

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LACEWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bolton-on-Deane, Rotherham

LEA area: Barnsley

Unique reference number: 106579

Headteacher: Mrs J. Bowkett

Reporting inspector: Miss M. A. Warner  
17288

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2002

Inspection number: 195067

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Station Road  
Bolton-on-Dearne  
Rotherham  
South Yorkshire

Postcode: S63 8AB

Telephone number: 01709 893238

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. J. Thomson

Date of previous inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17288	M. A. Warner	Registered inspector	Science Religious education	Information about the school. The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What the school should do to improve further.
9189	J. Horwood	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Accommodation
17877	C. Ingham	Team inspector	Music Foundation stage	
31963	M. Padmore	Team inspector	English Art and design Information and communication technology	How well does the school care for pupils?

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2140	P. J. Allison	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Special educational needs Equal opportunities	
25203	R. Cooke	Team inspector	Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Lacewood Primary School is situated to the east of Barnsley in the heart of the Dearne Valley, which was previously a coal-mining area. There are 264 full-time pupils and 60 children part-time in the nursery, making it bigger than other primary schools nationally. Twenty-one per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above the national average. Twenty-two per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is in line with the national average. One per cent of pupils have formal statements of need, which is broadly in line with the national average. Almost all pupils are from white, United Kingdom backgrounds; one pupil is of black Caribbean heritage background. No pupil has English as an additional language. Whilst children's attainment on entry is wide-ranging; overall, it is well below that expected of children of their age, especially in speech and language development.

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

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. The leadership and management of the school are good, the quality of teaching is good and pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. As a result, standards are beginning to rise and are mainly in line with what is expected nationally by the time pupils leave the school, although literacy skills are still below what is expected. The cost per pupil is high. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards in music at the end of Year 2 and in singing and performance by the end of Year 6 are above national expectations for pupils of their ages.
- The quality of teaching is good across the school.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good; staff who support them are very well trained.
- Provision for pupils' personal development and their response to this provision is good.
- The planning of the curriculum is very good in the nursery.
- The school is a fully inclusive school: there is very good equality of access for all pupils to the curriculum and to all provision.
- The headteacher has a long-term commitment to the school and the pupils: her leadership is based on a clear vision for the school and this provides good direction for improvement.

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

- Standards in all aspects of English need to be raised and literacy, library and research skills used more frequently across the curriculum.
- The presentation of pupils' work, especially in geography and history, is unsatisfactory.
- Assessment data is not used sufficiently to match work to the needs of higher-attaining pupils.
- The requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education are not being fully implemented.
- Parents have very mixed views of the school.
- Co-ordinators' responsibilities are unevenly distributed, because of staffing difficulties, and some teachers are overloaded.
- The school has no long-term development plan.

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

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

There have been substantial improvements since the last inspection in June 1997. All key issues have been at least partly addressed, although further improvement is still necessary with regard to improving attendance, the checking of teaching by subject leaders and providing opportunities for pupils to use their research and enquiry skills. There are also still some omissions in the governors' annual report to parents. However, there have been additional improvements in the provision for English and mathematics

in both key stages and the assessment and analysis of English, mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology across the school and in physical education in Years 1 and 2 have improved. There have also been improvements in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and for pupils with special educational needs.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	E	E
Mathematics	C	D	E*	E*
Science	E	E	E	E

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average   E

very low               E\*

In 2001, the percentage of pupils at the end of Year 6 reaching the expected level in mathematics was in the lowest 5 per cent of schools both nationally and when compared with similar schools. In English and science the percentage was well below the national average and those of similar schools. Results over the last four years reflect the staffing difficulties the school has had over a number of years and particularly in the unstable staffing of Year 6 in 2001. These results also reflect the larger number of pupils with special educational needs in the 2001 year group and the fact that 16 of the 38 pupils who took these tests had joined the school since Year 4. However, the trend in these results is broadly in line with the national trend.

The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, in 2002, show a marked improvement on the 2001 results. National comparisons are not yet available for the 2002 results. Whilst the number of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 in 2002 was higher than in 2001 in all three subjects, standards in English, as seen during the inspection, are still below national expectations. The school exceeded its targets, at the end of Year 6, both in 2001 and in 2002 in English, but did not achieve them in either year in mathematics.

In 2001, standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average and those of similar schools. In mathematics, they were below the national average and were in line with those of similar schools. National Curriculum test results in 2002 show improvements on the previous year's results. Seventy-eight per cent of pupils reached the expected level in reading and writing, and 100 per cent reached the expected level in mathematics. In 2002, 28 per cent reached the higher Level 3 in reading, whereas seven per cent achieved this level in 2001. In 2002, eight per cent reached the higher Level 3 in writing, none having achieved this level in 2001. In mathematics, 25 per cent reached Level 3, whereas only 14 per cent had reached Level 3 the previous year. Comparisons are not yet available for the 2002 results but standards seen during the inspection in speaking and writing are below national expectations and are well below in reading. In mathematics they were in line with national expectations.

A strength in standards in other subjects, as seen during the inspection, was in music in Year 1 and 2 and singing and musical performance in Year 6. In all other subjects, except religious education, standards were broadly in line with what is expected of pupils of their ages. No judgement can be made about standards in religious education because of the lack of evidence.



Pupils start school with standards which are well below average and make good progress in the nursery and reception classes. Progress in the rest of the school is mainly satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils like school and work hard in lessons. They willingly accept responsibilities and are fully involved in school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is good throughout the school with only small numbers in each year group presenting challenging behaviour; this is well managed.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are friendly, confident, and polite. Good relationships exist throughout the school and all pupils are included in all activities.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is improving but last year was well below the national average with a high number of unauthorised absences.

The main strength is in pupils' positive attitudes to learning which is helping to raise standards. The main weakness is in the attendance rates, which affect the progress that pupils can make.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching during the inspection was very good or excellent in over a quarter of lessons. It was good or better in seven out of ten lessons and satisfactory or better in almost all lessons.

Teaching in the nursery was almost always very good or excellent. Teaching in reception classes, by supply teachers, was mainly good. Strengths in teaching in the Foundation Stage are the planning and structure of sessions in the nursery and excellent teaching of communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills in reception classes. Throughout the school the main strengths in teaching are the detailed planning of lessons, the quality of teachers' questioning and management of pupils, all of whom become involved, and the deployment of support staff whose contribution to teaching is invaluable. Excellent teaching was seen in both English and mathematics but, overall, the teaching of English and literacy skills is satisfactory and the teaching of numeracy skills is good. The teaching of mathematics is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Very good teaching was also seen in science, music and physical education. The main weaknesses in teaching are the use of literacy skills across the range of subjects, the expectations teachers have of higher-attaining pupils and of the presentation of pupils' work in geography and history.

The main strengths in pupils' learning are the skills, knowledge and understanding that they acquire; the intellectual, physical and creative effort that they themselves put into their work; and their own knowledge of what it is they are learning about. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are well supported. They are given work that matches their individual needs well and this enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The overall provision is good with the provision for spiritual and moral development being very good. Many of the assemblies are uplifting experiences which the pupils enjoy and benefit from.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides good care for its pupils with the pastoral systems ensuring that pupils are well known to staff.

Strengths are in the nursery curriculum, pupils' personal development, extra-curricular provision and in the behaviour procedures, which are particularly effective. A weakness is that religious education does not meet statutory requirements and there is no formal risk assessment policy. The school's partnership with parents needs to be developed. Parents have mixed views of the school and communications are not always satisfactory.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	There is very good leadership and management from the headteacher and good leadership from the deputy headteacher. Members of the senior management team are relatively new and their management is satisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has led the school through difficult times and has fulfilled its responsibilities satisfactorily.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has set up satisfactory systems and is beginning to monitor and evaluate its performance satisfactorily.
The strategic use of resources	The governing body has a clear understanding of the need for a strategic use of resources but has not formalised it into a long-term school development plan.

During the inspection, three temporary teachers were taking classes. Staffing is now, however, adequate and many of the permanent teachers are experienced and well qualified. Support staff are very well trained. The buildings are adequate but of different ages and quality. The school has an adequate range of learning resources, but the lack of a library has a significant effect on standards. The main strengths in leadership are in the chair of governors' and the headteacher's long-term commitment to the school. The school applies the principles of best value well. A weakness in leadership is the fact that some members of the senior management team and co-ordinators have not had training in their management roles.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teachers have high expectations of their children.</li><li>• Their children like school.</li><li>• Their children make good progress.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li><li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They feel that the school does not work closely enough with parents, including making itself accessible to them and providing them with information about their children's progress. They are also concerned about test results over the last two years.</li><li>• There is a limited range of activities outside lessons.</li><li>• The amount of homework set is inconsistent.</li><li>• The behaviour of some pupils is unsatisfactory.</li></ul>

The inspection team agree with the positive comments of parents. They found that teachers are very willing to work with parents, although parents sometimes think otherwise because of the security measures that have been introduced to ensure the safety of the pupils. Inspectors believe these measures to be appropriate. Information provided for parents is satisfactory and test results are beginning to improve. The range of activities provided is good and the amount of homework set follows the school's homework policy, which is appropriate for pupils of this age. The behaviour of most pupils is good and unsatisfactory behaviour is managed well.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children start in the nursery, their attainment is well below the level expected for their age, especially in speech and language skills. They make good progress because of the extensive range of worthwhile activities in an attractive, stimulating and vibrant environment. By the time they enter the reception year, baseline assessments show they are below the expected levels, particularly in language and communication skills. By the end of the reception year the children's achievement is at least satisfactory and it is good for the higher-attaining children. Many children are working within Level 1 of the subjects in the National Curriculum.
2. In 2001, National Curriculum test results in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were well below other schools nationally and when compared with similar schools. In mathematics, they were below other schools nationally and were in line with similar schools. National Curriculum test results in 2002 show improvements on the results of the previous year. There were improvements in reading, writing and mathematics, with 78 per cent of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 in reading and writing, and 100 per cent reaching the expected Level 2 in mathematics. Whereas seven per cent of pupils reached the higher Level 3 in reading and none reached this level in writing in 2001, 28 per cent reached Level 3 in reading and eight per cent in writing in 2002. In 2001, 14 per cent reached Level 3 in mathematics, whereas 25 per cent reached the Level 3 in 2002. Comparisons are not yet available for the 2002 results but standards seen during the inspection in speaking and writing are below national expectations. Pupils generally listen well, however.
3. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001, standards in English and science were well below the national average and well below similar schools. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level, compared with results nationally and with similar schools, was in the lowest five per cent of schools. Results over the last four years reflect the staffing difficulties the school has had over a number of years and particularly in the unstable staffing of Year 6 in 2001. These results also reflect the larger number of pupils with special educational needs in the 2001 year group and the fact that 16 of the 38 pupils who took these tests had joined the school since Year 4, only two of whom achieved Level 4 in all three subjects. However, the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points score for English, mathematics and science was broadly in line with the national trend.
4. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, in 2002, show a marked improvement on the results shown above in 2001. The number of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 in 2002 was higher than in 2001 in English (66 per cent, which is a five per cent improvement), in mathematics (53 per cent, which is a 16 per cent improvement) and in science (71 per cent, which is a five per cent improvement). Almost a quarter (24 per cent) reached Level 5 in English and 13 per cent in mathematics. National comparisons are not yet available for the 2002 results, but standards in English, as seen during the inspection, are still below national expectations; those in mathematics and science are in line with expectations. The school exceeded its targets, at the end of Year 6, both in 2001 and in 2002 in English but did not achieve them in either year in mathematics. The involvement of a teacher from the Beacon school is one of the strategies the school has put in place to help identify weaknesses and assist in the further raising of standards.

5. A strength in standards in other subjects, as seen during the inspection, was in music in Year 1 and 2. In all other subjects except religious education, standards were broadly in line with what is expected of pupils of their ages. No judgement can be made about standards in religious education because of the lack of evidence.
6. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs make good progress through the school. They are well supported in lessons and the work they are given to do is carefully matched to their needs. Thus they gain skills, knowledge and understanding in small steps. Results from tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 show that they often achieve in line with their peers. Whilst the school has identified pupils who are gifted or talented with the result that two are attending a related summer school, provision for higher-attaining pupils is not always made and, as a result, these pupils do not always reach standards of which they are capable.
7. There has been a tendency in the past for girls to achieve better than boys, but the school recognised this and effectively addressed it through Performance Management objectives. There are currently no significant differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls.
8. Pupils start school with standards which are well below average and make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Progress in the rest of the school is mainly satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall.

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

9. The majority of pupils have very positive attitudes to the school and to learning. They arrive in a very orderly manner and are clearly keen to come to school. The majority of pupils are polite and well mannered, showing courtesy to staff, visitors and to each other when moving around the school and this results in a disciplined community. Their attitudes throughout the school are very good. Most pupils concentrate well and work hard in most lessons; examples being in an excellent Year 5 mathematics lesson and in a lesson for the under-fives where there was clear enthusiasm and pupils responded very well to challenging teaching. In a small minority of lessons pupils' attitudes are not as good, but teachers work very hard to hold pupils' attention, usually with success. Many pupils join in the available activities including sporting and musical opportunities, as well as studying at the adjacent community group centre at lunchtime and after school.
10. There have been two permanent, and four fixed term, exclusions of pupils this year which, although high for this type of school, have been necessary to ensure the safety of other pupils. The behaviour of the pupils during the inspection was good in most lessons and around the school, including break and lunch times, with no evidence of any bullying or other type of oppressive behaviour. Where there were examples of poor behaviour, such as with small groups of boys in Year 5/6, teachers need to analyse the reasons for, and results of, misbehaviour more carefully. For example, lack of challenge in science and geography and constant calling out and speaking while the teacher was talking meant that instructions were not always properly followed. In the playground pupils are supported well by the 'buddy' system where Year 6 pupils help the younger pupils. The well-trained lunchtime supervisors, working well as a team, quickly sort out any behaviour issues. There is adequate supervision at all times during the day.

11. Relationships throughout the school are good and are fundamental to the ethos of the school. As a result, there is a positive learning environment. Communications between staff and pupils are very good and there is mutual respect and trust between them. The pupils are mature and sensible as well as being confident, polite and trustworthy reflecting good progress in their personal development. They are keen to take on responsibilities available to them, such as taking registers to the office, ringing the bell and tidying up the classroom. The pupils often demonstrate respect for each other's feelings; examples being their attitudes during prayers in assembly and the pupil-derived class rules, which include being kind and helpful as well as considering the feelings of others.
12. Attendance levels for last year at 91.3 per cent were well below the national average with unauthorised absence at 1.8 per cent being well above the average. The school has worked hard to improve these figures, with good results. So far this year, attendance is at 92.31 per cent and unauthorised absence is down to 0.9 per cent. This is a very good achievement when one considers that the figures include a relatively large number of pupil transfers. The punctuality of the majority of pupils is very good. Registration takes place at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions and the procedures are followed well. The registers are returned to the office where they are entered into the database. An analysis of attendance data is carried out regularly. Although absence is followed up to determine the reasons this is not immediate and the school should review procedures to ensure unexpected absence is followed up quickly.
13. The positive attitudes and good behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection. The attendance figures are now similar to those at the last inspection but are in fact recovering from a significant dip during the interim years.

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

14. The quality of teaching is good across the school. It was very good or excellent in over a quarter of lessons. It was good or better in seven out of ten lessons and satisfactory or better in almost all lessons. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed.
15. The teaching of basic skills in the Foundation Stage is very good, overall. The quality of teaching in the nursery was almost always very good or excellent. The two reception classes were being taken by three supply teachers during the inspection and teaching was mainly good. Strengths in teaching in the Foundation Stage are the planning and structure of sessions in the nursery and excellent teaching of communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills in reception classes. The quality of teachers' questioning is also often very good.
16. Teaching is good, overall, in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6. Very good and excellent teaching was seen in both key stages. Throughout the school the main strengths in teaching are the detailed planning of lessons, to ensure that work is well matched to the attainment of the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs; the management of pupils and their behaviour; and the use of resources and deployment of support staff, whose contribution to teaching is invaluable. Teachers also prepare lessons well by providing pupils with the key vocabulary of the lesson and the learning objective, displayed on the board in front of the classroom. Pupils, however, are not always sufficiently encouraged to actually use this key vocabulary, both verbally and in writing, throughout the lesson and thereby become familiar with the words and extend their own vocabulary. Whilst excellent teaching was seen in both English and mathematics, overall, the teaching of English and literacy skills is satisfactory and the teaching of numeracy skills is good. The teaching of mathematics is very good in Years

1 and 2 and it is good in Years 3 to 6. Very good teaching was also seen in science, music and physical education.

17. The school has a helpful handbook for supply staff and a comprehensive policy on teaching and learning. Teachers follow the DfES guidance on the setting of homework. Parents feel, however, that the giving of homework is rather 'hit and miss' and there should be more consistency in the amount that is set, as sometimes there is too much and at other times too little set. Good guidance on teaching is given to long-term and supply staff.
18. Additional small group teaching, such as that provided by teaching assistants in Years 1 and 3, is of good quality and gives individual pupils the chance to build up the skills they need to cope in lessons. Teachers plan carefully for the inclusion of all pupils in all activities and use appropriate strategies in classrooms to ensure that there is equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. These strategies are very effective and this is a strength of the school. Teachers are good at involving all pupils in lessons and enabling them all to learn. They plan carefully for individual needs and deploy supporting adults effectively to ensure that all pupils make progress. The positive relationships in classes and the skill with which teachers manage pupils help everyone to feel confident and involved. The use of information and communication technology to support different subjects is developing well and making a positive impact on pupils' learning; for example, there are good links made with English and in other subjects such as art and geography.
19. There is currently an emphasis on the development of non-fiction writing during the literacy hour. However, at the time of the inspection little extended writing was seen in foundation subjects taught in the afternoon. The limited expectations of what pupils in Years 3 to 6 can be expected to achieve at this time of day is an area of concern, as are teachers' expectations of higher-attaining pupils. Teachers' planning is not always to a high enough level for these pupils. The school maintains portfolios of pupils' work throughout the school in all subjects, where work is generally colour coded at three levels and shows progression. However, there are few examples of higher levels of work for more able pupils to aspire to in some subjects such as geography and history. There is a marking policy that is consistently used by the permanent members of staff, but marking does not always give pupils enough information on how they can improve their work. The standards of presentation and written work expected of pupils in subjects such as geography and history are not high enough.
20. A particular feature of pupils' learning at Lacewood is the delay found, after the whole-class teaching session at the start of the lesson, in pupils' understanding of what is being taught. This was an unusual feature of the inspection and was observed by a number of inspectors. Pupils are very attentive and listen carefully to their teachers. There then often follows a time during the lesson when it appears that what has been taught as a class is not fully understood and pupils struggle to concentrate and understand. At this time both teachers and inspectors wonder if, after all, pupils have grasped the concepts previously discussed. After a while the light dawns and pupils achieve, almost surprisingly well, working quickly with their newfound skills. Inspectors and teachers discussed at length this, more than usual, delay in pupils' ability to understand new concepts, with the conclusion that health-related issues should be looked into further, such as classroom windows not being open, the tiredness of pupils, a lack of food or water which might affect their ability to concentrate, or other personally-related reasons. The main strengths in pupils' learning are the skills, knowledge and understanding that they do acquire; the considerable intellectual, physical and creative effort that they themselves put into their work; and their own



knowledge of what it is they are learning about. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. The school makes effective use of classroom and corridor displays to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment. Displays are monitored and changed on a regular basis to ensure that they reflect work currently being studied. All pupils have the opportunity of having some of their best work displayed during the course of the year. This is good practice and supports pupils' learning well.

21. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers differentiate work well, especially in English and mathematics, ensuring that the work pupils are given to do matches their learning needs. Teachers skilfully include all pupils in lessons. For example, in the mental starter part of numeracy lessons teachers target questions so as to give all pupils the opportunity to answer, they give the less confident time to think and work out answers and they use praise well to encourage and support effort. Whilst teaching is very good, there is a need to improve target-setting in pupils' individual education plans.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching. During whole class sessions, teaching assistants sensitively help individual pupils, giving them that little bit of encouragement that they need to enable them to take part. In activity sessions, teaching assistants are very well directed. They know exactly what the teacher wants the pupils to learn and they skilfully support individuals and groups of pupils. Whilst they are deployed well to teach phonics to individuals or groups, they are seldom deployed to hear pupils read. With their considerable knowledge, through training, their expertise could be further used to hear pupils read, identify weaknesses and thereby help raise standards.

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

23. Nursery staff provide a curriculum of high quality so that the children want to learn. However, the present reception class curriculum plan is too rigid. Excessive time is allocated to communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world, resulting in insufficient time for creative development, particularly for the art aspect. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for Years 1 to 6. The school meets the statutory requirements of the literacy and numeracy strategies satisfactorily and the strategies for teaching numeracy skills are good. The school has improved its provision for information and communication technology in recent years and there are now policies and clear guidelines in place for all core and foundation subjects. These are improvements since the last inspection. However, the school has no scheme of work for religious education and the time allocated to the subject is insufficient to meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. This needs urgent attention, as the statutory requirements of the Agreed Syllabus are not being met. Whilst there is clear evidence of individual research by pupils in history and geography as well as in mathematics and science, the development of this aspect of the curriculum is limited by the inaccessibility of the school library and the number and range of non-fiction books. Overall, however, the school provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities and has a clear commitment to ensuring that all pupils have an equal access to them. Support is provided for those who need it.

24. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are fully involved in all school activities. Support is used well to ensure that pupils cope in lessons. Teachers write individual education plans and try to incorporate the targets in them into their own planning. Although the strengths and weaknesses of individuals are analysed well, the targets themselves are often too vague, are not really measurable and pupils are not always involved enough in the setting of these targets. This is an area for further development.
25. All teachers have planning folders containing medium-term plans, weekly plans, lesson plans and pupils' individual education plans. These are readily accessible to, and used by, support staff who liaise well with class teachers. Class teachers plan half-termly. Weekly planning is based on these half-termly plans with flexibility, so that the teaching of some aspects of a subject can be in larger blocks of time. This works effectively. The deputy headteacher and senior management team oversee all long-term planning. The deputy headteacher sees teachers' weekly planning on a weekly basis and checks them against medium-term plans to ensure that objectives are being met. Any resultant issues are discussed individually with teachers. There are also effective arrangements in place for checking short and medium-term plans to ensure that National Curriculum programmes of study are being delivered.
26. The deputy headteacher was appointed in 2001 and has revised the school's overall curriculum plan to cover a two-year cycle, in order to cater for mixed-age classes. The school is approaching the end of the first year of this cycle and plans to review the curriculum coverage annually. The Qualification and Curriculum Authority's guidelines form the basis for most foundation subjects except science, physical education and music for which other schemes are used. The school carefully checks the schemes against National Curriculum requirements and makes modifications according to the school's needs. The overall plan gives good curriculum coverage and is mainly working effectively. Planning for the use of literacy across the curriculum is an area for further development.
27. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The school places a strong emphasis on this aspect of the pupils' education. There are policies and programmes in place for health education, drugs education and sex education and a portfolio of work reflecting work in all classes. Most aspects are taught through other subjects such as geography, science and religious education. This is mainly appropriate. There is also a separate hour per week allocated to personal, social and health education in Years 1 to 6. In some classes this is divided up into short lessons after lunch, used in many schools for reading. In these sessions the pupils are generally well behaved and the activities well planned, but the contribution of this time to the raising of standards is not evident. In Years 3 to 6 there are very limited opportunities for pupils to read or to be heard to read individually. The tracking of the pupils' progress in reading is restricted to weekly guided reading in some classes. The use of curriculum time and timetabling arrangements are therefore a cause of some concern. The co-ordinator for personal, social and health education plans to monitor whether the present arrangements for personal, social and health education help to raise standards of attainment.
28. During the autumn term, Year 5 and 6 pupils are involved in a workshop on drugs awareness and, in the summer term, a health visitor gives support for teaching sex education. These occasions have proved appropriate for Year 6 but not always for Year 5 pupils. Parents are invited to both presentations. The school receives good support for health education by being involved with the Barnsley Healthy Schools Scheme. The co-ordinator has been given release time to develop a new scheme for the school

using the project material as a basis. Year 6 pupils are also involved in an annual 'safety awareness' day, which involves local services such as the police, firemen and paramedics. There are therefore some constructive links with local community workers.

29. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enhance and extend the curriculum. These include football, rounders, cricket, netball, music, drama, poetry, art and craft. Good use is made of a local community building adjacent to the school site for extra information and communication technology and a boys' club. Good use is also made of educational visits and visitors to the school including visiting theatre groups and authors. In 2001 the school took part in a local music festival for the Dearne Valley schools and it takes part in an annual Christmas festival. Another annual event is a mathematics competition at Dearne Valley High School. These and the other extra-curricular activities enrich the curricular opportunities offered to the pupils. The community, including parents, make a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' learning and there are constructive relationships with partner institutions such as local secondary schools and other primary schools. The pupils from Lacewood go to a number of secondary schools. Normal induction processes take place and secondary school teachers visit the pupils in school time.
30. The provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. There are many areas within the curriculum and through the assemblies for pupils to develop a spiritual awareness. The atmosphere during the assemblies is one of calm, and the ethos of the school is underpinned by a strong Christian belief. During the assemblies music is used to create a particular mood, songs are appropriate to the themes and pupils sing them with enthusiasm and understanding. Many of the assemblies are uplifting experiences which the pupils enjoy and benefit from. The prayers during assembly are appropriate to pupils' understanding and give them time to reflect. The religious education lessons also make a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. Within the curriculum, pupils exclaimed with joy when they found information on the Internet during a Year 5 geography lesson, experienced wonder when seeing the different parts of a flower for the first time in a Year 4 science lesson and expressed delight at the prospect of writing poems on computers. When unscheduled opportunities arose for pupils to marvel at events, such as when the Red Arrows flew overhead during the inspection, teachers allowed pupils time to observe and reflect.
31. The school's provision for pupils' moral development has also improved since the last inspection and is now very good. The school promotes a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. The pupils are involved, each year, in producing the school and class rules and there is a strong emphasis on pupils being accountable for their own actions. Within the behaviour policy there are rewards systems to encourage good behaviour and individual classes have developed additional systems to encourage pupils further. The pupils are encouraged to think of others, for example, they were asked to think about how they, during playtime, should look after a girl who had a broken arm during playtime. Moral issues are often discussed during assemblies, examples being through stories about greed, honesty and stealing. Many moral issues are discussed during the personal, social and health education lessons; for example, in a Year 4 lesson when pupils considered the moral reasoning behind making difficult decisions as well as understanding different people's moods.
32. The provision made for pupils' social and cultural development has been maintained as good since the last inspection. Social skills are developed progressively in the school through lessons and other activities. Most issues are discussed as part of the personal,

social and health education course but pupils study topics with social issues, such as the rainforests being in danger, within the main curriculum. The class teachers help pupils to develop their social skills by working in pairs and in groups within the lessons as well as by encouraging them to work co-operatively and share equipment. The pupils learn how to listen to others, as well as participate in presentations, through the very good 'class assemblies'. Sporting activities give pupils good opportunities to learn fair play and experience team spirit. The Year 6 pupils have excellent opportunities to develop social skills by acting as 'buddies' or 'listeners' for the younger children. Other opportunities for taking responsibility are at present limited; for example, there is no school council.

33. Good provision for pupils' cultural development is provided within the curriculum as well as through visits and visitors. The pupils study topics such as Ancient Greece in history, Monet within art, and communication with Japan in geography. There are also special events held in school, such as a 'Greek Day'. A notable event in the school was the visit by the 'Zulu Nation', a group of people who acted out Zulu dances and songs and provided a high quality insight into a completely different culture. Through history lessons, pupils learn how people used to live and good photographs, related to their local environment, make this very meaningful to them. There are very limited opportunities, within religious education lessons, for pupils to study other religions but they have opportunities to visit churches and museums on day visits. Opportunities for pupils to explore different cultures within a multi-racial Britain, whilst present, are however limited.

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

34. The school provides good care for its pupils. The welfare of pupils in the school is promoted through the close relationships between staff and children. Staff know the children, and often the families, well, and pupils know that they can talk to staff about any problems that concern them. There is good, formal and informal provision for pupils' personal development as they move through the school. The personal, social and health education curriculum and many other less formal opportunities are provided to give pupils greater insight into their personal growth. The monitoring of this after the Foundation Stage, however, is not formalised. The site and all activities during the day are supervised by well-trained staff. Lunchtime supervisory staff; for example, are responsive to the pupils and, where they feel it is appropriate, they will introduce some of the games of their own youth. These are highly successful with the children, who can often be heard playing singing games in the playground.
35. The school effectively supports individuals. Because staff know pupils well they are able to meet their specific needs. The emphasis on personal and social education encourages a climate of care and respect for others. This is seen in the positive way in which pupils work with each other, listen to others and support those who are less confident than themselves. The school has a high percentage of pupils who are new to the school during the school year. Although there is no specific policy for supporting these pupils, who can often be emotionally unsettled, the school's ethos of care ensures that they are supported and make the adjustments to change as well as they can.
36. Staff and pupils understand the behaviour policy which offers appropriate rewards and sanctions. At the beginning of each school year, pupils agree on the rules and these stay in place for the year. Staff have been trained in ways to deal with challenging behaviour. There are two display boards within the school where, alongside

improvements in other areas, success in improving behaviour is recorded. The anti-bullying policy addresses issues associated with bullying well.

37. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Whether they have learning or behavioural difficulties, teachers and support staff are sensitive to the needs of individuals. External agencies, for example the Behaviour Support Service, are involved appropriately to advise staff and support specific pupils. Improvements in the use of assessment information are helping teachers to assess pupils' needs more precisely. However, procedures for tracking their progress are not yet fully developed.
38. The school has developed good procedures to monitor and assess pupils' academic performance and achievements in English, mathematics and science. Its plans to develop assessment in the other subjects are well advanced and should be in place during the next academic year. Plans are in place to make appropriate use of information technology to improve further the collection and analysis of data. The use of assessment folders is well established and contributes to the setting of standards in the school.
39. The school makes good use of the bank of data that testing now produces. Data from national and optional tests is systematically analysed. The information gained is appropriately used to assist in planning. Data is being used to set school and individual targets, to track individual achievement and to ensure that the school's inclusion policy is effective and that there are explanations for any differences on the basis of, for example, gender. There is a need, however, to use assessment more for matching work to the attainment of higher-attaining pupils so that they reach higher standards and for measuring the added value that the school provides.
40. The school monitors attendance closely and analyses data to enable issues to be investigated and addressed if necessary. Although attendance figures have fallen in recent years the current year's figures show a significant improvement. This is clear evidence that the procedures are working. The school receives good support from the education welfare officer if issues do arise. Procedures for monitoring attendance and lateness are secure although the school has not yet introduced first day contact with parents to further improve pupil care.
41. The school has a sound approach to health and safety and provides a safe and secure environment for pupils. There are effective procedures in place for child protection. The headteacher is currently the child protection officer and has received appropriate training to equip her for the role. All staff in the school have undergone training in child protection and are aware of what to do should there be any concern about any of the children. The school has no medical room but otherwise has satisfactory medical facilities. There is an adequate number of qualified first aid staff. Responsibilities will need to be reviewed when staff, currently in training, become qualified. External medical specialist staff visit the school as required. Accident reports are completed and external agencies are involved as required. Fire drills and alarm tests are carried out on a regular basis and good records of these are kept. Routine health and safety inspections are carried out on a regular basis. However, there is no formal risk assessment policy to give governors a framework against which the range of potential risks can be identified.

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

42. The parents have very mixed views of the school but most are pleased with the high expectations staff have for their children and the good progress their children are making. They are also pleased that their children like school and with the way the school helps them to become mature and responsible. Although only 29 per cent of parents returned the questionnaires, there was a significant number of parents who were concerned about the following: the lack of extra-curricular activities, how closely the school works with parents, the information they receive about the progress their child is making and the inconsistency in the giving of homework. Homework and extra-curricular activities are discussed elsewhere in the report but homework is considered by the inspection team to be satisfactory, overall, and provision for extra-curricular activities good. The main concerns, voiced through the parents' meeting and questionnaires, relate to behaviour and to the result of the recent changes in school access which is discussed later.
43. Individual comments made by parents were considered. These refer to the management of the school, in particular to issues around the frequency of supply staff having to be used and an occasion when the headteacher had to supervise two classes with the help of two support assistants. Parents were concerned about repeated project work and restricted challenge for some pupils. The new two-year curriculum cycle of work will correct the former concern; the inspection team agrees with the latter concern. The school has clearly been through a difficult time with staff vacancies and absences but, as reported later, a more stable staff is now in place with good teaching seen during the inspection, and the inspection team believes staffing arrangements have improved. Some parents were not happy with mixed year group classes, but with pupil numbers as they are, it is necessary to have these and the school manages the situation well.
44. The school works satisfactorily with parents of pupils with special educational needs; for example, they are involved at meetings when their child's formal statement of need is reviewed. Recently there have been a number of worthwhile initiatives, such as a home visit programme carried out by nursery staff and joint agency meetings. The aim is to encourage parents to be more involved with identifying and addressing the difficulties their children have.
45. Because of the number of parental concerns, there is at present an unsatisfactory partnership between parents and the school, but this is as a result of recent actions the school has had to take to ensure the health and safety of pupils - these actions being misinterpreted by parents. The school has had to introduce security measures that parents feel exclude them from school and the school has not successfully explained the situation. In order to ensure the safety of pupils, all the gates and access doors to the street are kept locked except at arrival and departure times. The parents are not allowed into the building (except to the nursery where they have access to the cloakroom) but a member of staff is always available at the door to talk to parents if they wish. The school has considered the possibility of a welcoming reception area between inner and outer doors but the layout of the building does not facilitate this. Whilst the inspection team understands parents' concerns about access, they consider that pupil safety is the main factor and that the school has no choice but to continue with access restrictions. The inspection team believes, however, that parents must be fully involved in their children's education and that governors should review how they can improve the partnership with parents so that they can have a better understanding of the good work that is taking place within the school.

46. The information provided for parents is satisfactory. The school produces newsletters as well as letters and leaflets on specific matters of interest to groups of parents. Whilst the newsletters are informative, they are not designed to attract the reader and a better format which celebrates pupils' work through illustration would improve their profile. The school brochure and governors' annual report to parents are both informative documents although the governors' annual report does not fully meet the requirements, with omissions about pupil numbers, targets and a description of access arrangements for the disabled. The reporting system to parents on their children's progress is good and comprises parents' meetings and an annual report which provides personalised comments about their children and what they have done; however, there is no indication of levels to enable parents to fully evaluate progress. A strong feature of the links with parents is the programme of home visits associated with the pre-nursery work.
47. There is a parents' association at the school which provides good support by organising events and fundraising. The support by parents for the association is very low, although parents' attendance at events is good. A home-school agreement is in place and most parents support their children and the school well; they also support their children's education by encouraging homework and by attending parents' meetings. Many parents provide direct support to the school by being governors, by supporting pupils with reading or by helping on school trips.
48. The partnership has declined since the last inspection, mainly due to the access issue, and governors need to take an active part in improving the partnership.

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

49. The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership for the school. She has a clear sense of direction and has considerable knowledge of the particular needs of the locality, school and its pupils. The headteacher was without a deputy headteacher, for financial reasons, from the time she was appointed in 1994 until Easter 2001. The appointment of a deputy headteacher has, therefore, been particularly welcomed and has given the headteacher new opportunities to move the school forward more quickly. The deputy headteacher is giving a particularly strong lead in developing the curriculum and this is beginning to make an impact on driving up standards. The school has had considerable staffing problems over the last two years, with the headteacher having to teach one Year 6 class full time for two half-term sessions and on some days in 2001 two Year 6 classes together, with the support of two classroom assistants. Staffing has now improved and stabilised and there is a relatively new leadership team. Training in management for this team has not yet taken place and the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and the curriculum are underdeveloped at present. Courses are to be held for senior and middle management staff in September. Mainly due to the recent staffing problems, responsibilities are unevenly divided in the school and a few teachers are over-loaded. This needs to be addressed to provide a more even spread of duties. Performance management is in place and whole school targets, set for all teachers, are beginning to show results in improved standards.
50. The school now monitors and evaluates the school's performance well in core subjects and is taking effective action. As a result, the school has a detailed one-year school development plan which is based on a clear vision for the school, provides target dates, the resources that will be needed and the cost involved, and who will be responsible for ensuring its progress. Governors are not involved at an early stage with producing this plan but approve it, after consultation, and monitor its progress. The headteacher and chair of governors have a clear, long-term plan for the school; however, there is no

strategic school development plan so this vision is not fully shared with other governors and staff. Now that there is more stability in the school, a long-term strategic plan needs to be written so that all may be better involved in the longer-term development of the school and their careers. The school provides good induction procedures for new staff, although the provision by the Local Education Authority for newly qualified teachers is sometimes thought to be too similar to their initial training to be of additional use.

51. The school has a strong commitment to the support of all pupils and this is reflected in the quality of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The provision is well managed by the co-ordinator, but he has a heavy workload and does not have enough opportunity to monitor the provision sufficiently. Any time that he does have is usually needed for administration. The school's policy has been reviewed in line with the new Code of Practice, but a graduated approach to matching provision to needs has not yet been implemented. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is well informed about provision and she keeps up to date with developments. She has not yet had the opportunity to be more involved in monitoring what is going on, on a day-to-day basis.
52. The governors have shown a clear lead and a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses over the last few years. They have ensured that a deficit budget of over £40,000 now shows a considerable carry forward to next year. Whilst this carry forward is considerably larger than recommended, this can be successfully explained. The appointment of a deputy headteacher took longer than expected to achieve, as governors were not willing to appoint until they were satisfied that it was the right appointment for the school. This took two years, during which time the money allocated for a deputy headteacher remained unspent. Building plans also were delayed and this money also remained unspent in the expected financial year. The carry forward is now £40,000 of which £20,000 is to be vired, with the agreement of the Local Education Authority, to building maintenance. A further £12,500 is to be invested in the information and technology suite. The school manages its finances very well and governors and the headteacher apply the principles of best value well.
53. The headteacher is on a number of local committees and regularly has opportunities to compare her school's results, both academic and pastoral, with others, particularly in the pyramid of schools. The Local Education Authority also provides statistics of results in schools in the authority which governors and staff use to compare their school with others. Costs are also compared, and although the school has four buildings to maintain, costs are often lower than at other schools locally. The present ethos of the school is one of challenge and raising standards. One example of this is the identification of gifted and talented pupils and the provision for a few of them at a summer school. Consultation is not as strong, but parents are consulted about the setting of their children's targets, and have been consulted about homework, a walk-to-school project and the shorter lunch hour. As many parents are on shift work attendance at meetings can be difficult. Much of the headteacher's time is at present taken up with pastoral issues and the appointment of a person such as a school counsellor is being considered to help develop the consultation process. The school ensures that competition is addressed when making orders as well as in educational terms.
54. The governing body represents well the range of views of the locality, and the headteacher and chair of governors have a good working relationship where both are willing to challenge the other. Both have a very long-term commitment to the school. The committees of the governing body meet regularly and reports are regularly



presented at full governing body meetings. Considering that accommodation is a particular concern of the school with four buildings, and the fact that the school may be considered for a new building in the future, it is surprising that the governors do not have a separate premises committee. With the school keeper's house and kitchen also now being the responsibility of the governors, the lack of a premises committee means that the headteacher takes on a more than usual amount of responsibility for the care of buildings. The lack of a premises committee may also be a reason why the governors have not produced a detailed risk assessment policy. Few governors are able to visit the school while it is in session as they work full-time. However, the parent governors have attended occasions such as the Greek Day and help both on day and residential visits.

55. The administrative staff provide a friendly, welcoming face to the school for visitors but the office is not near enough to the main door for this to be of full advantage in building positive relationships with parents. As a result, many parents do not feel able to make informal visits to classrooms to see teachers. The fact that there are four buildings on the site is also a disadvantage, with regard to such informal meetings being possible.
56. The day-to-day running of the office is very good. The finance officer is proactive in attending courses and in introducing new systems to the school. The use of information and communication technology is good and the staff have introduced their own ways of using it where other methods are not yet available to them; for example, in recording attendance data. This has helped to improve the monitoring of absences and has led to an improvement in pupils' attendance in school. Day-to-day financial planning is very good. The finance officer keeps careful records and is continually improving recording systems. All recommendations of the last auditor's report in July 2000 have been addressed.
57. Resources are used very well to support pupils with special educational needs. The school employs a range of very good quality and well-trained support staff and they are deployed very effectively. The school places a strong emphasis on training for all staff and as a result there is the means to meet a range of specific needs.
58. The accommodation is satisfactory, but part of the difficulty faced by the school with regard to security is as a result of the school being made up of four different buildings. As a result, entry to any building has to be restricted. The school does not have a medical room or a library. The lack of a library affects pupils' ability to acquire library and research skills adequately and this in turn affects the standards they can reach. Although the buildings are old or of a 'temporary' nature they are very well maintained and sufficiently spacious for the current number of pupils. The caretaker and cleaning staff are very effective in their duties and teachers make good use of the available space and produce high quality wall displays to enhance the environment. Storage facilities are limited but every opportunity to improve it is taken; for example, now that the school has changed fuel from coal to gas the old coal bunker is to be converted to a good quality storage facility. The school recognises that the current staff room is inadequate in size and is producing proposals to provide an additional area. The governors are at present looking into the possibility of building a new school.
59. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are good, the quality of teaching is good and pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. As a result standards are beginning to rise and are mainly in line with what is expected nationally. The cost per pupils is high but the school gives satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to raise standards the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) Improve standards in English by:
  - improving pupils' speaking skills by enabling them to use a wider vocabulary; (Paragraphs 2, 94, 97, 98, 101)
  - reviewing the time allocated to hearing pupils read; (Paragraphs 22, 27, 95.)
  - planning for, and regularly using, the skills pupils learn in literacy lessons in other subjects; (Paragraphs 19, 26, 101, 102, 135)
  - improving the library so that research skills can be used more effectively. (Paragraphs 23, 58, 100, 102, 148)
- (2) Find ways to improve the presentation of pupils' work, especially in geography and history, in order to raise standards and pupils' self-esteem. (Paragraphs 19, 139, 143)
- (3) Improve the assessment of pupils by:
  - putting in place assessment procedures in the foundation subjects and in religious education; (Paragraphs 38, 125, 133, 155)
  - drawing together assessment data, so that it can be used more easily for matching work to the attainment of higher-attaining pupils. (Paragraphs 6, 19, 117, 119, 139, 141)
- (4) Write and implement a scheme of work for religious education, which meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. (Paragraphs 23, 174)
- (5) Establish strategies to improve the parents' views of the school. (Paragraphs 42, 48, 55, 66)
- (6) Improve middle management by:
  - reviewing the allocation of middle management responsibilities to avoid overload on some teachers; (Paragraphs 49, 160)
  - developing middle management skills such as monitoring and evaluation. (Paragraphs 51, 141, 150, 169, 174)
- (7) Write a long-term school development plan. (Paragraph 50)

The headteacher, governors and staff should also:

- Improve the management and organisation of the curriculum in the reception year; (Paragraphs 23, 62)
- Ensure that marking is consistently carried out and shows pupils how they can improve; (Paragraphs 19, 101, 139, 148)
- Produce a risk assessment policy. (Paragraphs 41, 54, 169)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	61

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	11	28	18	1	0	0
Percentage	9	17	44	28	2	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 one percentage point.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	264
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	75

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	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.8

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	13	29	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	8	12
	Girls	23	22	28
	Total	32	30	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (79)	71 (79)	95 (79)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	8	10
	Girls	21	24	22
	Total	28	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (82)	76 (79)	76 (82)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	21	17	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	9	17
	Girls	9	5	8
	Total	23	14	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (65)	37 (68)	66 (68)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	7	13
	Girls	8	8	7
	Total	17	15	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	45 (55)	39 (71)	53 (71)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	229
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	11	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	235

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	618555
Total expenditure	622606
Expenditure per pupil	2224
Balance brought forward from previous year	100335
Balance carried forward to next year	96284

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

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	225
Number of questionnaires returned	66

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	42	6	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	38	5	5	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	39	20	6	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	45	17	10	3
The teaching is good.	34	51	9	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	38	17	20	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	33	12	9	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	45	5	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	18	41	24	17	0
The school is well led and managed.	34	39	12	9	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	55	9	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	31	23	12	9

### **Other issues raised by parents**

The accessibility of parents to the school and teachers.



## **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**

61. Provision in the Foundation Stage of learning is good overall and very good in the nursery. Children start in the nursery in the term following their third birthday for either the morning or afternoon session. They enter the reception class at the start of the term when they become five. The staff provide a curriculum of high quality so that the children want to learn. Provision for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well promoted through the curriculum and assemblies. In a well-prepared assembly based on the parable of the sower, the teacher, with great skill, developed the pupils' appreciation of social and moral issues.
62. Improvements have been made since the previous inspection when provision was deemed to be good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. The building of the conservatory with a soft play surface has significantly supported the development of the children's physical skills in the nursery. The range and quality of the activities in the reception year have made an impact on the children's progress and enthusiasm for learning. However, the present reception class curriculum plan is too rigid. Excessive time is allocated to communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world, resulting in insufficient time for creative development, particularly for the art aspect.
63. The quality of teaching in the nursery is very good and sometimes excellent. The teacher and nursery nurses are an effective team. They are friendly, lively and enjoy their work with the children to successfully maintain their interest and enthusiasm. The very well-planned, extensive and varied range of activities ensures the children's time is used well. The structure of each session achieves an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated, quiet and lively activities. In the reception classes at the time of the inspection, three supply teachers were covering the absence of both reception class teachers. During the inspection, teaching was good and for older children it was excellent in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. The quality of questioning was often very good, and the children know that an incorrect response is not a cause for anxiety because the staff give positive feedback. The checking of the children's progress is thorough. The staff continuously observe the children's responses and note progress and difficulties. However, the assessments in the nursery are not directly linked to the stepping stones in the national Foundation Stage curriculum.
64. The provision for the children with special educational needs is good. In the nursery a child with severe physical disabilities is fully integrated and has access to all activities; for example, to participate in a wheelchair hopscotch game, through the commitment and support of staff. The staff organise the classrooms to ensure all resources are accessible and this is a particular strength of the nursery. The staff skilfully modify activities through adapting language and the use of different resources.
65. The planning of the curriculum, to guide teaching and learning, is very good in both the nursery and reception classes. It covers a suitable range of topics that are highly relevant to the children. Daily planning is thorough and clearly states what the children are to learn. The policy, guiding practice in the nursery, does not fully reflect the revised Foundation Stage curriculum although it is fully implemented in practice. The use of the outdoor environment in the nursery is well planned to ensure it is used effectively.

Although an outdoor soft play area is now in place for reception class children, it is used infrequently.

66. Prior to admission to the nursery, very good links are established with parents through the Lacewood Little Learners home-visiting project. Two nursery nurses manage the project very competently. This is a very good initiative based on a highly structured series of visits to establish contact with both parents and children, and results in developing the children's confidence on admission to the nursery. Although parents do take their children into the cloakrooms on entry to the nursery at the start of a session, most contacts with the staff are to discuss problems rather than involve parents in their children's learning.

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

67. The children make very good progress in this area of learning, reaching the expected Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. They achieve well because it is promoted across all the other areas of learning and it is monitored by the staff. The staff are very sensitive and caring in their relationships with the children. Well-established routines and a warm welcome help the children to settle quickly. There are many worthwhile activities to develop the children's confidence and independence, and to develop their self-esteem. The children show pride as they successfully complete their activities and delight when they are chosen as 'Star of the Day'. In the nursery, the three-year-olds learn much from watching the four-year-olds, for example, in physical development activities.
68. The children are encouraged to make individual choices about what they want to do during activity times. They show a mature level of responsibility, for example, when they decide to have a snack-time break. They find their own name card and only take the prescribed amount of food and drink. Reluctant learners develop their confidence because the staff start with a task which is easily achievable and gently move on to a more challenging task.
69. The children's behaviour is good because they understand the simple rules and also because they are too involved in their activities to misbehave. The children co-operate and share resources because the staff plan many opportunities for them to work together, for example, through simple team games and role-play. The children are encouraged to care for the nursery classrooms by tidying and by the proper use of equipment, which most children do willingly. In the reception classes, the children develop their understanding of how they can help others and take responsibility for their own actions, because the staff make good use of stories as illustrations. For example, in the story 'The Clown God' the teacher leads the children to understand they can all do something to make others happy.
70. The staff encourage the children to try for themselves before asking for help. A good example was seen when a child persevered to release the sellotape using various strategies before finally asking for help. Another child was thrilled when he mixed the paints and made a new colour.
71. The adults actively encourage the children to find out more, because the staff show they also want to know more; for example, as they observe what will happen as a large ice ball is immersed in the water.

72. Teaching is good. It is creative and imaginative, resulting in developing the children's curiosity and all the staff make learning fun. In a reception class the imaginative introduction of racing in a numeracy activity generated great excitement and in the nursery the children showed much pleasure as they imagined the brown area on the soft play area become the water. Boys and girls and those with physical disabilities get on well together because the staff show each child is a valued member of the class.

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

73. The children in the nursery make very good progress in literacy, however their attainment in language remains below the expected levels. By the end of the reception year a significant number of children have achieved the levels expected and have begun to work within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. This is because the development of the children's abilities in this area of learning is given a high priority. Elements of the literacy strategy are introduced in the reception classes and they are fully in place in the daily session by the end of the summer term.
74. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is excellent in both the nursery and reception classes. The staff seize every opportunity to promote good speaking and listening skills and develop early reading and writing skills very well. The children's abilities to listen attentively are well developed. The children show they are responsive listeners when they comment on stories such as 'Mucky Pup' in a reception class and they follow instructions well in outdoor activity. The children participate in the conversations the staff promote; for example, when they discuss the things they will need for their lunch boxes in preparation for the forthcoming visit to a farm.
75. The children develop much interest in stories as a result of the considerable attention given by the staff to books and the good range of books available. The higher-attaining children in the reception classes read confidently from simple texts, have a good understanding of stories and are able to anticipate outcomes. Good use is made of large picture books to promote interest in reading. In a well-led reception class lesson the skilful presentation of the story, 'We're all going on a bear hunt' very successfully developed the children's word-recognition skills. The children in the nursery often choose to visit the reading area and share a book with a friend, and adults are available to share stories. The excellent attention given to using print in the classrooms, for example, bold and bright labels, and instructions and captions to explain the children's work, reinforces the children's familiarity with words. Letter sounds are taught in a variety of ways and are systematically introduced; as a result, the children confidently recognise letters of the alphabet. Initially, letters in their own names are taught and each week there is a particular focus on a different letter.
76. There are many worthwhile opportunities for the children to develop their early writing skills as they use the well-resourced writing areas and make their own books. When the children first use pencils in the nursery, their hand-control skills are poor. They try very hard and make good progress in their writing patterns. They made good attempts to 'write' invitations to the Teddy Bears Picnic. In the reception classes the children are able to form many letters and enjoy making their own books. The higher-attaining children know they need to start a sentence with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

## **Mathematical development**

77. The children's attainment in mathematics meets the expected levels by the end of the reception year. The children respond positively and make good progress because they are offered a wealth of opportunities to use mathematics in practical ways and in the other areas of learning.
78. By the end of the reception year, some higher-attaining children can count to 200 in tens, locate numbers on a 100 square and exchange coins up to ten pence. In the nursery the children use their knowledge of number as they set the table in the role-play area, count the items in the suitcase and play games such as hopscotch. They begin to record numbers, for example, when they label a set with the correct symbol. In a good range of activities to observe growth, the children measure the large bean plant by the entrance to the nursery. They learn about shape and position as they organise the furniture in the role-play caravan and respond to directions in physical development sessions.
79. The children in the reception classes begin to develop an understanding of addition and subtraction because number rhymes are effectively used to reinforce learning. They see how numbers increase and decrease when they participate in the actions.
80. In a well-planned lesson in a reception class, the teacher successfully developed the children's understanding of sharing by initially using sweets as the learning resource. By developing the lesson to include an odd number of sweets, the children learnt that all numbers cannot be divided equally. As a result of the energy and enthusiasm of the teacher in one reception class lesson, the children responded well to a challenging task based on 'what can you do in one minute?' All children worked at great speed and each group succeeded in recording their results on bar charts. The higher-attaining children completed this task without adult support.
81. The teaching of numeracy is excellent in both the nursery and reception classes. In carefully focused sessions, the staff work systematically with the children in small groups in the nursery. The numeracy strategy is introduced to children during the first term in reception, when they begin to use mental skills in counting.

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

82. In this area of learning the children's attainment is good overall and above the levels expected for children of this age. They make good progress because of the extensive range of activities. In the nursery, effective use is made of outdoors, such as the garden area, as a resource for learning. The programme is promoted well through interesting themes; for example, the seaside, opportunities for exploration of materials and regular discussions.
83. Teaching is very good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. Early investigative skills are introduced successfully. In the wet and dry sand trays the nursery children have access to a variety of tools to promote exploration; for example, rakes which leave tracks in the wet sand but not in the dry sand. They make ducks and test to see if they will float on the water. Reception class children learn about evaporation as they observe what happens to the water in puddles and the clothes on the washing line. The children are encouraged to record their observations, for example, on charts and in pictures.

84. The children's technological skills are well developed because they have regular opportunities to construct, using waste materials and construction kits. They learn the skills of joining materials in the nursery without the need to make an end product, as they experiment with different glues, paper clips, rubber bands and sticky tape.
85. The children are interested in using the computers. Most children can control the mouse to move images and in the reception year they can use some icons and the keyboard.
86. The staff encourage the children to be interested in other places through role-play in the travel agent's. The children talk about the places they have visited and locate the seaside resorts they have visited in England on a map of Britain.

### **Physical development**

87. The children's physical development, by the end of the reception year, is good and above that expected for children of this age. The children make good progress and by the end of the reception year they have well-developed physical skills. The good progress made in this area of learning is as a result of the presence of staff, their comments and demonstrations. These heighten the children's involvement and willingness to improve what they do; for example, when two reception children worked together to make an effective representation of a coral shape. Whilst progress in this area of learning is good, some constraint is placed on the reception children's progress because they do not have access to the excellent indoor soft play area and the outdoor play area available in the nursery. Teaching is very good in the nursery and good in reception classes.
88. The children are encouraged to move imaginatively through response to music. In a good lesson in the reception class the children changed the speed, level and direction of their movements and created simple dances; for example, moving gracefully as a piece of seaweed in the water.
89. In the soft play area, the nursery children climb with confidence and balance unaided across a beam. Outdoors, they balance on the footprint trail and move at speed and with control on the wheeled toys. Much energy is expended as they use large buckets and brushes to paint the outside walls. In physical development sessions in the hall, the children have good opportunities to practise and develop their skills because they behave well in response to the high expectations of the staff and they listen attentively to the instructions.
90. The children's manipulative skills are very well developed through the daily opportunities to use small tools and malleable materials. In the nursery, children roll out the play dough and use a range of tools to make shapes from the flat dough. They make recognisable pictures using drawing materials. By the end of the reception year, the children clearly show their dexterity, as they manipulate the pieces of jigsaws and construction pieces effectively. The higher-attaining pupils form most letters correctly in their writing.

### **Creative development**

91. The children's attainment in creative development is in line with the expected levels. The children achieve well and make good progress, particularly in the nursery. The children in the reception year have very limited opportunities to use art materials to develop their skills fully. The strength of the creative development programme in the

nursery is the emphasis given to allowing the children to express their own ideas and feelings as they use the excellent range of materials in the creative workshop. A good example was seen when a child, without adult support, mixed new colours and painted a picture of the seaside with good effect. Children successfully explore colour and texture because they have the confidence to use their own ideas; for example, when they used a range of materials to make pictures of fish. In the reception year, the children are encouraged to respond to what they see when they make effective observational drawings; for example, of poppies and seashells.

92. Teaching is very good in the nursery and good in reception classes. Imaginative skills are well developed through musical activities and role-play. The children respond imaginatively to music such as The Rainforest and Handel's Water Music. They are also encouraged to create their own sounds and music. In the nursery they delight in creating music on the water xylophone and using percussion instruments to beat the rhythm of their own names. The reception children have a good repertoire of known songs and respond with a variety of actions. The children use their imagination to improvise in role-play because the staff are imaginative in their own use of resources. For example, in the caravan, the bookcase shelves become the bunk beds and the bench becomes an aeroplane to take them on holiday. Many displays of the children's work show the children's efforts are valued.

## ENGLISH

93. In the 2001 standardised tests for seven-year-olds, pupils attained standards in reading and writing that were well below the national averages. This was also the case in the standardised tests for 11-year-olds. Due to fluctuations in standards over the past five years, it is not possible to detect any definite trend in results. The school has been diligent in analysing the results and has used the analysis to target writing, and in particular the writing of boys, as an area for improvement. New resources have been acquired that are designed to raise boys' interest levels and teachers have reviewed planning in order to introduce means to promote boys' progress in English. There is some evidence that these are beginning to be effective but the overall standards in the classroom are below the national expectation in both Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6.
94. Inspection evidence shows that current Year 2 pupils are attaining below the expected standards in speaking as their answers are rarely extended and feature a restricted vocabulary. However, they respond appropriately to the teacher when she questions them, for example, about the changes in the nature of holidays across the years. They listen carefully and follow instructions well. They listen especially well to the expressive reading of the teacher and take great enjoyment in following texts such as the lively and attractive big books that teachers often use in their lessons.
95. Whilst the test results in Year 2 show that there are pupils who now read with confidence, during the inspection there were examples of pupils' reading still being below, and sometimes well below, what is expected of pupils of their age. Above average readers employed little expression, although they read simple texts with fluency and understanding. They use a suitable range of cues to reach meaning such as splitting words up and looking at the pictures. However, they are not able to offer much information about the people in the books, such as possible motives for actions or main features of their characters. Average pupils experience difficulty with words such as 'great' but do persevere. They have a positive attitude to reading and gain enjoyment from it. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 do listen to readers individually and hear them once or twice per week in group reading sessions in the literacy hour. However, the school might consider making changes to ensure that all pupils, but especially

those in Years 1 and 2, are listened to individually more frequently. Teaching assistants are well trained and some have specialist training in reading that could be more effectively used. Some very good progress is made in reading in Year 1 when pupils read a big book with a visiting teacher. Her approach is inspirational and pupils in that class begin to recognise the functions of speech and exclamation marks. They are encouraged to become aware of the messages behind the text and to look for motives for the things the characters do and say. Infant pupils have a knowledge of the alphabet to locate information, although not all turn to the index as first choice when asked to locate information in reference books.

96. Writing is below national expectations by this time in Year 2. Teachers use journal writing well as a means to get their pupils to write at length. Because they are writing about things that have happened to them they have more to say. They have a regular slot twice a week and thus get into the habit of recording their thoughts and feelings. A similar approach is used when teachers get pupils to retell fairy stories. Because they know the plot, they write from a position of strength and this gives them the confidence to see themselves as developing writers. Teachers and teaching assistants work around the class to encourage them and to suggest ways in which they can put their thoughts down on paper. Although standards are low, pupils produce a good variety and volume of work over the year. They have difficulty with spelling and rarely use interesting vocabulary. Their punctuation is below average although handwriting is often sound. In some of their writing they are encouraged to look at character when they write about, for example, the 'Brute Family'. Teachers use poetry well to encourage pupils to write down emotional responses to stimuli, such as nature. The work is given structure when pupils write the narrative to a series of pictures, sequenced to tell a story. They learn to write in different styles for different purposes, such as when they supply the commentary for a series of pictures that teach children about basic road safety. They learn to write instructions, for example, when they produce a recipe for pancake making.
97. Speaking is below national expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils listen well during lessons and their responses in question and answer sessions show a sound understanding of the subject matter. They talk confidently in pairs, for example, when they share computers in information and communication technology lessons and in discussion with teachers and other adults. They are developing their awareness of the need to alter their speaking for different audiences. In drama club, a group of the older girls gain confidence in performing, but the school does not make use of every opportunity to use drama to develop speaking through, for example, role-play in different subjects. Teachers promote speaking and listening skills through their own teaching and through bringing story tellers and poets into the school. These visits also make a positive contribution to the cultural development of pupils, especially the local story teller, whose stories involve local happenings.
98. Reading in Year 6 is below national expectations. Teachers listen to readers regularly in the guided reading sessions and classroom assistants listen to the lower-attaining readers at least once per week. The school has developed a reading partner scheme that involves employees of a local firm coming into school to listen to and help readers to improve their skills. This successfully encourages the development of reading skills. The higher-attaining pupils are reaching national expectation in their reading. They read fluently although with little expression. When questioned, they can describe what they have read well, offering detail about motive and other background information that they have gleaned from the books. Middle-attaining readers read fluently, but find difficulty in looking behind the words to infer reasons for what occurs. Their speaking and thinking skills are not sufficiently developed to talk about character and motive.

99. Pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards in writing that are below national expectation. They produce work in a good range of writing styles and complete a large number of exercises that teach them about punctuation, sentence structure and other grammatical features of the language. Their teachers give them a lot of support and guidance to help with the structure of their work as well as stimulating the development of creative, rather than formulaic, approaches. Much work is also done to improve vocabulary, spelling and handwriting and for this reason more time could be spent on learning a cursive hand in Years 1 and 2. Handwriting is satisfactory by Year 6, although most pupils' vocabulary and spelling remain limited. Some good work has been done recently on a project that gives pupils the opportunity to write a short novel. Pairs write a chapter to a given story line and these are then put together using information and communication technology.
100. The school uses structured reading schemes to develop reading skills. Group and guided reading activities within the literacy hour are used well to promote reading. However, the library is wholly inadequate as a place to promote reading for pleasure. There is no local library for pupils to use and so reading generally does not have the support it has in many schools. Pupils with identified reading difficulties receive good additional support from teachers and classroom assistants. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in reading.
101. The teaching of English is satisfactory, overall. During the inspection the teaching in English in Key Stage 1 was good. All teachers successfully teach to the National Literacy Strategy. This demands planning that gives pupils' learning a progressive structure through their years in the school. Teachers keep well to the framework and lessons have clear introductions, followed by activities that give pupils of differing abilities appropriate challenge, finishing with recapping sessions that recognise what pupils have learnt and sharing individual or group progress with the rest of the class. Teachers use question and answer well to establish what pupils already know and to keep a track on pupils' progress. Teachers reward good responses with praise that helps to build confidence in individuals. Marking has received much attention in the past year and it is generally good, although there are a few gaps caused by absences or cover by temporary teachers. The majority of marking follows the school policy well and encourages effort, while pointing out ways in which individuals can improve their writing. Teachers also set good targets that are displayed at the back of books and that are regularly reviewed. These are achievable and relate to individuals rather than the class. This promotes individual progress well. Teachers work hard to sustain the interest of their pupils; for example in a Year 4 class, the teacher used very expressive reading of a poem to grab pupils' attention. As he worked through the poem he asked and invited questions at appropriate points to gain the involvement of pupils in their learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work together very well to the benefit of the pupils. Teaching assistants are well prepared and well trained to help particularly the lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. In this way all pupils are included in lessons. Teachers are beginning to use information and communication technology to support learning, although there is still a need for them to acquire software programs that help pupils with their phonics and for further training. Behaviour management is very good. Pupils are always well behaved and respond well to teachers and teaching assistants. An example of this occurred in one lesson when pupils expressed sheer delight when the teacher suggested they write poetry on the computer. They appreciated the help they were given to improve and extend their vocabulary and were proud to read their finished poetry aloud to the other pupils. Areas for improvement are the development of library, research and literacy skills across all subjects, consistency in marking in Year 6, and the further development of pupils'



speaking skills with a greater emphasis on providing them with opportunities to use a wider range of vocabulary.

102. The co-ordination of English is very good. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the good assessment procedures that are now in place and which track pupils' progress very well. He is an expert teacher himself and leads by example. He has identified weaknesses in teaching and learning and has initiated ways to remedy them. Where necessary, he has sought the advice of the Local Education Authority. Marking has improved throughout the school and the setting of targets for individual pupils has been successfully introduced. He has not been able to improve the library much, although he has successfully obtained funding for books over the past few years. The poor state of the library, which is now combined with the information and communication technology suite, is something the school needs to tackle for the benefit of all subjects. The school's ultimate aim to make this a resource area for research is to be commended and this development needs to be accelerated. There remains a need too to develop literacy across the curriculum, in particular to identify opportunities to promote literacy skills in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. These subjects can successfully promote literacy skills through role play, and empathic and instructional writing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

103. Standards in mathematics have been improving year on year and are now broadly in line with the national average at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is good achievement, given the level at which children enter the school. In tests and assessments last year, almost all of the Year 2 pupils achieved the expected levels. Results overall were below the national average but in line with those achieved in similar schools. Results of tests at the end of Year 6 were disappointing. Standards were very low compared to all schools nationally and to similar schools. However, there were some significant factors that affected the results; for example, the large proportion of the pupils who had been identified as having special educational needs. Current standards in Years 2 and 6 are considerably higher than they were last year.
104. The pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is at least in line with what is expected for pupils of this age and is probably higher than this. Year 2 pupils work confidently and accurately with numbers to and above 20, adding and subtracting mentally and using written methods. They have a good understanding of place value and use this to order numbers and to describe and extend number sequences. They count in twos, threes and fours. They understand units of time and reflective symmetry, and can work out fractions of shapes. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils worked confidently with a range of coins, making up totals and solving problems involving money.
105. The pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly in line with what is expected of pupils of this age. Most Year 6 pupils work confidently with numbers to and above 1,000. They calculate mentally using a range of strategies. Problem-solving is now a major strength of pupils' attainment and is something Year 6 pupils do well. They understand fractions and decimals and draw graphs of different kinds to sort data. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils demonstrated that they understood acute and obtuse angles, could use the language associated with angle, and measured with a protractor (usually accurately) the angles of triangles and quadrilaterals.
106. The pupils' achievement is good. They gain confident skills with number as they progress through the school and they learn to apply these skills in solving problems.

There is plenty of challenge for the higher-attaining pupils and they achieve well; for example, in the Year 3 class the teacher worked on fractions with the higher-attaining pupils. They put a good degree of effort into this work and eventually they could find, for example, two thirds of 30. The pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs make good progress. They are well supported in lessons and are able to participate fully alongside their peers. There has been a tendency for girls to achieve better than boys but the school has addressed this and now all pupils achieve equally well. The practical problem-solving approach and the emphasis on speaking and listening, which have been school priorities, have made a significant impact on the interest and achievement of boys and helped them to make better progress.

107. The mathematical skills that the pupils gain are used well across the curriculum. In geography, the pupils use scales, measure distances and use graphs to help them organise data. In art, ideas of proportion are used when drawing the human body. In design and technology, the pupils accurately measure with rulers when making models. However, information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning in mathematics.
108. The pupils' attitudes to learning throughout the school are very good. They are interested and keen to learn. The speed and challenge of the 'mental starter' parts of lessons bring a high level of response from pupils. All pupils take part in answering questions and no one is afraid to 'have a go', even if they may be wrong. Teachers use mistakes positively, showing pupils how to put things right and this encourages confidence and a willingness to try again. The pupils feel they can 'do maths' and this attitude has a considerable impact on the amount of progress they make. The pupils settle quickly to tasks they have been given to do and they persevere when work becomes a bit difficult. They co-operate with each other and often solve their own problems without the help of an adult. For example, a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils discussed why they had different answers when they were measuring angles: they were able to sort this out between them.
109. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is very good. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching is more variable, but is never less than satisfactory and is usually good or very good. One of the strengths of the teaching is the good knowledge and understanding teachers have of the mathematics they teach. This is apparent in the mental starter parts of lessons, where teachers provide a high level of challenge, keep a good pace and skilfully include all pupils by varying and targeting questions. Thus all pupils are fully involved, enjoy what they are doing and make good progress. Because they have a good grasp of the subject, teachers can emphasise the use of different strategies and encourage pupils to verbalise how they work. This ensures that the pupils gain a good level of understanding.
110. Teachers plan meticulously to meet the needs of all the pupils in their classes. They have clear learning objectives and share these with pupils, so they themselves have an understanding of what they are learning. Work is differentiated to take account of different attainment levels. In the Year 1/2 class the teacher had excellent plans and provided different worksheets for each group of pupils in the class. The work thus matched the needs of pupils and enabled them all to make progress. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good, and the quality of this support makes a valuable contribution to the quality of the teaching overall. In the Year 2 class, the teaching assistant supported particular pupils during the class session, encouraging them to answer questions, and she then worked effectively with a small group who needed more focused attention than the others in the class.

111. Teachers teach basic numeracy skills very well. They provide clear explanations and demonstrations, using resources such as overhead projectors well. There is secure progression from one piece of learning to another and, although teachers do not always use assessment information as well as they might, they have a good knowledge of pupils' achievements and they use this to help them plan for the next stage in the learning. As a result, pupils gain skills and develop their understanding effectively. The teacher in the Year 5/6 class was working on angles and she skilfully built on the learning of the previous lesson, when pupils were measuring the angles of triangles, as she introduced them to measuring angles of quadrilaterals. She also demonstrated how their knowledge of acute and obtuse angles could be used to help them check their accuracy when measuring.
112. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a good level of expertise and provides a good model in the quality of her own teaching. She monitors pupils' work by, for example, keeping a portfolio of moderated work, but does not have enough opportunities to monitor and support teaching and learning in classes. The school has developed effective systems of monitoring pupils' performance and tracking their progress through the school. This has enabled teachers to address weaknesses and improve standards. For example, the emphasis on problem-solving came about after a weakness in this area was identified. Work on this has resulted in better achievement throughout the school. Good use has been made of staff development opportunities, for example, through the support of the local authority numeracy consultant, to improve teachers' skills.
113. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection. Standards then had already improved on previous years but the progress pupils made was variable. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and other developments, such as improvements in assessment procedures, have ensured that there is now more consistency in the quality of teaching. The standards the Year 2 pupils are now achieving is evidence of the effectiveness of what has been happening. There is a shared commitment to further improvement and therefore the potential for the school to achieve more consistently good standards at the end of Year 6 as well.

## **SCIENCE**

114. Teacher assessments in 2001, at the end of Year 2, show that standards were well below the national average both at the expected Level 2 and higher Level 3. Seventy-six per cent of pupils achieved Level 2 and none achieved at Level 3. In 2002, 93 per cent of pupils reached Level 2 and none achieved at Level 3. National and similar school comparisons are not yet available for the 2002 results.
115. National Curriculum test results in 2001, at the end of Year 6, show that standards were well below both the national average and those of similar schools. Results have been at this level over the last 4 years, reflecting the staffing difficulties the school has had over a number of years. The 2001 results also reflect the larger number of pupils with special educational needs in the 2001 year group. The 2002 National Curriculum test results show a slight improvement, with the number of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 as 71 per cent, which is a 5 per cent improvement on the previous year. National comparisons are not yet available for the 2002 results. In 2002 boys achieved at a higher level than girls: there was no difference between them the previous year.
116. Inspection evidence shows that current standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with what is expected of pupils of their age. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to work in groups at practical investigations. A wide variety of investigations have been carried

out. When considering the difference between pushing and pulling, pupils explain what has to be done to make a swing go higher: "You put some effort into your push". They know which are magnetic and non-magnetic materials and have investigated into the properties of different types of paper. They know that when a solid is melted it turns into a liquid. When studying living and non-living things, they have studied the life cycle of the caterpillar. They know the parts of a flower and that if you put a black bag over a flower it will die. When studying health and growth they learn that "exercise helps us because it pumps blood"; they learn about safety in the street and safety with medicines and also which foods will make you healthy. Good links are made with other subjects; for example, when they are studying changing materials and sort and group materials and mix colours in their art lesson. The writing frame helps pupils of this age to record their work well, but pupils also record in a wider range of ways with labelled diagrams, their own text and descriptions, such as when they write about the five senses, and about pictures. Pupils are achieving well and working in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2.

117. Inspection evidence shows that current standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with what is expected of pupils of their ages. The coverage of the curriculum, especially in Years 3 to 5, is good and a considerable amount of work is completed. Whilst pupils cover various short topics they also complete a lengthy and detailed project on rocks. Investigative work has improved since the last inspection and, in Years 3 and 4, pupils record their work very well: as a result, these pupils are reaching standards that are higher than nationally expected of pupils of this age. Worksheets are seldom used, as pupils make their own records of the investigations they carry out: this builds well on what pupils learn in Years 1 and 2. Whilst work in Year 4 is as good as in Year 3, the work is more successfully presented as A4-sized books are used to collate the work. Work in Years 3 and 4, and sometimes Year 5, is of good quality but the expectations of pupils in Year 6 have been too low and standards in their books are not high enough. Work in Year 6 improved, however, towards the end of the year and their standard of recording began to match what was being achieved by younger pupils. There is a variation in the quality and amount of work expected in the two Year 5/6 classes. The quality of the work of Year 5 higher-attaining pupils in one class is often very good, with diagrams, graphs, charts, lists, text and pictures all being used to record their work. Worksheets are used well to support lower-attaining pupils and, as a result, they complete a good amount of work at a satisfactory level. In the Year 5/6 lessons observed, pupils were able to make different circuits using wire, switches and light bulbs and information and communication technology was used well in the lesson about circuits. Expectations of pupils in the other class were too low and as a result, they only had an elementary understanding of magnetism.
118. Pupils' attitudes are good across the school. In Year 2, pupils enjoy watching a video and looking through a magnifying glass to find out the similarities and differences of plants. Their behaviour is good, and although they are at times noisy, they are clearly learning. They enjoy describing fruit, but their vocabulary is limited and this inhibits progress. Opportunities for spiritual and social development are good, with pupils working well with partners and experiencing a sense of wonder in what they study. In Year 3, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and in Year 4 they are excellent where their sense of wonder is aroused through very good teaching, the use of excellent resources, including a model of the different parts of a flower and a microscope, and the experience of looking at the different parts of a flower in detail. As one boy declared, "It is really good to see it really close because I have never seen it before." Their very positive attitudes are also evident in the way they present their work and the very high quality of presentation they achieve. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and intrigued in what they observe, with the support assistant helping them

view different parts of the flower through the microscope. Pupils in a Year 4/5 class showed very good attitudes to learning, being very attentive and interested in what was being taught. Attitudes of pupils in Years 5 and 6, however, were variable, because expectations of them were too low, they had covered the work in previous years and became bored, and sometimes because the pace of the lesson was too slow.

119. The quality of teaching is good across the school and as a result learning is also good. Teachers try to widen pupils' vocabulary and improve their speaking skills by having key words displayed clearly and by encouraging pupils to answer questions in complete sentences. Whilst teachers recapitulate on what pupils have learned, and then build well on what pupils already know, they do not always repeat a pupil's answer with the planned results that pupils are encouraged to listen more attentively. These are strategies that are helping to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. Resources are used well, with videos, computers and reference books all adding to the first-hand experiences pupils are given, when carrying out an investigation. The high expectations of pupils in Years 3 and 4 result in the above average standards that they achieve. There are four science specialists on the staff and subject knowledge is very good across the school. However, teachers' expectations of pupils do not always reflect this. Whilst a larger number of pupils this year reached the average level in Year 2 and the higher level in Year 6, more work needs to go into analysing why the National Curriculum average scores have been so low over the last few years and then find ways of remedying this. One of the reasons was that few pupils reached the higher levels in past years and it is still the case that planning at a higher level for higher attainers does not always take place. Teachers of Year 6 pupils also need to find out what it is they need to do to move pupils who are nearly at Level 4 up to a Level 4, as a significant number of pupils in 2002 achieved at a level just below Level 4.
120. There is a new co-ordinator who has taken on the subject with enthusiasm and considerable knowledge and expertise. In the short time she has been leading the subject she has done so very well. She has observed lessons, re-organised the resources and worked with the Local Education Authority's advisor in re-writing the policy. She has a clear vision for the subject, based on the substantial investigative work she carried out during her initial training. She has identified that the scheme of work needs to be re-written to cover a two-year cycle and that investigative and experimental work needs to underpin better the other attainment targets. She has also identified that information and communication technology could be used more extensively and that work in Year 6 is often too prescriptive. She regularly collects in end-of-unit evaluations from teachers, which are particularly useful in enabling her to monitor where strengths and weaknesses lie and where assistance or further resources are needed.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

121. Standards, overall, in art are in line with national expectations throughout the school. During the inspection it was not possible to inspect a sufficient number of lessons to come to a judgement about teaching and learning in the subject. However, from analysis of pupils' work in folders and on display, and from discussions with the co-ordinator and teachers, it is clear that attainment and progress are at least in line with national expectations. Standards at the last inspection were judged to be good and there is still evidence of some above average work.
122. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed their skills using a suitable range of techniques, working with a variety of materials. They carefully observe objects they are

going to draw and record their observations effectively for their age using a suitable range of media such as pencil, pastel and paint. Year 1 pupils have produced still life portraits of fruit and vegetables and these imaginatively explore the styles of artists. They investigate the use of colour when they use Renoir's blues and effectively capture the mood he worked to create. They produce clear and bold images when they successfully copy the style of holiday postcards. Year 2 pupils use a sketch book to record self portraits using pencil. Sketch books are not always effectively used in the school to promote skills, however. They are used too sparingly and pupils are not often encouraged to use them to capture ideas or to explore effects. Art contributes well to pupils' appreciation of the beauty of nature and to literacy skills, when they produce watercolours of scenes in nature and write poems about them that capture the moods they create.

123. By the end of Year 6, pupils are attaining the expected standards, working with a suitable range of materials and techniques. They learn the importance of planning the sequence of colour application in advance of putting brush to paper so as to avoid unwanted effects. They develop sound basic skills of observation of detail as well as the sensing of proportion in their subjects. They work with proficiency in a range of media and learn to experiment with and modify techniques. They learn from other artists when they derive ideas from others to create their own stained glass windows out of tinted plastics. They capture something of the spiritual in these and in the rugs with a religious theme which they design. Year 4 pupils use information and communication technology well when they explore the work of Mondrian. They use his work as a starting point to develop their own ideas. They use a digital camera most effectively to capture and print off perspectives of the sculptures they create, using found materials. This replicates the techniques of Galdsworthy. This class also produced some very successful small scale sculptures after the style of Moore.
124. Pupils make sound progress in art and design in Years 1 to 2 and Years 3 to 6. There is a progressive use of colour in successive years and pupils work with increasing attention to detail with a range of media such as modelling clay and textiles. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well
125. The subject is well co-ordinated by an enthusiastic and capable teacher. She has a clear vision as to how art should be developed in the school. Although she has not had the benefit of non-contact time to check others' teaching, she has a good overview of what is being done well in the school. She has developed a comprehensive portfolio of work in the school that gives a clear picture of national standards against which teachers can assess the work in their own classes. Assessment has not yet been developed in the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

126. The pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is in line with what is expected of pupils of this age. Although there was no teaching of the subject taking place in these classes during the time of the inspection, samples of the pupils' previous work, for example when they prepared fruit and vegetables for a special occasion, indicate that they are gaining appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding. They develop ideas and plan what to do, using pictures to describe their designs. They use tools to prepare and assemble materials.
127. The pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is in line with what is expected of pupils of this age. They generate ideas and produce step-by-step plans for making. They use diagrams and labelled sketches and use tools and techniques with some accuracy.

They reflect on their completed work and evaluate what works well and what could have been improved. All these skills were clearly shown in the work of Year 6 pupils, as they designed and made slippers.

128. The pupils' achievement throughout the school is satisfactory. They gain confident designing and making skills and apply them in different contexts. For example, earlier in the year some Year 3 pupils had learnt how to make pop-up mechanisms in books, when they made chairs for a Pharaoh as part of their topic on the Egyptians. Currently they are using this skill to help them to make their own pop-up page to illustrate a story. The confidence with which they are approaching this task indicates the secure skills they have gained. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs achieve in line with their peers. They enjoy the practical activities, are able to join in with discussions and are supported well during lessons.
129. The pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are interested in what they are doing and take a pride in their achievements. For example, the Year 4 pupils in both classes were very keen to show the models they had made, and talked enthusiastically about how they were planning to finish them. Behaviour is usually good, although sometimes teachers have to work very hard to keep the attention of a few pupils who find it hard to concentrate. The pupils co-operate with each other well, sharing their ideas and skills. This was apparent in a Year 4/5 lesson when pairs of pupils worked together to produce a pop-up book. They discussed how they were going to complete the pages and agreed who was to do each bit. The subject is thus making a good contribution to pupils' social development.
130. The standards achieved and the positive attitudes of pupils are as a result of the good teaching that takes place throughout the school. Although there was no teaching observed in Years 1 and 2 at the time of the inspection, it is clear from samples of the pupils' work that teachers provide appropriate experiences and use resources well. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching is good.
131. One major strength of the teaching is the enthusiasm with which the teachers approach the subject. As a result, the pupils are interested and they put a lot of effort into their work. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson the teacher demonstrated the use of linkages to make moving parts in a pop-up book. He had made a model himself and the pupils were visibly excited as he showed them how it worked. They were very keen to try this out for themselves and this enthusiasm lasted throughout the lesson. The teachers use resources imaginatively and they organise activities effectively. As a result pupils are able to get on with what they have been given to do and they do not waste time.
132. The teachers are good at teaching basic skills and they plan carefully for this. The learning objectives for each lesson are clear and shared with pupils, so that they have a good idea about their own learning and what they are achieving. Teachers include all pupils in their lessons, encouraging individuals to take part in discussions and supporting those who find some of the work difficult. This has a major impact on the quality of learning of all pupils. The teachers are very aware of health and safety issues in their lessons and take care to show pupils how to use tools and materials safely. As a result, pupils act sensibly and use tools and materials thoughtfully. There is no evidence of information and communication technology being used to develop this subject.
133. The management of the subject is satisfactory. Although the co-ordinator is highly skilled and provides a good role model in the quality of work produced by his own class,

he has only had a short time in the post and has not yet had the opportunity to make a real impact on the subject in other classes. He does however, know what needs to be done and is keen to develop the subject further. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced the national non-statutory guidelines and now all teachers plan from these. This has brought about more consistency in quality of teaching, but the teachers do find some of the ideas hard to implement. There is not enough guidance in school on how to teach the aspects of planning for, making and evaluating on-going and completed work, and these are often the weakest parts of lessons. Although there is now a portfolio of work, which gives an idea of what the pupils are achieving, there is no assessment system in place to help teachers with planning for different levels of attainment in their classes. Both of these weaknesses have been recognised by the co-ordinator and he has ideas for addressing them in the future.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

134. At the time of the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2. However, based on the scrutiny of the pupils' work, the pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is in line with that expected of pupils of this age. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory because the pupils make steady progress from year to year.
135. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is in line with that normally expected of pupils of this age. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is very good the pupils make very good progress, but there is unsatisfactory achievement where inappropriate behaviour affects the pace of lessons. Standards of written work at the age of seven and at the age of 11 are below those normally expected of pupils of this age. There is a lack of extensive written work and a tendency to over-use printed sheets where the pupils could be developing a range of skills by producing more work of their own.
136. At the age of 11, the pupils are confident in the use of computers and in accessing data via the Internet. In Year 5, they are able to explore travel costs to Japan and record the data on spreadsheets. In a Year 5/6 class the pupils explored how human development can affect the environment. The pupils understood that people have different views and are able to exchange their own views with each other. There are good links with other subjects and this reinforces geographical work. For example, in a Year 1/2 class, pie charts and bar graphs are used in work about the seaside. Work on Egypt in Years 3 to 6 is supported by extended writing in the literacy hour and by other work in history. Good attention is paid to mapping skills throughout the school. Year 3/4 work includes locating Britain and Egypt on world maps and exploring side views and plans of objects; the Year 4 pupils identify key features on local maps and use a key; and the Year 5/6 pupils study maps of the Indus valley. There is good use made of the Internet by older pupils, who exchange letters with the pupils in a school in Japan. The older pupils are familiar with symbols used on Ordnance Survey maps. They are familiar with the water cycle and the main rivers of the world.
137. In the lessons observed the pupils' attitudes and behaviour were satisfactory, overall. In a Year 5 class, sharing skills are not fully developed when working at computers, but the pupils showed pride in their achievements. In a Year 5/6 class there were periods when the pupils behaved well, but inappropriate calling out and inattentiveness by a number of boys was unacceptable.
138. In all lessons, teachers and support staff ensure that all the pupils are given sufficient help to carry out the work. In Year 5, support staff help the lower attainers while the class teacher helps the high attainers. In a Year 5/6 class the teacher changes the



groups during the lesson. This gives all the pupils varied opportunities to be included in each activity while she circulates giving appropriate support to individuals and groups.

139. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. In a good lesson combining information and communication technology and geography there was good classroom management and a good use of support staff, but achievement was limited by the need to share computers. Most of the pupils make good progress, but there is insufficient challenge for high attainers. In Year 5/6 the planning and preparation were good; the teacher had clear ideas of what she wanted to achieve; and the lesson plan was carried out. Learning opportunities were, however, lost through inappropriate behaviour and high noise levels. There were, therefore, insufficient opportunities for constructive dialogue in which the pupils' ideas could be usefully shared in order to take their learning forward. Teachers make good use of constructive comments at the end of pieces of work, however, and make some corrections to key words, but these practices are not consistently applied in all classes. Some marking is therefore unsatisfactory. This has a significant impact on standards, including presentation, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
140. Resources and accommodation for geography are satisfactory. The geography curriculum is well supported by educational visits and the use of visitors to the school. The school makes good use of the local environment and the local area for information and map work. The display work around the school creates a supportive and stimulating environment, both in classrooms and corridor areas. Holiday diaries and an excellent seaside display incorporating a lobster pot, nets and shells in the infant area, and a Rainforest in Danger display in the junior hall are good examples. Good use is made of large-scale local maps and world maps in classrooms.
141. There are satisfactory arrangements for the management of the geography curriculum through whole-school planning and monitoring by the senior management team and geography co-ordinator. The geography co-ordinator has been responsible for the subject for three years. A policy and guidelines are in place and effectively used throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers carry out end-of-unit evaluations that are received by the co-ordinator. At the present time these are used mainly to pinpoint resource needs. The school lacks a systematic arrangement for monitoring teaching and learning such as through the regular collection and scrutiny of pupils' work. This is an area for development together with the need to develop a system for monitoring pupils' progress. The co-ordinator keeps up to date with educational publications from specialist publishers. There is a well-arranged portfolio showing work at three levels throughout the school. There is, however, no indication of any work at Level 3 for seven-year-olds or work at Level 5 for 11-year-olds, which indicates a lack of high expectation at these levels.

## HISTORY

142. The pupils' attainment in history at the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with that expected of pupils of these ages. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils use a video and recall a visit to Bridlington to learn about the differences between the recent and distant past. They learn to recognise differences, to sort information into categories and to know that some things change and some remain the same. They learn appropriate vocabulary such as 'parasol' and 'bathing machine'. By the end of Year 2, the pupils' achievement is good because teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour; lessons are well planned and prepared and there is good support for the pupils of different abilities. At the age of seven, spelling and punctuation vary and standards of written work are below those normally expected of pupils of this age.
143. Although some good extended writing is seen in a variety of formats in Years 3 and 4, written work is variable at the age of 11. There is some printed and untidily written work by more able pupils at the age of 11 that is unacceptable. Good standards are seen in illustrations using a variety of media, but the overall presentation of work in both key stages could be much improved. Presentation is often adversely affected by the use of loose sheets. The haphazard insertion of loose material into workbooks in Year 4 mars the appearance of work that could otherwise show progression and give the pupils a pride in their achievements. There is a tendency to overuse printed sheets where pupils could be developing a range of skills by producing more of their own work. In a Year 3/4 class the pupils are able to identify people's names, marital status and occupation from a census form and know that there is a national census every 10 years. In a Year 5 and 6 class the pupils learn to look at historical evidence using old photographs and are able to make deductions from it. At the age of 11, the pupils' achievement is good in lessons that are very well planned and resourced, but some lessons lack pace and challenge.
144. Displays around the school provide an interesting and stimulating environment to support the history curriculum. There is a very good display about churches by pupils in Years 1 and 2. There are also very good displays from Years 3 to 6, such as Egyptian artefacts, models of chairs from history, games past and present, items on the Greek Day, Tudor portraits and a Tudor street, and Bolton in 1904 and 1960.
145. Some further examples of good work in history are Year 1/2 booklets on getting to the seaside by train in the 1900s, by car in the 1950s and by plane in the present; good topic work on the Tudors and the ancient Egyptians by Year 3; and work on the Tudors by a Year 4/5 class. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a very good understanding of life in Ancient Greece as a result of a 'Greek Day'. They participated in role-play, dressing appropriately and experimenting with Greek crafts and food. A further World War Two Day is planned for the autumn term. There are opportunities for comparing past and present in all years and by the age of 11 the pupils have used a timeline and have an understanding of chronology.
146. The pupils' attitudes to learning in Years 1 and 2 are good because the pupils listen well, behave well and show enthusiasm for what they are doing. The pupils' attitudes to learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory and sometimes good. Good attitudes were seen in a Year 3/4 class where the pupils were keen to participate and behave well. Attitudes were satisfactory in another Year 3/4 lesson where there was less pace and challenge and some off-task behaviour that had to be corrected by the teacher.

147. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. The lessons are well planned and resourced and are carefully prepared. Teachers use good probing questioning and set appropriate work for pupils of different attainment. The teachers give very clear instructions and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work. As a result the pupils listen well, show enthusiasm, respond well to questioning and work hard. In one class, the teacher provided a variety of suitable research material which was used by higher-attaining pupils while a teaching assistant conversed with and supported lower-attaining pupils well. Support staff are deployed well. Teachers make good use of praise for pupil of all abilities. Good examples of work, at two levels of attainment, were shared at the end of one lesson. In all lessons teachers ensure that there is appropriate support and work for pupils at all ability levels. In a Year 1/2 class the teacher patiently encouraged a pupil who stammers to participate. Teachers in all classes direct appropriate questions well to pupils at varying levels of attainment to ensure that the all pupils feel included and secure. There are very good relationships between the pupils and all adults involved in teaching them.
148. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and sometimes good. In the best lessons, as in a lesson on the 2001 census, very good planning and resourcing and clear explanations elicited a good response from the pupils, despite the fact that some pupils had difficulty in finding information initially. In a well-resourced lesson using old photographs there was good planning but little challenge, and the pupils worked at a leisurely pace. Pace and challenge could be improved in both lessons seen in Years 3 to 6. There is evidence that the pupils are being given opportunities for their own research and enquiry. This shows an improvement since the last inspection. The arrangements for the use of the library for this purpose are, however, unsatisfactory at the present time. Most of the pupils' work is marked, but some marking consists of no more than a tick at the end of pieces of work. There is some good marking where key words are corrected and there are constructive and challenging comments by teachers. This has a significant impact on improving standards. These practices are, however, not consistently applied in all classes.
149. The school uses a range of educational visits and visitors to the school to support the history curriculum and this is having a significant impact on the pupils' learning. The school also makes good use of the local environment and visits to the local area. Resources within school are good, well labelled and centrally stored. Information and communication technology is seldom used to enhance this subject.
150. The management of the history curriculum is satisfactory, having been disrupted in the past because of staff changes and absences. There is a policy and scheme in place and the deputy headteacher monitors the delivery of the curriculum through whole-school planning arrangements. She has received some training on investigational techniques and on developing speaking and listening skills in history. As co-ordinator she sees end-of-unit evaluations by teachers, but there is no systematic monitoring of teaching and learning such as the regular collection and scrutiny of pupils' books. An area for improvement is also to develop a system for the monitoring of pupils' progress. There is a well-organised portfolio showing work at three levels throughout the school. There is, however, no indication of work at Level 3 by seven-year-olds or work at Level 5 by 11-year-olds, which indicates a lack of high expectation at these levels.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

151. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and 11. This shows considerable improvement since the last inspection when standards were seen to be unsatisfactory. The improvement has been partly due to the successful introduction of national guidelines that are used to help medium-term planning and the planning of lessons, and also to the increased expertise of teachers and the development of an information and communication technology suite.
152. By the time pupils reach seven, they are attaining standards that are in line with national expectations. They are using word processors to improve the presentation of their stories. They combine text and graphics to create simple posters and greetings cards. They have a satisfactory understanding of databases for their age and successfully use the Internet for simple research. They model information when they use a simple simulation package to dress a character or to present weather information. They successfully use information technology to investigate situations in a software package that takes them through adventures during which they have to make decisions to save the environment. This makes a positive contribution to their moral development. In this package they attain sound standards in control technology as in part of it they learn to write simple procedures to make things move the way they want them to on screen.
153. By the time pupils reach 11 they are attaining standards that are in line with national expectations. They have developed satisfactory expertise in using word processing and desktop publishing software to draft and redraft their writing in English. They can produce basic multimedia presentations using challenging software. They successfully work with spreadsheets in exercises that contribute to their numeracy skills when they enter formulae, for example, to calculate angles of quadrilaterals and triangles. They model information well when they produce alternative budgetary forecasts for the spending of a fixed amount of pocket money. Their skills in researching information are satisfactorily developed in exercises that involve the study of the Ancient Greeks, Santa Claus, the Indus Valley and the World Cup although they do tend to download more information than is necessary. Teachers are developing ways of making sure pupils summarise the information they find. The use of information and communication technology to support other areas of the curriculum is beginning to be developed in the school. Links are now being made with English and mathematics and other subjects such as art. In one class very good use is made of a paint program to model the work of Mondrian. The same class uses a digital camera to record the best perspectives of collections of found materials that pupils use to create pieces inspired by Galdsworthy. Year 6 also model information when they produce musical compositions using compositional software. Pupils attain sound standards in control technology when they produce simple programs that control the operations of belisha beacons, lighthouses and a fairground ride. A residential visit to Kingswood is organised for pupils in Years 5 and 6 where they work on the control technology program Robolab. The curriculum provided by the school complies fully with National Curriculum requirements.
154. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers share learning objectives at the start of each lesson to give pupils a clear idea of what they are going to learn. They recap previous learning to make sure that learning builds on previous advances. They use the computer suite appropriately to give whole-class demonstrations of basic skills and to answer any questions about what is to be done. They use these sessions well to interest and motivate pupils by showing them on screen some of the things they can achieve. This is especially so when they demonstrate the fun pupils will have learning by using an adventure game

that teaches them control technology, among other aspects of the curriculum, such as how to save the natural environment. This package makes a good contribution to literacy as teachers use good questioning techniques that establish potential misunderstandings in the introductory phase. Some teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge as they are only now beginning the nationally sponsored training to give them all a general level of competence in information and communication technology. This is, in part, compensated by the information and communication technology co-ordinator whose expertise is good and who gives good support and guidance to his colleagues. Teachers are ably supported by teaching assistants who have themselves a sound level of expertise. Teachers and teaching assistants manage the behaviour of children well. As a consequence, lessons are purposeful and often exciting.

155. There is good co-ordination of the subject. The co-ordinator gives good direction to the development of information and communication technology in the school, through the work that he does on developing schemes of work, on the monitoring and evaluation of existing provision and on the support and training of other members of staff. He is developing assessment procedures that will give the information teachers need on the progress that individual pupils make and has a clear view of what needs to be done to improve the information and communication technology facilities in the school.

## **MUSIC**

156. The pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is good and above that expected for pupils of this age. The pupils achieve well because demonstration is effectively used to improve the pupils' abilities to perform in singing and become actively involved in creating music. By the end of Year 6, the pupils' attainment, overall, is in line with that expected for pupils of this age. The pupils' attainment in singing and performance is good and above the level expected. The pupils' achievement is good because of the emphasis given to music in the school and the skills of some teachers with musical talent. The quality of the pupils' singing has improved since the previous inspection because the staff use their own voices well to lead the pupils' singing. In a good Key Stage 2 assembly with a musical focus, the pupils demonstrated their increasing ability to use voice improvisation when singing. More attention is now given to composition including the use of information and communication technology which results in the pupils improving skills to compose and appraise. The pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated in lessons through the good quality support from classroom assistants. The staff have identified gifted and talented pupils and provide for them well. Opportunities are available for pupils to learn to play brass instruments and recorders.
157. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They respond with enthusiasm to tasks; for example, in a Year 1 lesson they performed simple pulse-based accompaniments. They sing with enthusiasm in assembly and are well behaved. In a Year 6 lesson they persevered to improve their group performance, in response to a task to explore composing, using closed and open chords. They confidently performed their composition for others and were proud of their achievements.
158. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well fostered through music and performance. In a Key Stage 1 assembly, participating in a singing session was an uplifting experience and the pupils enjoyed working together. In a Year 5 short musical appreciation session at the start of the afternoon, the pupils quietly listened to piano music. This promoted a calm atmosphere and a good ethos for the next lesson. These opportunities make a significant contribution to raising the pupils' self-esteem.

159. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is very good because effective music activities are planned for the pupils. In a very good Year 1 lesson, the knowledge and enthusiasm of the teacher and the support for individual pupils resulted in most pupils successfully understanding pulse and rhythm. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. In a Year 6 lesson, the pupils' previous knowledge and understanding were used effectively to help the development of skills when performing a composition. The pupils' interest was maintained and the availability of a suitable range of instruments and practical opportunities ensured all the pupils were involved. In a Year 4 lesson, the good organisational strategies ensured a good pace was maintained and disruption, when all the pupils changed instruments, was kept to a minimum. The staff's very good relationships that exist with pupils have a significant impact on the good progress that the pupils make in lessons.
160. The subject co-ordinator provides effective support for other teachers and, as a result, has developed teaching skills and progress in the subject. However, with several other responsibilities there are excessive demands on her time. There is a commitment to raising standards through evaluating the outcomes of each unit of work covered in the newly-acquired commercial scheme of work. A programme of training for teachers is helping to develop the confidence of teachers with less secure knowledge in the subject. Strategies for checking the pupils' progress are limited. However, the co-ordinator is providing guidance for teachers on how to level the pupils' work to be implemented in the next academic year. The co-ordinator is aware of the shortages of resources to meet fully the requirements of the curriculum. In addition to the school facilities for music, the school benefits from access to the Dearne Valley Venture situated on the same site which has recording studios. The school used these facilities to compose a Christmas CD-ROM.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

161. The pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with that normally expected of pupils of these ages. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils learned to use space well in finding different pathways; they worked well at different heights; demonstrated stillness and balance; and used jumping and turning movements with their bodies. They used the music 'La Mer' effectively to interpret the mood and rhythm of the music with the movement of their bodies. They incorporate the movements they have learnt in the first part of the lesson when interpreting the music. The pupils also participated well when discussing their performance with the teacher. The pupils' achievement at the end of Year 2 is good because teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, they select examples of best practice to demonstrate and they model good practice.
162. In Year 3/4, pupils develop hockey skills they have already learnt including the correct holding of a unihoc stick, dribbling, tackling and passing. They use the skills learnt in the first part of the lesson well in team activities. They learn to work with a partner and with larger groups. The pupils listen and participate well in analysing their own performance and that of others. In Year 5/6 the pupils effectively develop their cricket skills by learning to retrieve a ball and throw on the turn. The pupils practise throwing and catching at different levels and participate well in analysing their own performance and that of others. The pupils' achievement at the end of Year 6 is good because lessons have good pace, teachers have high expectations and the pupils are well behaved. In all classes pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers ensure that they are well supported. They ensure that all the pupils are able to take part in all activities by planning for them to participate at appropriate levels of attainment.

163. The physical education curriculum is supported by a good display in the infant hall showing outstanding sporting achievements by pupils with their photographs. Notices of clubs and activities are displayed in the entrances to the junior part of the school. This draws the pupils' attention to what activities are on offer and extra-curricular activities are well attended by boys and girls. A display of games past and present in the Year 3 additional learning support area also encourages interest in the physical education curriculum.
164. The pupils' attitudes to learning in Years 1 and 2 are very good because the pupils listen and respond well. They concentrate and work hard throughout lessons. There are very good relationships between the pupils and the adults who teach and support them. The pupils' attitudes to learning in Years 3 to 6 are good because they behave well, listen attentively and follow instructions. In both classes observed the pupils worked well together in pairs, in small groups and as a class. Boys and girls, and pupils of different abilities, mix well in their group activities.
165. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is very good because teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work. The teacher's instructions are very clear and the pupils are very clear about what is expected of them. As a result they concentrate fully and work hard. The teacher makes very good use of praise to encourage the pupils at all levels of attainment and she and the teaching assistant are very good role models. Good work is demonstrated and praised. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching is good overall. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. In Years 3 to 6, lessons have good pace and the teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour. The pupils respond well by lining up sensibly, coming to order quickly and following instructions. Equipment is put out quickly and efficiently and pupils behave well when rearranged into pairs or into groups of various sizes. In very good lessons, teachers are good role models and dress appropriately. Lessons are not as good where teachers are inappropriately dressed and pupils who have forgotten or lost their kit are not engaged in any learning activity.
166. In a Year 3/4 class the teacher made appropriate interventions to make teaching points and used good examples to demonstrate good practice. Other pupils responded by emulating what they had seen. Teacher and teaching assistant give appropriate help to lower attainers so that they can succeed. In a Year 5/6 class the pupils are told to set their own targets when working in pairs. This provides a suitable challenge for pupils of varying levels of attainment. Unacceptable behaviour by a small group of boys is dealt with quietly and efficiently and the pupils resume the activity sensibly.
167. Equipment has improved since the last inspection and new agility mats and a storage trolley for infant equipment are recent additions to resources. Some equipment is still in need of replacement, however, and storage areas are inadequate. This is an area of concern but is not being dealt with at the present time because of uncertainty about future building arrangements. Accommodation for physical education within the buildings is good with two halls available most of the time. The playground area is adequate and a physical education area is well marked with grids. A small field near the school is used for sports day and is suitable for five and seven-a-side football but is inadequate for 11-a-side games.
168. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities that are open mainly to older pupils. These include football, cricket, rounders and matball. The school takes part in local tournaments and friendly matches. Year 3 and 4 pupils learn to swim. The school occasionally receives coaching from local sixth form students and has occasional input from sportsmen from the Dearnside Sports Centre. There is an

annual residential visit for Year 5/6 pupils, that offers opportunities for outdoor pursuits such as abseiling and team-building exercises.

169. The management of physical education is satisfactory with curriculum planning being monitored by the senior management team and the co-ordinator, through the school's planning arrangements. The physical education co-ordinator was appointed this year. She attends termly co-ordinator meetings and seeks and receives advice from the Local Education Authority's adviser. She has developed a new scheme for the school that is now ready for full implementation. The co-ordinator receives end-of-unit evaluations from teachers, but there are at present no school structures in place for the regular monitoring of teaching and learning or for tracking the progress of pupils. This is an area for development. Physical education has a clear focus in the school development plan, as a channel for raising the self-esteem of the pupils, and is therefore given more time than other foundation subjects. The co-ordinator has identified risk assessment as a priority for the school. This appropriately includes attention to teachers' dress.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

170. No judgement can be made about standards in either key stage, as there was very little work to view as lessons are mainly oral. However, in the lessons observed in Years 3 to 6, pupils' attainment was satisfactory. The co-ordinator's portfolio shows that pupils in Year 2 have learned about Advent and the Christingle ceremony, have visited, drawn and written about the local church and understand that giving and receiving are important concepts to Christians. When discussing precious gifts they record that 'My mum, because she takes good care of me', and 'my gift of love of my mummy and daddy and brother'. Pupils in Year 2 also learn about the concept of being sorry, when they learn about the Jewish festival of Rosh Hashanah, making cards to record what they are sorry for.
171. By interviewing Year 6 pupils it is clear that the subject had been taught in Years 3 to 6 but their recollection of what they have learned is vague. They make reference to the Faith through the Arts display in the classroom, to Jesus' miracles and Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter. They also know about Saul becoming Paul and becoming blind. They know a few stories from the Old Testament, such as the creation, Noah, Moses and David and Goliath. They have also learned about famous Christians such as Helen Keller. Work scrutiny shows that Year 3 pupils have an understanding of the Bible being made up of different books and the link between the Bible and the Torah. No separate work was available from Year 4 but a class of Year 3/4 pupils have looked at Jewish artefacts such as a kippar, tallit, seder plate and shofa, with higher attaining pupils' well-expressed written work showing that they have understood what each is used for. They have also thought about faith in the home, written prayers of thanks and studied different images of Jesus. A minimal amount of work was available from Year 5 pupils. Year 5/6 pupils have designed stained glass windows and know that the Bible was written in Hebrew and Greek and can record short texts written in the different languages. Year 5/6 pupils also know the colours associated with the church's year and have designed posters showing Christian symbols. The only reference to Islam in Years 3 to 6 appears to be to prayer mats. At the last inspection standards were judged to be in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in Year 2 and above them by the end of Year 6. They are not as high now.
172. No lesson was observed in either Year 1 or 2. In the lessons observed in Years 3 to 6, pupils' attitudes were satisfactory. In Year 3 they enjoyed role play, showing different



feelings such as being fierce, angry, grumpy, unhappy or fed up. Many co-operate well in groups and are willing to share, but others are not. In Year 4 pupils apply themselves well to the tasks and most are able to interpret 'I am the good shepherd' as meaning Jesus cares for his sheep. One pupil identified that 'it means they have his trust and care'. Again most pupils' behaviour is satisfactory but a significant number present challenging behaviour. In Year 5 this is similar, with contrasting behaviour from different pupils; some do not take the subject seriously. In the Year 6 lesson observed, behaviour was mainly good and pupils contributed well to role-play in a mature way, worked co-operatively in pairs and asked sensible questions.

173. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 was satisfactory. Teachers used a variety of teaching and learning styles to keep pupils' interest, such as role play, questions and answers, whole-class teaching, group and partner work. Teachers matched work to the different attainment of pupils well and although pupils presented challenging behaviour they generally managed it well with a calm patient approach. They showed a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christianity, teaching pupils how to find references in the Bible and what symbolic language means, such as 'I am the good shepherd', 'I am the light of the world' and 'I am the bread of life'. They encourage a respectful attitude to the subject and use music well at the start of a lesson to create a calm atmosphere. Lessons are well planned and challenge pupils to think and develop their own ideas well. Occasionally, timescales for pupils to complete their work could be more challenging. Much good religious education teaching is said to happen in assemblies and visitors make a valuable contribution to the subject.
174. The management of the subject, however, is unsatisfactory. Monitoring of the subject, through teachers' plans, does not sufficiently ensure that the legal requirements are covered. The co-ordinator has begun to compile a portfolio of work showing one piece of work from each year group. Further examples would be helpful to teachers and for monitoring purposes. The school has the Barnsley and Wakefield Agreed Syllabi but considers the former to be too demanding. Staff have been partly following the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's guidelines for the past few years, based on headings related to the school's two-year cycle, but realise that these do not fully meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In-service training is needed to ensure that teachers have appropriate knowledge to teach the subject. The time allocated to discrete lessons of the subject is unsatisfactory. The expectation has been that the 20 minutes spent in assembly on Thursdays by the whole school has been the focus for all other religious education lessons throughout the school for that week. However, most teaching appears to be done through other subjects in a minimal way, and as a result discrete lessons in religious education, to the expected amount of time, do not take place in all classes. The monitoring of the subject by senior management should be a priority, to ensure that legal requirements are met as soon as possible. The co-ordinator has plans to introduce a new scheme of work in September. This needs to be implemented as soon as possible. The school has very good resources for the subject and more are borrowed, when needed, from the local High School. Pupils have also visited the local church and Litchfield Cathedral.