who were learning how to write their names. She coached them on the correct formation of the letters through songs and rhymes that reinforced their understanding of the necessary strokes very effectively. These children tried hard because they were keen to please her.

Mathematical development

58. Children make overall good progress but often there is more rapid learning in the Nursery because of similar factors to those in literacy skills in Reception. By the time they start Year 1, most children will reach the targets set for their age in mathematics.
59. Teaching in the Nursery is very good. The adults maintain a close focus on developing mathematical vocabulary. Children learn counting rhymes and songs. They can count up to five objects when they touch them and recognise a circle and a square. When the class counts together, they say the numbers up to 20, as when counting as the teacher cuts up squares of jelly. Most children can sort objects by size or colour. They use money to give 'change' to customers in the hairdressing salon.
60. The direct teaching of skills in the Reception classes is very good. Children learn to count up to 20 or more. Most recognise the symbols for numbers up to 20 and most can write the numbers up to ten. Some can count in twos and recognise odd and even numbers. Most of the children can add one or two onto numbers under 20 and can take one away. The children use terms such as *longer* or *shorter*, *bigger* or *smaller* when they compare objects. In a good lesson in a Reception class, an activity in which a group of children put socks into pairs quickly reinforced their learning about odd and even numbers. When they worked on number ladders, they quickly saw the pattern of leaving a number out. However, as in literacy, there are times when the skills learned are not as quickly practised to consolidate learning and so the rate of children's progress is sometimes diminished. Children use number programs on the computer to help them count and match objects.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. Children make very good progress in this area of learning in all classes and reach the targets for their age by the end of Reception. This is because the teachers plan a very good range of activities, including using computers, that promote children's understanding of the world and why things happen. Children of all ages are encouraged to observe closely, think about what

they see and talk about their thoughts. The teaching is very good. Teachers give children plenty of opportunities to use their initiative and try out their ideas. Children in the Nursery often find it hard to explain or describe what they see because of their restricted vocabulary, but this is widened through the adults' timely intervention. In one lesson, for example, the teacher introduced the word *steam*, when a child volunteered that 'smoke' was coming from hot water. The children watched with fascination as jelly melted and turned the water orange. A child in the Nursery, working independently, created symmetrical patterns in thick, soapy water by moving her hands in opposite directions and was delighted by the resulting 'butterfly' pattern. Children test how high they can build towers with construction kits before these topple.

62. Reception children benefit from a good range of activities through which they can explore physical phenomena. A group was working in a tray of soapy bubbles, for example, and created huge bubbles by 'blowing air into them' through straws. These children were amazed at the reflections in each bubble and noticed how these curved. In the 'Bedouin Tent' role-play area, children explain that there is very little furniture because the Bedouin people 'travel around and have to carry everything with them.' In the small world scene with an igloo and Inuit dolls, the children explain that the house is made of blocks of ice and the people wear fur to keep warm.

Physical development

63. Teaching is good and the children of all ages make good progress to achieve the targets for their age by the end of Reception. Teachers plan a good range of activities to promote physical development. In their outdoor play, children in all classes have good opportunities to play imaginatively and develop control over their bodies. The adults who support them give good guidance on safety and intervene appropriately to enhance children's learning, when throwing and catching, for example. The children use bikes and other vehicles and steer these carefully to avoid others and obstacles. In the Reception classes the children create games in groups, using the play equipment. They make good use of the covered areas to create 'school rooms' where they take turns as pupils and teachers.
64. The Nursery children have good control over paintbrushes and place paint carefully. They experience more difficulty in cutting out with scissors, but apply glue with reasonable accuracy. Children in the Reception classes choose the materials to make bridges and handle tools and fixing materials carefully. They knead and roll clay with appropriate control and their cutting and sticking skills are average for their age. They use the mouse on the computers with a good level of dexterity.

Creative development

65. Teaching in this area is very good. The children have very good activities in which they can act out parts and pretend to be different people. In the Nursery, the 'hairstylists' is very popular with both boys and girls. Children use the phone to make appointments, look at hair styles in magazines and make each other drinks. Much of this play makes very good use of the props but there is relatively little spoken interaction unless an adult intervenes. In the reception classes, the houses from different countries are well used, as is the boat that travels to either hot or cold countries, depending on which door is open on a particular day.
66. Children in the Nursery learn a good range of songs and rhymes. Children in Reception explore the sounds made by a good variety of instruments from other cultures. They remember how to play these and can make softer or louder sounds. Two children were observed working independently to create the same rhythm with their instruments and they were pleased when they both got into the swing of it. In the Nursery, children paint, draw and model with a wide variety of media. One group was making pictures of goldfish with a wax resist technique and noticed that only one of the fishes eyes could be seen at a time. The children's artwork is better than expected for their age by the end of reception. In all other aspects, the children's attainment reaches the goals for their age.

ENGLISH

67. The school's results in writing over the past three years have shown a steady upward trend. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Over time, girls have done slightly better than boys at writing and this remains a feature of the school's results at the age of seven. There was a dip in standards in reading in 2001, however, because a third of the pupils in that year group were on the special educational needs register. The school recognises that lower attaining pupils' progress in writing could be better and has identified this as a priority in its school improvement plan.
68. Inspection findings are that standards in reading are above average by the age of seven and in writing and speaking and listening they are average. The pupils enter the school with a wide range of attainment but, overall, they are below average in speaking and listening, in reading and in writing. Pupils make very good progress in reading and good progress in speaking and listening. They make generally satisfactory progress in writing. However, lower attainers' progress in writing is not as good as it is in reading because teachers do not always make it clear to these pupils what they need to work on next.
69. The factors that contribute positively to the pupils' learning are:
- The teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the way to teach basic skills, particularly in reading.
 - They encourage pupils to explore and share ideas through skilful questioning and use resources imaginatively to make lessons interesting.
 - The school has effectively implemented the Early Literacy Support with pupils from Year 1 and this is having a good effect on their standards of spelling and reading.
 - There are good opportunities planned for pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects.
 - Pupils' learning is well supported by teaching assistants.
 - The subject managers provide effective leadership.
 - The support from home is very good and this contributes to the very good progress pupils make in learning to read.
 - The school has good resources for teaching reading and a well-stocked library, which is used regularly by all the classes.
70. The main points for improvement are:
- Teachers do not always make use of their assessments in writing to guide lower attaining pupils on what they need to do next.
 - The marking of pupils' work is not always consistently helpful in pointing out what needs to improve.
71. When pupils enter the school many of them lack confidence in speaking and the pupils' speaking skills are under-developed. The pupils listen well to their teachers and to each other, but they do not always answer questions confidently or are able to give explanations for an answer. By the time they are seven the pupils are able to contribute to discussions although on occasions they need encouragement from the teachers and questions rephrasing before they can understand them. As time goes by the pupils acquire a wider vocabulary with which to discuss their work. For example, they use appropriate scientific terms to describe their investigations and can suggest alternative adjectives to use in the descriptions when they write about characters.
72. At the time of the previous inspection, a key issue was to build upon the success of the reading initiative, enabling all pupils to progress through the reading scheme at an appropriate pace. This has been well addressed and standards have risen in reading and are now a strength of the school. Since the last inspection the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the emphasis on reading schemes has been lessened. This means that

all pupils take part in the group guided reading sessions with their teachers and these are not recorded in the pupils' home/school reading diaries. A few parents expressed their anxieties that the pupils were not reading in school on a regular basis. This is not the case; the pupils read in English lessons and frequently in other areas of the curriculum. In addition, the school makes good use of teaching assistants, parents and the 'Generation in Action' volunteers to hear pupils read individually. The school's arrangements for involving parents in a reading partnership are carried out consistently and contribute to the very good progress pupils make in learning to read.

73. The pupils read fluently, accurately and with good expression. They use punctuation well to help gain the sense of what they are reading. The pupils talk about what they like and dislike about different books. The pupils use the sounds of letters and blend these together to help them build words. They develop the skills to tackle harder or unfamiliar words by looking at the whole sentence to see what makes sense. By the time they are seven the pupils know how to use dictionaries, contents pages, indexes and glossaries. They understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction. The pupils are familiar with how to find information books in the library. The higher attaining readers develop a critical appreciation of the books they read and are able to discuss the way that characters are built up and humour is used in stories. The school has noted the better attainment of girls over time and has put in place a range of effective strategies that has successfully improved the level of reading by boys.
74. By the age of seven, the pupils can express themselves satisfactorily in their writing with an average number of pupils doing better than expected. These higher attaining pupils are using speech marks, and question and exclamation marks appropriately and they show imagination and flair in their writing. They confidently select adjectives to help them write more exciting sentences. After their recent visit to York Minster, pupils wrote interesting and lively descriptions of what they had seen. They use language well and imaginatively as when a pupil wrote after he had looked at the roof of the Minster: "When I moved away from the mirror I felt I was in the sky". However, the lower attainers do not make such good progress; they can form simple sentences and know how to punctuate their writing using full stops and capital letters but the sentences are often repetitive. Although they write a range of simple words these pupils do not often enough use their knowledge of spelling rules and letter strings to help them spell less familiar words. They do not use joined writing and some pupils' presentation of their work is untidy with erratically sized letters with a mixture of lower case and capital letters being used.
75. The teaching in English is good. Of the nine lessons seen the teaching was good or better in eight of them. There were no lessons in which the teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching has some significant strengths. The basic skills are taught well, particularly in reading. The teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to talk, and encourage them to explore and share their ideas. They have very good management of the pupils, enabling them to concentrate well and try hard at the tasks set. The teachers use resources very effectively to support the learning, for example when a teacher uses information and communication technology to share writing ideas before the pupils' work individually on writing a poem. Good use is made of additional helpers to support pupils in the independent part of the lessons and this enables the pupils to be presented with challenging texts and tasks. The teaching of some aspects of writing is good; for example, by the time they are seven the pupils have experience of writing across a wide range of forms. Pupils use their literacy skills well across the curriculum, including information and communication technology skills. For example, when using a booklet on Scarborough the Year 2 pupils took the information and turned this into a narrative account.
76. There are some weaker aspects to the teaching. While there are good arrangements in place to check the overall progress of the pupils, the information about the rate of progress by the lower attainers in writing is not always used to inform the teachers' planning or to make the pupils aware of what they need to learn next. This means that some pupils remain on the same level for too long. In some classes the pupils' work is marked with helpful comments

and guidance that help the pupils to improve their work, but this is not the case throughout the school.

77. The subject managers for literacy are recently appointed. They are enthusiastic and well organised and have made a good start in understanding what the school needs to do to help the progress of the lower attainers in writing. They plan to hold workshops in the near future for parents to keep them in touch with developments in the teaching of reading and writing. At present they have had few opportunities to check what is happening in other classes to ensure that the National Literacy Strategy is being carried out systematically, although this was well carried out by the previous subject manager. The school has effectively implemented the Early Literacy Support with pupils from Year 1 and this is having a good effect on their standards of spelling and reading. There are helpful and interesting displays to support teaching English in all of the classes, together with presentations that celebrate the good work done by many pupils.

MATHEMATICS

78. Standards in mathematics are above national expectations by the end of Year 2. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection and the most recent national test results. Most pupils make good progress as they move through the school because:

- The teaching is good, with work matched carefully to pupils' needs to help them to achieve well.
- Most planning is thorough, focused and followed, enabling teachers to build carefully on prior learning.
- The subject is well represented in other subjects throughout the school, with good emphasis given to the development of number skills, which aids understanding.
- There is good adherence to the National Numeracy Strategy, which is helping to raise standards over time.
- Support staff are carefully targeted to help pupils with special educational needs.
- All pupils' contributions are valued, which helps to improve levels of confidence and motivation among all pupils whatever their age, ability or background.
- Teachers give pupils many opportunities to work together effectively, which contributes to their personal development as well as their learning.

79. However, very occasionally pupils' learning is not as good because:

- They are sometimes given repetitive number work to complete, which they can already do and understand, before proceeding to more challenging tasks.
- Teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their skills in solving everyday problems.

80. Pupils achieve well in their development of understanding of number, shape, space and measures, and in their ability to handle data. Year 1 pupils count, sequence, add, subtract, read and write numbers beyond ten, start to use *more* and *less*, and begin to identify odd and even numbers. They start to recognise two-dimensional shapes, and begin to use words, such as *heavier* and *lighter*, when comparing the weights of different objects. By the end of Year 2, many pupils understand the place value of digits, sequence numbers beyond 100, and estimate with increasing accuracy, such as the length of objects more or less than one metre. They read weights on scales using standard measures, and start to classify two-dimensional shapes using reflective symmetry. They communicate findings of collected information in tables and block graphs, and are increasingly using information and communication technology for this purpose, for example, when Year 1 pupils complete a graph about pupils' eye colour, using information and communication technology, and start to interpret the represented data.

81. Teaching is good and the basic skills are taught thoroughly. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, on 'counting', high expectations resulted in challenging work, and pupils put great effort into getting it right. The introductory parts of lessons, when pupils practise mental calculation, are brisk and so the pupils are alert and eager to answer. Purposeful questioning and clear explanations by teachers develop clear understanding of new knowledge. A good choice and use of resources ensures that learning is effective and all pupils are involved. High levels of enthusiasm from the teacher, good relationships and a brisk pace help to keep pupils motivated and involved. Teachers place satisfactory emphasis on investigative work, to help pupils develop their thinking and reasoning skills, as they move through the school. For example, by Year 2, pupils are beginning to identify number patterns and sequences. However, not enough attention is given to using and applying mathematics in real-life situations, rather than through the use of worksheets, to enable pupils to start to see the relevance of the subject to their daily lives. Weaker features of teaching include too much time spent on tasks which do not extend mathematical understanding. While most marking celebrates pupils' efforts, it does not always help them to further develop their understanding. However, strengths far outweigh weaknesses, and pupils respond well to mathematics lessons.
82. The subject is well led and there are clear plans for its further development, such as through the development of links with information and communication technology. The use of number work in other subjects is developing well. The school's assessment arrangements in mathematics are good. Data from national tests is carefully analysed to help identify weaknesses, and they are then targeted for development. There are consistent approaches to help teachers find out what pupils know and understand so that they can keep track of pupils' progress, although they do not yet link to National Curriculum levels. It is too early to assess the impact of the recently introduced initiative of grouping pupils by ability in Year 2 to help teachers match work more carefully to pupils' precise needs. The subject leader has monitored teaching and learning to help him gain an important overview of the subject, but does not yet systematically monitor pupils' work. Improvements to the range, quality and quantity of resources have helped to meet National Curriculum requirements more effectively.

SCIENCE

83. The standards reached by the pupils are better than expected by the end of Year 2. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve very well in science. More able pupils are given very challenging work in investigating. There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection. The factors that contribute to the good standards include:
- The teachers' very good understanding and knowledge of science and how to teach it.
 - Very effective planning to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities.
 - High quality leadership by the subject manager.
 - Frequent opportunities for the pupils to investigate, use their initiative and try out their ideas.
84. The pupils enjoy science because the lessons are interesting and often involve practical activities. All aspects that should be covered are well planned and taught at a good depth. The teachers give them good opportunities to observe and use their existing knowledge to think about what might happen. Pupils readily offer their ideas because teachers value all contributions and class discussions show a high level of thought and maturity. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, after one pupil had contributed that tissue paper was not suitable for wrapping a parcel, another suggested that, "You could use the tissue paper and then put acetate over it to stop it from getting soggy."
85. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have a good understanding of the properties of materials and describe these accurately because the teachers introduce a good vocabulary. Year 1 pupils use the terms *flexible*, *transparent* and *waterproof* to describe different types of

paper. Year 2 pupils have looked at the suitability of materials for different purposes. One higher attaining pupil wrote, "The lenses in the glasses are made of plastic because plastic is lighter and is more comfortable and it does not break as easily as glass." Another pupil wrote that, "This hat is made of wool so it is warm and soft and cosy. It is knitted and can stretch and bend so that it fits your head." The pupils have researched where metals come from and what they are used for. One Year 2 pupil wrote that he had discovered that mirrors were just glass with a silver backing that caused the reflection. The pupils have a good understanding of how plants and animals grow and what promotes healthy growth in themselves.

86. The teaching is very good. The pupils are encouraged to think about how to test their ideas, right from the start. They listen carefully to the teachers and are keen to find out for themselves. The teachers are very skilled at giving good support for all abilities, but also allow the pupils sufficient freedom to use their initiative, including how to record their findings. In one lesson, when Year 2 pupils were planning a test to see in which area of the classroom ice melted most quickly, a lower attaining pupil suggested that the colour of the tray which held the ice should be varied because "red is a hot colour and blue is cold, so the ice in the red tray will melt fastest." This suggestion was sensitively and seriously accepted by the teacher and led to a valuable discussion that clarified the pupils' thinking. In another very good Year 2 lesson on the same topic, pupils of all abilities planned how to set up an experiment and the average and higher attaining pupils, with minimum support, decided that the size of the lump of ice and the bowl and length of time were the things that needed to be kept the same. They understood that the position of the bowl of ice was the variable. Good links were made to mathematics in measuring the time it took to melt and the pupils knew the units of measurement that they would use. The pupils used their observations from the previous lesson very well to predict what might happen.
87. The subject is very well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who sets a very good example in her planning and teaching. The co-ordinator monitors standards and teachers' planning very thoroughly. She identified some time ago that investigative work was weaker than other aspects of pupils' attainment and provided very good support for teaching to bring about improvements. This has led to higher standards.

ART AND DESIGN

88. The pupils' attainment in art is well above that expected for their age. Much of their work is outstanding. The pupils do so well in art because:
- The teachers have high expectations and lessons are well planned and resourced.
 - Pupils learn a broad range of skills and are given plenty of opportunities to develop their ideas in a wide variety of media.
 - Good links are made to other subjects and so the work is relevant and interesting.
 - Two of the support staff, with a high level of expertise, give excellent advice and guidance to the teachers.
89. The pupils take great pride in their work and this is further boosted by the attractive displays around the school. The subject makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils talk in detail about how they created pictures, claywork, collage and sculpture and show great pleasure in the subject. They have a very good sense of colour. Year 1 pupils know how to mix secondary colours and make tones of a colour by adding white or black. Year 2 pupils use delicate tones and tints when they use a drawing program on the computer to create pictures based on Miro's work.
90. The pupils' observational drawings show a very good use of variety in line. Year 1 pupils use shading to show form in their charcoal and pencil drawings of Victorian objects and know that the darker areas fall away from the direction of the source of light. Year 2 pupils used a digital camera to take photographs of the stonework and windows in York Minster and also made

sketches. They used these to design high quality clay tiles with indented and raised patterns. The pupils' monochrome paintings of York Minster are of an excellent standard. These pupils have also researched line from a website on the Internet and have used paint, charcoal, paper, felt pen and pastel to explore different ways of representing line. Pupils have also used viewfinders to observe and draw linear patterns in natural objects.

91. Only one lesson was observed, with Year 1 pupils, and the teaching was very good. From looking at pupils' work, talking to them and looking at teachers' planning, it is evident that this is representative of teaching generally. In the lesson seen, the teacher kept a very close focus on teaching skills. He encouraged the pupils very well but also gave very good guidance that helped them understand how to improve their work. When working with a less able pupil, for example, the teacher first praised the pupil's efforts to make a clay thumb pot but followed up with: "Now you need to improve the quality of the edges and give them a smoother finish."
92. The subject is very well managed. Teachers are very confident to try out new ideas and use a wide range of media because of the very good advice from two support assistants who readily share their expertise. They are providing excellent support for the new co-ordinator. The pupils also enjoy taking part in the after-school art club, which is led by a highly enthusiastic teacher. The pupils were looking at Matisse's abstract work during the inspection and gained a deep understanding of why he worked in this way.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. Standards in design and technology are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. However, some pupils exceed national standards, such as in their ability to use labelled sketches to communicate design details. The high status of design and technology within the school's broad curriculum identified in the last inspection has been maintained.
94. Pupils make good gains in learning in the development of design and making skills as they move through the school. This is because:
 - All areas of the subject are given suitable emphasis.
 - Planning ensures that work carefully builds on previous learning and indicates a good range of projects through which pupils develop important skills.
 - Teachers have the required subject knowledge and confidence to ensure pupils learn.
 - The subject is well led by a competent and knowledgeable teacher;
95. A point for improvement is:
 - Teachers occasionally give too much direction, which restricts pupils' initiative.
96. Pupils use pictures and words to explain their designs, work with a range of tools, equipment, materials and components to make products of mostly good quality, and evaluate their finished products, suggesting ways of improvement. For example, Year 1 pupils, in work on structures, study playground equipment and how it is made before using materials, such as art straws and construction kits, to design and make their own. Finally, they evaluate their completed piece of playground equipment to discover how they can make it stronger. By the end of Year 2, pupils plan and make a sock and finger puppet, some pupils showing labelled designs to show their intentions. They use a variety of construction materials to build models of cars from their designs, using different approaches, discovering how the wheels turn and learning about the axle and chassis.
97. Teaching was good in both lessons observed. Good features of teaching include secure subject knowledge, a brisk pace, good emphasis on developing important skills and on matching tasks to pupils of different abilities, good questioning of pupils, and much encouragement and praise given to pupils. These positive features help to increase pupils'

confidence and enthusiasm. As a result, pupils clearly enjoy lessons and make good gains in their learning.

98. There are clear plans for the continued development of design and technology, such as by holding a technology week, to ensure that the subject remains well represented within the curriculum. Teachers assess against specific learning objectives at the end of each topic. However, there are no consistent approaches to the assessment of important skills as pupils move through the school, although this is planned. Pupils are involved in their own learning through their evaluations of their completed products, and this is a good feature of the subject. Areas for attention include the development of links with information and communication technology, which are under-represented. The co-ordinator is not yet monitoring the quality of teaching and learning to enable her to have the best possible overview of the subject to help raise standards further.

GEOGRAPHY

99. The pupils' work reaches the expectations for their age by the time they leave the school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and teachers' planning better reflects the requirements for the subject. The pupils make good progress in this subject because:

- The teachers plan interesting activities that motivate the pupils.
- Good use is made of the pupils' experience and the local area to support further learning.
- The pupils are encouraged to think about how the environment affects how people live and also how people affect the environment.

100. A point for improvement is:

- A few of the lower attaining pupils struggle with recording work and need more guidance to help them make a start.

101. By the time the pupils are in Year 2, they understand how to interpret maps and can create a key for a simple map that they have drawn. They know that a map shows physical features from above. Most can draw a plan of the immediate area of the school. The pupils know that York is a city and that Pickering is a small town. They explain that York has factories, many large shops and much more traffic, whereas Pickering is quieter. The pupils can identify all of the countries that make up the British Isles on a map.

102. The teaching is good because lessons are well planned to build upon what pupils already know. Teachers encourage the pupils to think about how aspects of geography affect people's lives. In a good lesson in Year 1, for example, the pupils were asked to decide what Barnaby Bear would need to pack for a journey to Dublin. They understood that Barnaby could travel by air or sea to get to his destination and they found Dublin on a map. The teacher's very good questions prompted the pupils to justify why they felt certain items would be important for Barnaby's comfort in travelling. In a good lesson in Year 2, the pupils were highly motivated to learn because of a well-planned local study of traffic controls. On their return to the classroom, they drew a map of the local area and put in problem spots and the traffic restrictions that they had noted. One group were dismayed to find a car parked on a bus stop. The pupils suggested ways in which their local area could be made safer, by further restrictions on traffic.

103. The subject is managed effectively and the teachers' planning reflects the national guidelines for the subject. The local area is well used as a resource for learning.

HISTORY

104. The pupils' work reaches the expectations for their age by the time they are seven and they make good progress in this subject. The strengths in the subject, noted at the previous inspection, have been maintained. There are some strong features in the pupils' learning, which were evident in talking to them, that reflect the effective teaching. No lessons in school were seen, but a visit to a local museum by Year 1 pupils was observed, and the pupils' work was scrutinised, along with teachers' planning.

105. The pupils achieve well in history because:

- The work is well planned and made interesting through the use of resources, visits to places of historical interest and visitors to the school.
- They are encouraged very well to think about how things have changed, why people in the past acted as they did and why events happened.

106. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of how everyday objects and aspects of daily life have changed over time. When the Year 1 pupils visited the Beck Isle Museum, they were intrigued to learn about the differences between Victorian domestic life and the present day. They listened very carefully to the teachers and the museum guides. One pupil described a Victorian dress on display as "too dark and heavy, you couldn't move in it!" Another pupil was aghast at the time and effort it took to polish a pair of brass candlesticks. The pupils remember the visitor last term who talked to them about old toys and explain that, "The Vikings couldn't play with computers because they weren't invented." The pupils show a good ability to look at different sources and extract information from them. They use books well to research information and write good accounts.

107. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator ensures that it is well resourced and enhanced by a good range of visits. The national guidelines for history are being well used to support the teachers' planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national levels by the end of Year 2. However, some pupils exceed national expectations in their ability to communicate information and present findings in different forms. Evidence from the inspection indicates that standards are steadily rising over time.

109. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because:

- They have regular access to computers in the computer suite, which has increased levels of skill, confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils often have immediate opportunity to consolidate their learning by building on their teacher's instructions.
- The teaching is consistently good. Teachers have improved their own skills, enabling them to teach all components of the curriculum effectively.
- There have been significant recent improvements to the quality and range of software, enabling teachers to support pupils more effectively both within information and communication technology and in some other subjects.
- Strong leadership is provided, and there are clear and suitably rigorous plans for its sustained growth.
- The subject is secure within the school's rich and varied range of learning experiences provided for its pupils, and good displays of pupils' work help to enhance self-esteem.
- Resources, such as the digital camera, which is used extensively, are helping to raise pupils' awareness of the increasing use of information and communication technology in the wider world.

110. A point for improvement is:

- There is not yet a consistent approach to tracking the development of key skills as pupils move through the school.

111. This is a significantly improved picture from the findings of the last inspection. Pupils make good gains in learning in their ability to use information and communication technology for different purposes as they move through the school. For example, children in Reception learn to control a mouse and change the colour in pictures, and some can print out their work. In a good link with mathematics, Year 1 pupils display information relating to eye colour in a graph and interpret their findings. Most can use the mouse confidently, load the program and print out their work. In a good link with English, pupils practise specific letter clusters to help them to spell and read effectively. By the end of Year 2, pupils use the computer to recreate abstract pictures, using complementary colours, inspired by the Spanish artist Miro, and create pictures in the style of Mondrian. In links with science, they use a branching database to sort different materials, and use text and images in work about frogs. They enter text, highlight, and change font style and size when completing poems and stories, such as about Little Red Riding Hood. They steadily acquire understanding of relevant terms, such as *hard drive*, *printer*, *mouse*, *hardware*, *software*, *keyboard* and *arrow keys*.

112. Good features of teaching observed during the inspection include secure subject knowledge, good explanations to help develop understanding, good use of resources to enable pupils to use computers whenever possible, and good emphasis on developing important skills. These strengths help to ensure that pupils, whatever their age, ability and background, are given every opportunity to succeed, and show positive attitudes to the subject. The subject is well led by a good, competent co-ordinator who intends to help raise standards, through the more regular monitoring of teaching and learning. Information and communication technology makes a good contribution to the personal development of pupils. This is because pupils often work in pairs and provide effective support for each other. There are satisfactory arrangements for assessing pupils' progress, although they do not link readily to National Curriculum levels.

MUSIC

113. Music and especially singing are positive features of the school and are enjoyed by all of the pupils. The standards of attainment by the time the pupils are seven are in line with those expected nationally and in singing they are above expectations. This is a similar picture to that found at the last inspection. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

114. The features that most strongly support the pupils' learning are:

- Pupils all have access to a range of musical activities that are relevant to their ages and interest.
- The school is using the national guidelines, together with a commercial scheme of work, effectively to plan what should be taught in each year group and to make sure that the pupils build on what they have learned before.
- The pupils are eager to become involved in the singing and instrumental activities, and the good teaching ensures that they remain attentive throughout the lessons.
- The co-ordinator is a competent musician and enthusiastically promotes the pupils' musical learning throughout the school.

115. The pupils often sing together and the good singing is a feature of the school. The pupils sing enthusiastically, tunefully and with expression. The co-ordinator ensures that the learning opportunities for pupils are very well extended in the 'hymn practice assembly'. Two teachers run the popular after-school choir, and its members sing a range of songs with skill and flair. The school choir recently achieved first place in a local musical festival.

116. The pupils' response to music is good; they handle the instruments well and treat them with care and respect. Throughout school, the pupils have opportunities to play a range of untuned percussion instruments. They listen to a variety of pieces of music and some pupils can identify different instruments. The pupils know, understand and correctly use a good range of musical vocabulary; for example, they understand high and low pitch.
117. Two lessons were seen during the inspection and both of them were of good quality. The teachers have good subject knowledge; they are well supported by the clear guidelines of what they are to teach and a good range of resources. They explain the objectives of the lessons clearly and expect the pupils to participate fully in the learning opportunities; this enables the pupils to make good progress in the lessons seen and satisfactory progress overall in music. The teachers' medium-term plans include opportunities for the pupils to create and develop musical ideas for themselves.
118. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has ensured that each class has a box of instruments to use in lessons and he is giving good support to the teachers by providing training in the different aspects of the music curriculum. He involves parents in the musical experiences provided for the pupils, as when a number of parents come to the after-school country dance club. Other teachers extend the pupils' musical experiences by, for example, offering recorder lessons. The pupils have opportunities to listen to professional musicians from a range of musical traditions and cultures. They perform for parents and friends of the school; at Christmas they presented 'Hosanna Rock'. During the inspection the youngest children enthusiastically and competently sang and played a range of songs and instruments to accompany their assembly on the theme of hot and cold countries.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

119. Standards in gymnastics, games and dance activities are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. Progress is at least satisfactory as pupils move through the school. However, in most lessons observed during the inspection, pupils made good gains in learning. The good picture of physical education found at the last inspection has been maintained.
120. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least sound, and often good, progress because:
- The teaching is good overall, and occasionally very good.
 - All components of the curriculum are given appropriate emphasis, including swimming.
 - Planning ensures that teachers build carefully on previous learning.
 - The subject is well led, and there are plans for its continued development.
 - Pupils are enthusiastic towards physical education and show positive attitudes in lessons.
121. A point for improvement is:
- Pupils could be given more opportunities to learn from others through the use of demonstrations in lessons.
122. Year 1 pupils use their imagination as they travel around the hall like 'Mister Strong' and 'Mister Jelly'. They reproduce simple actions, such as marching, showing developing co-ordination. They develop ball skills, such as passing and trapping the ball, showing developing control. By the end of Year 2, pupils explore basic skills, such as stretching and skipping, as they move to a taped programme about Dick Whittington. They confidently make shapes, express emotion and begin to employ movement in an imaginative way, such as when they recreate the movements of penguins from a taped broadcast. They gain confidence in water through attending regular swimming sessions.

123. Teaching is good overall, and very good teaching was seen during the inspection. In this lesson, the teacher was secure in his subject knowledge and placed good emphasis on the development of important skills to ensure that pupils made very good gains in learning. He followed the requirements of the curriculum to include suitable warm-up and cool-down activities. Other very good features included a good emphasis on safety requirements, high levels of challenge, much encouragement given, and effective use of resources, which helped pupils to learn. However, teachers do not always enable pupils to view examples of good practice or require them to discuss and evaluate the performances of others often enough to ensure that they always make the best possible progress.
124. Leadership of the subject is good, and plans for its further development include the systematic monitoring of teaching and learning and the development of dance to help raise standards further. The progress of pupils, including of swimming, is carefully assessed as they move through the school to help teachers to identify specific strengths and weaknesses. A good range of recently audited resources ensures that all components of the curriculum are fully implemented.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. By the time they are seven, the pupils' attainment is in line with the locally agreed syllabus, and the pupils are making satisfactory progress. This is a similar picture to that at the previous inspection.
126. The strengths are:
- The school uses the guidance from the local education authority well to plan what should be taught.
 - It makes close links to the themes being explored in the assemblies and this has a clear impact on the sound progress made by pupils in gaining religious concepts, knowledge and skills.
 - There are attractive displays that interest the pupils.
127. A point for improvement is:
- The pupils have too few opportunities to use their skills in writing in the subject.
128. In the lesson and assemblies seen, the pupils' response to religious education was good and most pupils concentrate well. All of the pupils have equal access to the subject and are included in the various activities planned to support the learning in this area.
129. The pupils think about new beginnings and new life. They consider how we feel when faced with new situations and how help can come from various sources. For example, they can suggest that if they are frightened or upset they can talk to a grown up or a friend and how some people will pray to God for help. The pupils learn about the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter and they discover how themes such as light are used in a number of religions. The pupils develop an understanding of the symbols and rituals of the Jewish religion and Hindu traditions. They consider how we are all individuals with particular talents, and the importance of family and friends and belonging. They think about people and places that are special to them and some can express their reasons for their choices. As part of a cross-curricular project, Year 2 pupils have visited York Minster and this has provided a very good opportunity for them to experience the beauty of a building dedicated to God and the special feelings that such a place can engender. The pupils also visit the local church to learn about the significance of features found there. The vicar comes into school to talk to the pupils and shows them how babies are baptised.

130. One lesson was seen during the inspection and it reached a very good standard. The teacher managed the pupils very well and ensured they were fully involved in the learning. He used effective, well-directed questioning to develop the pupils' understanding and showed that he valued their ideas. In their planning the teachers demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the guidance for what is to be taught in religious education and the lessons are well planned according to the guidance. There are very well arranged displays that include very good artwork by the pupils, Bibles, candles and other artefacts. These help the pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of Christianity.
131. The subject manager, who is the headteacher, is supporting colleagues by reviewing their planning for religious education and she intends to improve the resources for teachers to use. She monitors the quality of teaching and learning through looking at pupils' work and by talking to them to check their levels of knowledge and understanding. There is a good range of books, artefacts and pictures to promote the pupils' knowledge of different faiths and cultural traditions. The subject makes a good contribution to the school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.