

INSPECTION REPORT

CALTHWAITE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

Penrith

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112301

Headteacher: Mrs P A Steel

Reporting inspector: Mr Brian Griffiths
2607

Dates of inspection: 5 – 7 March 2001

Inspection number: 195099

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Calthwaite Penrith Cumbria
Postcode:	CA11 9QT
Telephone number:	01768 885277
Fax number:	N/A
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Williamson
Date of previous inspection:	24 March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2607	Brian Griffiths	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
			Information technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Geography	How well is the school led and managed?
			History	What should the school do to improve further?
			Physical education	
			Equal opportunities	
9160	Keith Baker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents and carers?
25431	Lesley Clark	Team inspector	English	How well are pupils taught?
			English as an additional language	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Science	
			Art	
			Design and technology	
			Music	
			Foundation stage	
			Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Leeds Metropolitan University

Schools Inspection Service
Fairfax Hall
Beckett Park Campus
Headingley
Leeds
LS6 3QS

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

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	10
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Calthwaite Church of England Primary School is a much smaller than average, voluntary aided school. It serves the largely rural community of Calthwaite, between Penrith and Carlisle in Cumbria, although a significant and growing proportion of pupils attends from other neighbouring villages. Numbers have grown steadily in recent years and there are currently 69 pupils on roll, including nine in the reception year who are taught alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. All pupils attend full time. Throughout the school there are roughly equal numbers of boys and girls. No pupils are from ethnic minorities. Three per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs is well below average and the proportion with statements of special educational needs is around average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the reception class varies a good deal; in most years there is a small proportion of lower attaining pupils and a higher proportion of higher attainers. Taken overall, attainment on entry is somewhat above average.

The inspection took place during a national outbreak of foot and mouth disease that badly affected this area.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school at which pupils reach high standards in most key subjects and develop a very good range of personal qualities and skills. This is largely because teaching throughout the school, especially of basic skills, is of a high quality. This ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in all aspects of their learning. Overall management of the school is very good, and the leadership provided by the headteacher is of a very high quality. The support of the committed staff, governing body and community ensure that the school has a positive atmosphere, which was maintained during the inspection week despite the serious threat to the local community of the national outbreak of foot and mouth disease that seriously affected local farms and caused attendance at the school to fall considerably.

The school was judged to be good at the last inspection and has improved a good deal since then. It is well placed to maintain its high quality provision and to improve further where provision is at present sound. Even though the cost per pupil at this small school is high, it nonetheless gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the age of both seven and eleven years, pupils reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science, whilst in art and design, eleven-year-olds reach high standards and seven-year-olds reach very high standards.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to others and to their learning; their behaviour is excellent and they develop very well as rounded, caring young people.
- Teaching is good overall and the teaching of infants is very good. The teaching of literacy is very good and that of numeracy is good.
- The headteacher leads and manages the school very effectively and is well supported by all staff and by the well-informed and positive governing body.
- The school provides a good level of care for pupils and very effectively promotes their attainment, well being and personal development.
- The great majority of parents rightly view the school positively and appreciate the links that it forges with them.

What could be improved

- There are no significant weaknesses at this school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997 and was judged to have many strengths and a few weaknesses. Since then, overall standards have improved, as have leadership and management and the

curriculum that the school offers. These improvements have taken place at a good rate. The major areas in which improvements have taken place include:

- pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is now good;
- seven-year-olds reach very high standards in art and design; eleven-year-olds reach high standards;
- pupils' behaviour has improved from good to become excellent;
- there is a greater proportion of very good teaching;
- the provision for the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved, so that attainment is now satisfactory and rising;
- imaginative provision is made for those areas of the curriculum that would otherwise be limited due to the school's small size;
- the building has been extended since the last inspection and the additional classroom has allowed junior classes to be smaller and cover narrower age ranges;
- the headteacher's leadership has improved from good to very good;
- governors' planning, including financial planning, is thoughtful and secure.

STANDARDS

No table of national test scores is included in the report because of the small numbers of pupils who are eligible to take the tests. However, results over a five year period indicate above average attainment at the ages of both seven and eleven in English, mathematics and science. At the age of eleven, the attainment of girls has been particularly high. These high standards in tests are consistent with the overall findings of the inspection.

Attainment by the time pupils leave the reception year is above average because a rich curriculum is taught well – and sometimes very well. At the age of seven, attainment is above average in all aspects of English, (including literacy), in mathematics (including numeracy) and in science; very high standards are reached in art and design. At the age of eleven, attainment is above average in English (including literacy), mathematics (including numeracy), science and art and design. These good standards are reached because a well-planned curriculum is taught well in the juniors and very well in the infants. Too little music was seen to allow a secure judgement to be made. In all other subjects, that is information and communication technology, design and technology, geography, history and physical education, pupils reach sound standards at both seven and eleven years.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are eager to learn and respond well in lessons. This has a very positive effect on the standards achieved.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent, both in class and around the school. Pupils show consideration for one another and are very polite and helpful.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show initiative and independence and contribute well to the life of the school. They form very good relationships with other children and with adults,
Attendance	Very good. There is no unauthorised absence and punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very good	Good

Overall, teaching is good. Teaching in all classes is at least good and of the lessons seen, teaching in 43 per cent was very good, in a further 43 per cent was good and in 14 per cent was satisfactory. No lessons were seen in which the teaching was less than satisfactory. Literacy and numeracy are well

taught and literacy is especially well promoted through the teaching of other subjects. Teachers are particularly skilled at developing the basic skills of reading, writing and number with the younger pupils. The teaching of the very small number of pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language is good – so that they make good progress. The school effectively meets the needs of all pupils. Reception children are taught well by both the class teacher and the support assistant. Children's basic skills are developed well in all areas of learning and especially so in literacy, numeracy and creative development. The very good support that children experience and the good classroom management skills of the staff encourage children to make independent choices and ensure that they work and play with great interest and concentration. The quality of infant teaching is very good. Pupils respond well to their teacher's lively and creative approach, resulting in good rates of learning and above average standards. Good teaching in the junior classes is based on good planning and lesson preparation in which resources and activities are well chosen to suit the different ages and levels of attainment in the class. Occasionally there is a rather relaxed pace, for example in the longer literacy lessons, and explanations could be more clear or precise. Teachers adjust their teaching in response to the day-to-day assessments that they make of pupils' responses. This contributes well to the pupils' good rates of learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, meeting all statutory requirements. A large proportion of time is given to literacy and numeracy and other subjects are used well to develop pupils' skills in these areas. As a result of the substantial time given to literacy and numeracy, the provision for other subjects, whilst reasonable, is less well balanced. The curriculum is enhanced considerably by well planned educational visits and by a reasonable number of school clubs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, enabling pupils to achieve good rates of progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils receive good support that enables them to learn as well as other pupils
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a prime concern of the school, which very successfully develops pupils as caring, responsible individuals.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. All staff know the pupils very well and take a close interest in their personal development and academic progress.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very well. The great majority of parents value the school highly and appreciate both the information that it distributes and the approachability of staff.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led by the headteacher; all other members of staff make significant contributions to the school's very clear and productive sense of direction and purpose.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body plays an active and supportive role. Governors help considerably in shaping the overall direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Because staff and governors are well aware of the school's strengths and its areas of relative weakness, they are able to play a positive part in planning for further improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The headteacher and governors are skilled at attracting funds and they spend the money wisely in ways that enhance pupils' learning. The school takes great care to ensure that purchases are of good quality at the best available cost. Sensible and effective use is made of the school's limited accommodation.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Staffing levels are good and all staff are well suited to their roles. Learning resources are good in both quality and range. Creative and effective use is made of the limited accommodation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Most parents feel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> teaching is good, so that children make good progress; children enjoy coming to school; the school is well led and managed; children are helped to become mature and responsible; children are expected to work hard and do their best. 	<p>Some parents feel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> they should be better informed about how their children are getting on; the school should work more closely with parents; more homework should be given; there should be a greater range of activities outside of lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Teaching is good, pupils respond well and reach good standards. The information provided for parents both general and specific to their children is of a generally good quality; documents such as reports on pupils' progress, the school prospectus and newsletters are informative and well produced. The number of school clubs is similar to or better than that seen in other schools of similar size and the curriculum is considerably enhanced by educational visits out of the immediate area and by visiting experts to the school. The use made of homework is reasonable.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 The numbers of pupils in each year group are too small to allow a reliable analysis to be made of the school's national test results in any one year. However, an examination of the test scores over the past five years shows that:
 - seven-year-olds reach good standards in the tests of reading, writing and mathematics; the assessments made by teachers in science also indicate above-average standards;
 - eleven-year-olds reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science tests;
 - eleven-year-old girls have out-performed boys in all three subjects but there are no such significant differences at the age of seven;
 - as might be expected with such small year groups, there is no discernible trend over the five-year period;
- 2 These results are in the main consistent with the overall findings of the inspection, that at the ages of both seven and eleven, pupils reach above average standards in English (including literacy), mathematics (including numeracy), and science. However, there were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls – in fact, they received very equal treatment in lessons, made similar progress and reached equally good standards.
- 3 The school sets targets for pupils' achievements in tests that are demanding in the sense that they will not be reached unless all concerned work hard and effectively, and realistic in the sense that they are based on pupils' earlier attainment. The school is on track to meet these targets.
- 4 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them in their clearly laid out individual education plans, largely because their needs are well catered for, and teaching and support staff give high level support to learning. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are well catered for. On arrival at the school, their English was in need of considerable support; this was given in a structured and positive way and the pupils are now fully fluent in English.
- 5 Children make good all-round progress in the reception year. When they enter the class, their attainment generally ranges from average to above and they consolidate and improve on this in all areas of learning. Because they are taught well both by their teacher and their support assistant, children reach above average standards in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. This gives them a very good start to the next stage of their education as infants.
- 6 In English, pupils of all ages reach above average standards in all aspects of the subject, namely speaking and listening, reading and writing. Older pupils reach very good standards in writing; higher attainers use complex sentences and sophisticated vocabulary very effectively. Learning progresses at a good rate in all three classes. It is especially helped at the infant stage by very good teaching overall, and in writing throughout the school because the aspect is imaginatively and thoroughly taught.
- 7 In mathematics, pupils throughout the school have a very good grasp of number work and by the age of ten and eleven many work with exceptional speed and accuracy in

order to, for example, 'make' 327 by adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing 2, 4, 8, 9, 10 and 50. At the end of both the infant and junior stages, pupils have a good grasp of the full range of mathematics, including work on shapes and their characteristics, weighing and measuring and the collection and use of data.

- 8 The attainment both of infants and juniors in information and communication technology (ICT) is in line with national expectations and is improving as more regular and confident use is made by teachers of the recently improved resources for the subject. The great majority of eleven-year-olds confidently use e-mail and the Internet – sometimes using e-mail to communicate with their teacher or other pupils.
- 9 Standards in art and design are high at the age of eleven and very high at the age of seven. Pupils are knowledgeable about art and artists. For example, infant pupils know that aspects of L.S.Lowry's life were sad and they talk with real interest about how he used dark colours to depict industrial landscapes. At both infant and junior stages, pupils reach the nationally expected standards in design and technology, geography, history and physical education. Standards are higher than they would otherwise be because the school makes imaginative provision for some of these subjects in order to compensate for its own limited accommodation. For example, it has no indoor space for aspects of physical education, so it develops these skills at a local college with the active participation of older students as well as staff. Similarly, the good use that is made of educational visits lifts the attainment in a number of subjects – notably history and geography. No judgement can be made on the standards reached in music, as very little was seen during the inspection. However, there is a good deal of evidence that the subject is properly catered for and it is much enjoyed by pupils of all ages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 10 The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils are very good overall and have improved since the last inspection. Virtually all parents state that their children like coming to school. Pupils, staff and parents work together as a family community based on a strong ethos of mutual respect and this helps to promote a very positive teaching and learning environment.
- 11 The attitudes of the children in the reception year are very good. They are keen to start school and take an enthusiastic interest in their learning. They listen carefully to their teacher and work conscientiously on their own or with others. This was seen to very good effect in an art lesson in which the reception children prepared strips of different coloured paper to form winter and summer landscapes. Pupils throughout the school respond well to the level of good teaching. The way that they listen to teachers' instructions, concentrate on tasks, and work co-operatively, often in congested conditions, is very impressive. Only very occasionally, such as during the long morning periods of intensive literacy and numeracy, or when an instruction is less clear than it should be, do concentration and effort levels fall just below an acceptable standard. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes and are integrated well into classes. They receive very good help from support staff and are able to maintain concentration and make good progress.
- 12 The school has built on the good behaviour of the pupils noted at the last inspection and the standard now in and around the school is excellent. Pupils clearly understand and respect the teachers' high expectations of them. Teachers manage their classes very well and ensure that pupils work in a calm and orderly way without the need for raised voices or constant correction. Pupils move around the cramped conditions sensibly and quietly. They are polite and helpful and treat property with respect. No bullying was observed and there have been no exclusions.

- 13 The quality of relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils themselves is very good. The level of rapport and trust between pupils and their teachers and other adults is very high and does much to enhance the quality of the pupils' work and the progress that they make. Pupils genuinely respect and value one another's opinions, and many instances were observed of pupils of different ages working amicably together in class. They are also very caring, as witnessed by the "Friendship bench" in the playground, where the children know that by simply sitting on the bench someone will always come to comfort them and listen to their problems.
- 14 The personal development of the pupils is promoted very well throughout their time in the school. Children in the reception year learn quickly to adjust to the school's routines and how to select, use and return resources on their own initiative. All children join the House system when they enter the school and this provides a good opportunity for them to take responsibility and to grow in confidence and self-esteem. For example, elections are held for the posts of House captains and vice-captains who then take the lead in organising meeting of pupils to discuss ideas that might be put to the teaching staff. Similarly, cultural activities attract the participation of the pupils throughout the school and enable them to display their creative ability and growing self-confidence. The large contribution made by pupils of all age groups to the highly successful Millennium project, which embraced art, drama, music and dance, is an excellent example of this.
- 15 The school has maintained the very good level of attendance recorded at the last inspection. Authorised absence is well below average and there is no unauthorised absence. However, during the inspection week attendance was badly disrupted as a result of the outbreak of foot and mouth disease. Punctuality is good and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 16 The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. The teaching of infant pupils is very good. Teaching was very good in 43 per cent of lessons, good in 43 per cent and in 14 per cent was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and there is now a greater proportion of very good teaching.
- 17 Literacy and numeracy are well taught and literacy in particular is very well promoted through the teaching in other subjects. The basic skills of reading, writing and number are very well taught, particularly to younger pupils. The teaching of the very small number of pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language is also good and, as a result, they make good progress. The school meets the needs of most pupils well.
- 18 The teaching of reception age children is good. Children receive extremely good support from the teaching assistant who develops their understanding very well through a range of well planned activities. Frequently, reception year children join with older infants for the early part of a lesson and benefit greatly from high quality input from the class teacher; they then often form a group of children of like age and work successfully with a very well briefed and effective teaching assistant. In both situations, children's learning progresses at a good rate. Children are encouraged to be independent and to record which activities they do. Teachers and children then review this towards the end of the week to ensure that each child has undertaken a balanced range of activities. The work is well suited to their age. They have ample opportunities to work and play together and so they learn to do so with great interest and concentration.
- 19 The teaching of infants is very good. The work is very carefully planned and timed so that the different age groups within the class receive the very different work their stage of

development requires. The expanded literacy hour works well with this age group and allows for flexibility so that reception children can be involved in some aspects, learning with and from older pupils, whilst giving the older pupils in Year 2 the opportunity to work intensively on their own. The planning is pertinent and resources are appropriate and used well to help pupils to learn. The teacher's enthusiasm transmits itself to pupils and helps them to achieve at a good rate as they respond very willingly. Pupils are encouraged to be independent and self-reliant, and to work co-operatively, sharing their expertise. This results in a good pace to lessons and a very good atmosphere for learning in which all pupils make progress and achieve well.

- 20 The quality of teaching of juniors is good overall and a range of lessons was seen from satisfactory to very good. Planning for the different age groups within the class is good and often the subject matter quickly attracts the interest of pupils. The younger pupils delight in the games their teacher devises whereas older ones take pains to mirror their teacher's methodical, systematic approach. Teachers effectively check the progress of pupils of different levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs or English is an additional language. The older juniors often prolong discussions productively, because they find what their teacher is saying very interesting. In very good lessons, these qualities sharpened the pace and gave a sense of purpose and direction to the lesson. In lessons with satisfactory features, the use of time was not as good as it should be. Occasionally lessons lost some impetus because they were too long - as seen in some literacy lessons, some explanations were imprecise and longer than necessary - which resulted in some loss of pace. These features were noticeable not because they were poor, but rather because they fell below the generally high and very high standard of other lessons. Teachers vary their use of language well when questioning pupils of different ages and they are aware of the needs of potentially higher attaining pupils. Sometimes, opportunities are missed to develop the understanding of these pupils even further by giving them just a bit more information, in order that they might look more deeply into a subject.

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

- 21 The school meets all statutory requirements for the curriculum and offers a satisfactory quality and range of learning opportunities overall. Throughout the school, intellectual, creative, personal and social skills are very well promoted. A large proportion of time is spent on literacy and numeracy and on teaching basic skills. This works very well in the infant class and enables pupils to attain above average standards. It works reasonably well in junior classes although some literacy lessons, in particular, are too long. There is a better range of opportunities for learning for the younger pupils because of the greater provision for practical activities in subjects such as art and design, design and technology, history, geography and science. Whilst the school has devoted much time and energy to improving provision for literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology, it has considered less systematically how best to organise the other subjects in order to achieve effective learning in the junior classes. As a result, the provision for these other subjects is less well balanced and pupils' attainment tends to be about average by the age of 11 in subjects apart from English, mathematics, science and art.
- 22 Personal and social education is incorporated well into the whole learning programme and pupils have ample opportunities to discuss and to learn from each other. The school's provision for health education and education in citizenship are effective and pupils develop relatively sophisticated understandings in these areas. The school has a clear policy for promoting equal opportunities and is effective in giving all pupils the opportunity to succeed. The school has made sensible provision for teaching music, employing a music specialist to teach one day a week. The provision for physical

education is quite imaginative, given the school's limited accommodation and lack of a space large enough to enable gymnastics and dance to be taught.

- 23 There is good provision for children under the age of six in the infant class. Good use is made of current national guidance on planning. A variety of interesting learning experiences are presented to children to foster positive attitudes towards learning. Children learn alongside older pupils for small parts of literacy and numeracy lessons. This raises the rate at which they acquire skills in language and number, as they are keen to compete with the others in mental mathematics and spelling games. For part of each day, children choose what they would like to do and respond very well to the independence and responsibility entrusted to them. Because of the small numbers, children are able to use facilities in school to promote their physical development and outside they have access to an imaginative range of play equipment to develop skills in climbing and balancing.
- 24 Teachers have worked hard to implement the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and to adapt them to the needs of classes which cover a wide age range. The blend of formal teaching and independent learning, with time to hear individual pupils read, works very well in the infant class. The additional time given to literacy and numeracy is used a little less productively in the junior classes. With the introduction of new information and communication technology equipment, teachers are quickly developing ways of using pupils' skills to support learning in, for example, science. There is no provision, as yet, for specific teaching of skills in information and communication technology, but the school is aware of this need and is developing appropriate plans. Taken overall, the standards pupils achieve are directly linked to the curricular provision. Where that is rich, as in English, mathematics, science and art, standards are higher. Nevertheless, provision is sound enough in the other subjects for pupils to reach the nationally expected levels.
- 25 The school makes good provision for the small number of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. Teachers are careful to include them in all activities. They make sure that the tasks that they set improve pupils' confidence and help them to learn. They use individual education plans effectively and support staff give additional assistance very well. The school has not made explicit the provision for gifted and talented pupils, but provision in lessons is usually effective in ensuring that all pupils make good progress.
- 26 The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn outside the classroom. They liaise with other primary schools to play in local leagues for netball, football, Kwik cricket, and Tag rugby; they also take part in swimming galas. Pupils in years 4, 5 and 6 have the opportunity to go on a three-day residential visit and to visit places as far afield as York to support work, for example, in history. Educational visits to places nearby develop pupils' knowledge of science. In addition, teachers take opportunities to explore links with other countries such as New Zealand, where some pupils are currently visiting, using correspondence and information passing in both directions, as well as pictures and leaflets. Older juniors benefit from half an hour's work on language with a French speaker each week. The school provides extra-curricular activities that are ambitious for its size.
- 27 There are good links with the community and with neighbouring schools and these contribute well to pupils' learning. The school makes available space for a nursery three days a week and links with local high schools support work in design and technology and information and communication technology, as well as physical education.
- 28 The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good with particular strengths in moral and social development. Pupils are helped to

appreciate the special qualities of individuals; the social and moral education that the school provides has firm foundations in the school's Christian ethos. All adults working in the school provide good role models and this contributes to pupils' exemplary behaviour and responsible attitudes. Good opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to gain the skills of co-operation and discussion, and to develop independence in their own learning. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the lives of saints, for example, and on different ways of living, through studying multi-cultural texts and learning about other cultures through lessons in art and design. Pupils are unafraid to be individual and older pupils guide younger ones by setting high standards – for example, when leading prayers before meals, they quietly wait for the appropriate time to begin. The school fosters and develops mature attitudes very well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 29 The overall provision for the pupils' care and welfare is good. The well being of the pupils is a prime consideration of the governors and staff. The school has maintained the high standards of care noted at the last inspection. Parents report that their children enjoy coming to school and from the reception class onwards they find it a friendly, orderly and secure place in which to learn. Good care and support make a significant contribution to the pupils' progress and attainment.
- 30 Procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress are good. Teachers match work closely to needs because they know individual pupils very well and have good, systematic procedures for monitoring progress and development. Close collaboration between the teachers, combined with monitoring by the headteacher, means that there is consistency of practice across the school. A good start is made with the reception children where useful and comprehensive notes are made of their progress towards the nationally recommended 'early learning goals'. Assessment records are strongest in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. But across the curriculum generally, sufficient information is being maintained by staff to enable them to check carefully what pupils have learned and to monitor progress as they move through the school. Realistic targets for pupils to improve their performance are being set from reception onwards, although these tend to be stronger in some subjects, notably English, than others. A pupil tracking system has been introduced in the core subjects but this is at an early stage of development. Information gathered through the assessment process is being built satisfactorily into the planning of subsequent learning.
- 31 The monitoring and supporting of pupils' personal development are good. Although procedures are less formalised than those for assessing academic progress, the school is a small and close knit community and the staff's knowledge of individual pupils and the liaison between them, mean that the personal qualities of pupils such as attitudes, perseverance, and concentration are kept constantly to the fore. Good assessment in this area is supported by the monitoring of behaviour and attendance records. Record of Achievement files are kept for each pupil and contain reports, samples of work and awards from throughout the pupil's time in the school. All of these make considerable contributions to the school's provision and help to ensure that pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is excellent.
- 32 The school has a good range of support and welfare policies that guide its actions. It welcomes outside specialist agencies to support the pupils on a routine basis or if there are any specific problems. The provision for pupils with special needs is good. The local authority's child protection procedure has been adopted and it is being implemented effectively. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow. The headteacher is the person designated for child protection and is intending to attend shortly some required updating training.

- 33 Procedures introduced for promoting good behaviour and eliminating any oppressive conduct have proved to be outstanding. The emphasis is on self-discipline. The school has a minimum of rules but has high expectations of pupils from the early years onwards, and the staff work hard to encourage good behaviour and manners at all times. Clear guidelines are in place for the sort of behaviour that is encouraged and discouraged at playtime and lunchtime. Parents are kept closely informed about the good conduct expected of their children and they widely approve of the high standards being maintained.
- 34 Procedures for promoting high attendance are good. Class registers are maintained accurately. Parents are very co-operative in providing information about absences and this ensures that no unauthorised absence occurs.
- 35 The school provides a safe environment. The governing body takes a close interest in safety matters and these are incorporated appropriately into the school development plan. The premises are kept clean and tidy. Regular safety inspections and risk assessments take place. The outside play area is well maintained.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 36 The last inspection indicated that parents had a high regard for the school and this continues to be the case. The majority of parents have very positive views of the school. They find the school approachable and agree that it expects their children to work hard and to achieve their best. They approve of the academic progress made by their children and of their personal development whilst at the school. A few parents feel that they are not kept well informed about how their children are getting on. However, the inspection evidence found that the information given to parents is good. Just over one third of parents who responded to the questionnaire wanted a more interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection of this issue confirmed that the pupils have access to a rich range of activities, including competitive football, tag rugby, cricket and netball against other schools, as well as ballet, horse riding and numerous school trips throughout the year. A residential visit is also arranged. The school works hard to provide these activities and in many respects gives its pupils opportunities as good as, if not better than, those experienced by pupils in much larger primary schools.
- 37 The quality of information provided for parents is good. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are well presented and very informative. A regular flow of notes to parents keeps them informed of events and new developments. There are opportunities for parents to have informal communication with teachers at the beginning and end of the school day. Parents are also given useful information about the topics to be taught each term to their children. The annual reports on pupils' progress are good and provide, especially at the infant stage, useful information on what pupils should do to improve. The school works effectively with the parents of children with special educational needs and keeps them well informed of their progress. Some attempts have been made to have meetings with parents to discuss aspects of the curriculum and other matters, but they have not been well attended. Meetings with parents to discuss the national literacy and numeracy strategies have still to be arranged.
- 38 Parents' contributions to the work of the school and to their children's learning at home are both satisfactory. Parents are very willing to support events in which their children are involved. A few parents provide regular assistance in the classroom – for example, they provide regular baking sessions for pupils of all ages, on a rolling programme. The school's Support Group is very active and enjoys some enthusiastic help from parents. Each year it raises a substantial fund of money for the school. The home-school agreement and a homework policy have been introduced recently and both provide a

useful basis for further work to increase the contribution of parents to their children's learning .

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 39 Under the very effective leadership provided by the headteacher, all other members of staff make powerful contributions to the school's very clear sense of purpose and therefore to the achievements of pupils. Governors play an active and supportive role. They are well informed about the school's many strengths and the areas of relative weakness, so that they are able to help considerably in shaping the overall direction of the school. The governing body meets all of its statutory duties. The school's aims are clearly set out, are widely shared by the school and community and set the framework within which all decisions are taken and within which teaching and learning take place.
- 40 The headteacher systematically monitors the work of pupils and staff in English, mathematics and science. All staff keep themselves fully informed about the work of all classes and all subjects, with particular focus on the subjects that they co-ordinate. This work is generally undertaken informally but, nonetheless, all staff have a good basic understanding of work undertaken in all three classes. This allows all staff to offer mutually supportive help and advice on approaches to subjects being taught and to matters such as the identification and use of learning resources. This knowledge is at its least secure in regard to the teaching and learning of subjects other than literacy and numeracy, where there has been little systematic observation of classroom practice. The school's plans to extend the monitoring of teaching to other subjects are well thought through and timely.
- 41 School administration is unobtrusive and very effective, allowing the headteacher to concentrate fully on her leadership and management roles and all teachers to focus on teaching. Very skilled use of technology to support administration and financial management contributes substantially to the school's efficiency and to its very effective financial planning. The headteacher and governing body are skilled at identifying and attracting financial resources and they spend this money wisely, in ways that enhance pupils' learning. The school fully understands the principles of "best value" and takes great care to ensure that all purchases represent good quality at the best available cost. Documents published by the school have not only high quality content but are also usually very well presented.
- 42 A major issue for the school is the relationship between its relatively limited accommodation; its desire to have three classes rather than two in order to reduce the age range that has to be taught in any one class; and the number of pupils needed in order to generate enough income to provide teachers for three classes. Governors are fully aware of the tensions involved. Within the past few years they have overseen building work that has provided a third classroom and some much needed administrative accommodation. Imaginative use is made of facilities beyond the school so that the curriculum is enriched beyond that which the school's own building can provide. Teaching is frequently organised so that all available spaces are in use for teaching and learning purposes. For example, in one session, staff, parent helpers and pupils were using not only all three classrooms, but work was also taking place in the library and in the entrance lobby, and parents were baking with pupils in the school kitchen. In addition, a voluntary nursery, which feeds children into the school and so enhances numbers, was using the hall. The whole atmosphere was busy, quiet and purposeful. The school's creative approach is sensible, given all the circumstances, and the solutions found are proving to be effective. The headteacher and governing body are wise in their determination to continue to monitor closely this aspect of the school's ways of working. Learning resources are good in terms of both quality and quantity.

- 43 The school carefully sets targets for the performance of pupils and adults and has sound arrangements in place to support and monitor progress towards these.
- 44 In view of the good standards reached by pupils, the quality of the curriculum and teaching, the school is deemed to give good value for money.
- 45 Since the last inspection there have been several improvements in the school's leadership and management. Overall leadership was good and is now very good. Strategic planning is now better supported by the school improvement plan and finances are more secure because they are underpinned by long-term thinking. The value for money provided by the school has risen from sound to good. The high level of commitment to the school by all concerned, together with the good management systems that are in place, ensure that the school is well-placed to maintain, and even improve upon, its good practice.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 46 There are no major weaknesses for the school to address. The following less important weaknesses should be considered by governors for inclusion in an action plan:
- i) Make better use of time. In particular:
- shorten those literacy lessons that are over long, in order to allocate more time and give more emphasis to developing skills in other subjects – particularly information and communication technology;
 - improve the clarity of teachers' explanations so that they provide more challenge and make tasks clearer, in order that learning progresses at a faster pace.
- ii) Continue to encourage all parents to be more involved with the education of their children.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	14
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	43	43	14	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	69
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

The number of pupils on roll at the end of the key stages falls below the figure (ten) above which detailed results of national tests are published.

The test scores over a five-year period point to above average performance at the age of seven in reading, writing and mathematics; assessments made by teachers of pupils' attainment in science also indicate that attainment is above average. A similar analysis of the test scores of eleven-year-olds show that attainment is generally above average in English, mathematics and science.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	69
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.9
Average class size	23.0

Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	3.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	58

Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
	£
Total income	154813
Total expenditure	151936
Expenditure per pupil	2338
Balance brought forward from previous year	-1311
Balance carried forward to next year	1566

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	69
Number of questionnaires returned	38

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	37	3		
My child is making good progress in school.	53	45	3		
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	26	5		13
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	53	11		8
The teaching is good.	73	24			3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	53	26	3	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	39		5	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	45			3
The school works closely with parents.	21	55	13	5	5
The school is well led and managed.	61	29		5	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	37			5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	39	26	8	11

Other issues raised by parents

Parental comments both in writing and at a meeting with inspectors confirm that the great majority of parents strongly support the school and the ways in which it works with their children. A minority are not happy with the quality of communications between school and parents and with the range of activities that take place outside of lessons.

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

- 47 Children under the age of six achieve well in the infant and reception year class. Overall, children enter school slightly above average attainment in spoken and written communication, mathematical skills and personal and social development. By the time they are six, most children attain standards above the level expected of their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is the result of the improved quality of teaching and improvements in the accommodation and therefore provision for this age group.
- 48 Children's personal, social and emotional development is provided for well and they achieve well, learning to become more independent and socially confident. The children are enthusiastic and happy. Although on occasions they sometimes become almost too excited to listen properly, they want to be co-operative and they relate very positively to adults and to other children. The very good quality of the teacher's questioning develops children's social skills effectively and encourages them to use speech to convey information. When they are taught alongside older pupils, the nursery nurse works with the reception children so that if they begin to find some aspects difficult, she can help them to understand. This works well. Because the children work in close proximity to six and seven-year-olds they learn to imitate mature behaviour and so readily put on painting shirts or tidy away resources in ways that are mature for their age. The quality of teaching is very good, particularly the management of children. The children are given a measure of independence and responsibility for their own learning through planning and choosing a sensible range of activities each week; they respond to this well and their personal and social development benefit.
- 49 Children achieve well and exceed the standards expected of their age in communication, language and literacy. They clearly enjoy learning new words and are quite competitive with children in Year 1. Children found lots of words to rhyme with 'cat'. All could imitate the same sound and most offered words like 'mat', 'sat' and 'rat' rather than made up words. The quality of teaching is very good and the lively approach appeals to younger children. Almost all children can write simple words such as 'pig' unaided and know the names of letters as well as their sounds. About a third of children have difficulties representing the sound 'u' in 'cup' though they write the 'c' and 'p' correctly in neat, legible letters. Higher attaining children can write 'bred' for bread and manage plausible versions of 'toast', offering 'tost' and 'toz'. They contribute confidently to discussions and are well aware that print carries meaning and that books contain interesting stories. Higher attaining children begin to read simple words. Children work accurately and speedily and, because teachers time such activities so sensitively, children seem to learn almost without noticing they have done so.
- 50 Children attain above average standards in mathematics overall. All children attain at least average standards and about half exceed the level expected of their age. They develop an understanding of mathematical vocabulary and use language of position such as high or low at about expected levels. They learn to count accurately through reciting number rhymes. Alongside older pupils, they learn to count to 20 and back and begin to copy them when counting up and down in fives and tens. The quality of teaching is very good and suitably practical activities are planned to develop children's understanding. For example, they learn to define position, direction and movement through working out a route for Antonio the teddy using apparatus in a physical education

lesson. The teacher's planning provides very well for higher attaining children, introducing the concept of 'opposites', for example, to those who are ready.

- 51 Children have an above average knowledge and understanding of the world for their age. They use language related to this area of learning confidently; for example, imagining a varied landscape with a river, stepping-stones and a bridge over a stream. They notice that 'the sky meets the ground' and when painting want to 'put frost on the grass'. Children know the sequence of days, months and seasons, which they chant with relish. They have an awareness of different countries and begin to understand that climate and the time of year can be different, remarking that 'it's not winter in New Zealand'. Teachers teach this aspect very well, broadening discussions to include all children and providing activities for them so that they discover for themselves more about their world. For example, children carefully fill containers with water and strenuously pump water from one container to another pretending that 'water runs down into the little stream'. Children notice the different materials used to construct buildings and expand their vocabulary as their knowledge increases.
- 52 Children's physical development is above expected standards. They move around confidently and with care and skill. They have good awareness of where their partners and equipment are in physical education lessons. They enjoy moving round and have good control of their limbs, often bouncing up and down with pleasure and excitement. Children use scissors with some dexterity, for example, carefully cutting round the outline of 'Teddy'. Some higher attainers are so successful that they go on to design their own simple puppet based on 'Teddy', carefully cutting holes for fingers to poke through, explaining, for example, that 'they can be the ears or the feet' depending on the animal. An average attaining child acted out a play on his own with a finger puppet on each hand, making them talk to each other. The quality of teaching is good and the nursery nurse offers very good support. Children organise themselves well, for example, setting up tapes for themselves on the listening centre.
- 53 Children's creative development is above average and they listen and watch others intently. They understand how to make a collage and tear strips of different coloured tissue paper to create a landscape. All but the higher attainers find it quite hard to tear long strips. Most are able to select colours in related shades, which they lay on carefully pasted strips to form a 'seascape', carefully distinguishing between sky, sea and sand. They concentrate very well and, when asked why they have chosen to place different colours side-by-side, say that 'the sea is not just blue'. One child invented the term 'nightscape' because 'then you could do stars.' Children work very well together and are relaxed and chatty. The quality of teaching is very good for it is sensitive and discreet. Teachers know when to direct and when to let children discover for themselves. Towards the end of the afternoon, when they begin to tire, children change activities quite frequently but always with the sense of purpose.

ENGLISH

- 54 By the time pupils are 11, their attainment is above the national average in reading, writing, speaking and listening. This is an improvement on the results in the national tests for English in the year 2000 in which pupils' attainment was below average. Because of the very small size of year groups, results for a particular year are not a reliable indicator of general levels of attainment. Inspection evidence confirms the above average performance as seen in tests over the past five years. The attainment of seven-year-olds is also above the national average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. The national tests in 2000 showed reading standards to be close to the national average and standards in writing to be high. Inspection evidence confirms pupils' performance over time as being above average. The trend in the school's results is similar to the national trend. Although the results of the most recent tests seem to

suggest that girls outperform boys, there was no evidence to support this in the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in their individual learning plans.

- 55 Pupils' attainment has improved since the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line with national averages at the ages of seven and 11. Almost all pupils attain at least average standards and many attain more highly. The school apportions a generous amount of time to teaching English and takes pains to develop the use of literacy through other subjects such as history. The national literacy strategy has been successfully adapted to suit teaching mixed age classes, incorporating the school's strategies for teaching reading and writing through sound and word recognition. Because of the relatively small classes, teachers regularly hear younger pupils read individually. In all classes, little time is spent on shared reading sessions in small groups. Opportunities are therefore missed to refine higher attaining pupils' ability to deduce information and to benefit from the stimulus of using text to support their points of view. The time allocated to literacy means that pupils can have extended time for writing should it be required. Occasionally, however, particularly in the junior classes, work can expand to fit the time available and then lessons lose a little pace and their sense of urgency.
- 56 Standards in speaking and listening are above average for seven and eleven-year-olds. Attentive listening, both to the teacher and other pupils, is consistently promoted so that pupils, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, have the confidence to express their ideas. Younger pupils are encouraged to answer questions and to comment, for example, on the illustrations and the story. In one lesson, pupils observed, 'The words seem to climb the tree', like the girl who '...looks as though she's struggling'. Older pupils volunteer suggestions, commenting on an eye-catching illustration on the front of a book, for example, that 'it could contain a series of newspaper reports' and suggesting that 'the material may well be chronological.' Teachers encourage pupils to discuss ideas together and present a shared view. This develops their confidence and encourages them to be articulate as well as to listen carefully to each other.
- 57 Pupils' reading is above average at both seven and 11. Infant pupils enjoy reading and talk with enthusiasm about books. They like to select the next reading book and a lower attaining pupil easily found the most interesting part of the book to read out loud. Higher attaining pupils read very fluently and with expression, varying the quality and tone of voice for reading captions. All pupils tackle new words with confidence and lower attaining pupils have a range of strategies to enable them to read words like 'famous' successfully. The older pupils read very well, describing how they skim read for information. They have distinct preferences for certain authors and read these expressively. A higher attaining pupil read an extract from a Horrible History book with relish, with a slightly sardonic tone well suited to the nature of the humorous introduction. The standard of most pupils' reading is at least at the level expected of their age. They begin to distinguish between the different ways in which modern and older books are written. Older pupils keep their own reading journals and some of their comments are quite detailed and perceptive. Higher attaining pupils, for example, select salient points such as 'normally written in the first person' or 'makes the reader feel part of the story' as critical commentary on an author's effectiveness.
- 58 Pupils' writing is above average by the ages of seven and 11. Younger pupils write neatly and clearly. They understand how to make new words by adding different endings and both higher and lower attaining pupils understand equally well how to use the past and present tense in their writing. The higher attaining pupils use a range of punctuation, including speech marks, correctly and they vary the structure of sentences. The teacher encourages different ways of writing, for example, writing postcards or retelling a well-known tale. The quality of older juniors' writing is very good and some of their creative

writing is well above average. Higher attaining pupils enjoy playing with words and begin to write very effectively, using complex sentences as in, 'Down by the bay the ships tethered to their green anchors waited patiently for their captains to return once more.' Average attaining pupils use short sentences effectively to increase suspense. Some of the pupils' poetry is very good and some lines are most thoughtful as in this personification of the sun, 'I am as old as life itself'. When working together, pupils are able to write cogently their differing points of view, assembling logical arguments for and against the building of a dam in India.

- 59 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall; the teaching of writing is very good. The very good quality of teaching in the infant class enables pupils to read and to write independently and with confidence. Pupils learn to understand technical terms such as synopsis and explain to others that 'it tells a little bit about the story.' The teacher brings the text alive by exciting children's visual awareness so that pupils work out through looking at the words and pictures that the story comes from Africa. Through encouraging discussion, the teacher skilfully helps pupils to deduce the meaning of foreign words and the pupils are delighted to find a new word, for instance, for magpie. This combination of fun and a sense of purpose mean that pupils concentrate well and learn almost without realising it. Throughout the school, lessons are thoroughly planned and well suited to the different age groups in the class. This leads to very good learning and above average standards for many pupils. Teachers are well organised and resources are used unobtrusively to facilitate pupils' understanding. Older juniors prolong a discussion about words with the prefix 'ex' because they are genuinely interested to apply its meaning to a word such as 'exquisite' which they delightedly declared to mean 'beyond good.' The teaching aims high and often draws in other subjects to develop pupils' skills in literacy. Through methodical explanation, using examples from pupils' work in design and technology, the teacher clarified pupils' understanding of the differences between texts that explain, report or seek to persuade. Then using geographical or scientific reference books, pupils quickly assembled short pieces of factual pieces of writing, on subjects which interested them choosing topics as diverse as 'What happens inside car engines' to 'How are clouds formed?'
- 60 Pupils clearly enjoy their English lessons and respond with increasing enthusiasm to their teachers' lively approach. The good choice of resources and the positive atmosphere encourage pupils of all levels of attainment to learn and to feel successful. The teachers match the level of questions well to the different age range within the class and draw boys and girls equally well into discussion.

MATHEMATICS

- 61 No reliable analysis can be made of the school's results in national tests in any one year, as the numbers of pupils in each year group are low. However, an analysis of results over the past five years shows that at the ages of both seven and eleven, pupils reach higher than average standards in mathematics. Boys and girls reach similarly high standards at the age of seven but, at the age of eleven, girls outperform boys. These results support the inspection judgement that attainment is above average at the ages of both seven and eleven. However, there was no recognisable difference between the attainment of boys and girls in any of the three current classes. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the ambitious targets set for them.
- 62 Targets are set for the achievement both of individuals and of year groups. These are demanding, in the sense that they require a high level of commitment from teachers and pupils if they are to be met, and realistic, in the sense that they take into account the earlier attainment of pupils.

- 63 At the age of seven, many pupils handle number confidently. Five-year-olds know what is one less (or more) than 5, 6, 7 and 8; pupils a year older successfully add and subtract using numbers between ten and twenty, often doing so mentally. This represents good progress. Higher attainers speedily solve questions such as 20 divided by () = 5. Seven-year-olds recognise shapes that are symmetrical and know where the lines of symmetry run. Most pupils know the names and key characteristics of shapes such as pentagons, hexagons and octagons and higher attainers can quickly work out the numbers of faces, edges and corners of simple three-dimensional shapes. Work involving weights and measures is generally at an above average level. Whilst some lower attaining pupils struggle to remember which way round to write, for example, 7 and 9, it does not affect their ability to work with reasonable accuracy.
- 64 By the age of eleven, most pupils handle number very well. For example, ten and eleven-year-olds worked with exceptional speed and accuracy to 'make' 327 by adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing 2, 4, 8, 9, 10 and 50. Their work was not only quick and accurate but also neat (helping to prevent errors) and inventive (higher attaining pupils identified solutions that no adult present had spotted!). Most pupils have a good knowledge of units of measurement and understand that imperial and metric units exist and that there is a trend to make more use of the metric system. They join in with gusto when asked to list different units and the most knowledgeable offer units such as 'milli-seconds' and 'light-years'. The attainment of eleven-year-olds is high across a broad range of mathematical topics. They use mathematical co-ordinates accurately and can relate these skills to similar work in geography. Higher attaining pupils understand and use ratio. Most pupils work accurately with graphs, fractions, and money. They tackle long multiplication such as 58 x 44, both neatly and accurately. When working in geometry terms such as 'acute', 'obtuse' and 'right angle' are used fluently and accurately.
- 65 The good rate at which pupils make progress and the high standards that they reach are often linked to the sense of excitement engendered by teachers and the very positive attitudes of all pupils. Pupils move from whole-class to group work without wasting any time and settle to the new tasks with considerable maturity. The behaviour in all classes is excellent; pupils go out of their way to be friendly and helpful to others.
- 66 Teaching is good in the junior classes and very good in the infants. Basic skills are especially well taught and the very good relationships between adults and pupils make a significant contribution to pupils' work rates and levels of achievement. Pupils respond to their teachers warmly and with very high levels of interest and concentration. Throughout the school, but especially in the infant class, work is matched very precisely to individuals' needs and levels of skill and this has a powerful impact on the progress that pupils make. On a few occasions the pace of learning is allowed to slow, sometimes because teachers' explanations are not clear enough or because opportunities are not taken to use precise mathematical language or techniques.
- 67 The sensible adaptations that the school has made to the national numeracy strategy allow it to meet well the needs of pupils in the mixed age group classes, thus enhancing the progress that they make. Good resources also make a substantial contribution to progress – although on the very few occasions when they do not work properly, progress is affected.
- 68 Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment at the age of eleven has become more securely above average, largely because teaching has improved and there is more thoughtful use of published materials to support learning. The school is placed well to consolidate its current good practice.

SCIENCE

- 69 Standards are above average by the ages of seven and 11, confirming pupils' performance in national tests over the past five years. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line with the level expected of eleven-year-olds. Standards have improved because of the greater emphasis on practical and investigative work.
- 70 The quality of teaching and learning are good overall and some very good teaching of older juniors was seen. Pupils clearly find science very interesting and consequently they achieve well. Younger pupils' observations of the changes that occur when materials such as liquid egg is heated are both spontaneous and exact: 'It went like pancake but it was not.' Higher attaining seven-year-old pupils' drawings of plants are very precise. Whilst lower attaining pupils' scientific explanations are more dependent on pictures than continuous prose, these pupils nonetheless achieve expected standards for their age. Eleven-year-old pupils use technical vocabulary accurately to make concise observations when proving, for example, that air has weight. Tables of results indicate methodical recording and precise timing to find the best conditions for drying fabric. They understand the movement of the planets and draw the position of the sun at different times of day in relation to the moon.
- 71 Teachers teach to precise learning objectives and pupils are clearly used to working together in groups. They behave very maturely, copying their teachers' systematic methods. In a very good lesson, the teacher taught very effectively the principles of hypothesis, testing and analysis of results. Pupils quickly worked out four different hypotheses as to how to dissolve sugar quickly, involving water temperature, quantity of water, the amount of stirring and the size of the 'sugar particles'. Their behaviour was exemplary as they decided how to make the test fair, carried out the test with minimum fuss and kept a careful record of their results. Higher attaining pupils were quick to spot a rogue result and understood very well how it was important to look at the overall trend.
- 72 Pupils record their work in a number of different ways, ranging from completing worksheets to writing up experiments in a given format. This encourages concise answers to questions such as 'What happens?' and 'Why?' Quite a lot of pre-written material is used and, although overall there is a balance between this and investigative science, higher attaining pupils could use their own methods of recording to encourage more individual thinking. Assessment is used well to check what pupils have understood and to set targets for development.

ART AND DESIGN

- 73 Standards in art and design are above average by the age of 11. Seven-year-old pupils reach very high standards in art because of the high quality of teaching they receive. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve very well and good quality work is produced in all classes in painting, drawing and fabric work.
- 74 The standard of art is better overall in the infant class than in the juniors (in which, nonetheless, it is good) because of the teacher's very good subject knowledge and creative approach, in which aspects of art and design are fused with other subjects. This gives additional time to the subject and sharpens pupils' visual awareness as well as their language as they discuss animatedly what they see or what they hope to achieve. For example, when looking at landscapes by Van Gogh, very young pupils declared they wished to make 'a seascape' rather than 'a landscape'. Pupils in Year 1 decided Lowry's paintings were 'cityscapes'. The teacher used older pupils' work very well to show younger pupils what might be achieved. Very different but related tasks are planned for each age. Pupils in Year 1 work with watercolour pencils to produce very

detailed drawings before adding water to soften the effect. Their drawing is accurate and highly competent for this age group. Pupils in Year 2 talk quite authoritatively about the technique they are using, explaining how to paint clouds by 'mixing the sky in the palate' and then 'use light dabs to apply it'. Teachers help pupils to be successful by choosing resources very carefully, such as thick cardboard so the painting doesn't curl when thickened paint is applied.

- 75 Standards are above average by the age of 11, though coverage of the different aspects of art and design is somewhat thinner. Nonetheless, the work is of a good quality and pupils are encouraged to work systematically and to learn through the process of production. Displays of pupils' collections of different textiles, for example, are used as a bank of ideas for collage and link well to work in science. Visiting artists develop pupils' skills in using clay as shown by delicately moulded clay heads, astonishingly lifelike, which look down from the art corner as pupils work.
- 76 The displays throughout the school attest to the importance the school gives to art and to its resourceful use of everyday materials to create impressive, large-scale works of art. For instance, painted folded sandpaper creates wonderfully textured pyramids behind which a sun, formed from tissue paper, radiates heat in subtly lighter shades. The school hall is dominated by a large batik hanging, illustrating 'The fish of the seas and the birds of the air' made from individual silk squares, stitched and painted by pupils. It is astonishingly good, full of life and colour. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used well to develop other aspects of art. Pupils learn very well from their teacher's infectious enthusiasm, excited to discover the creative possibilities of new technology to create pictures, for example, in the style of Mondrian.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 77 By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment in design and technology is at the level expected for eleven-year-olds, thus maintaining the standards seen at the last inspection. Only one lesson was seen and, as there were so few pupils present, it was not possible to judge the quality of teaching. There were many examples of pupils' work, however, in school, and from these, and discussions with pupils in Year 6 and Year 2, it is possible to gauge pupils' response and their attainment.
- 78 Pupils are very enthusiastic about design and technology. The work is carefully planned in the infant class for different year groups to suit their level of dexterity. Pupils in Year 1, for example, carefully coloured and then cut out pre-drawn Humpty Dumpties. They delighted in fixing on jointed limbs using paper fasteners and explaining as they did so how they worked. Pupils in Year 2 took great pains when making a mask, explaining how they bent a coat hanger to form the circular frame over which they stretched fabric. A higher attaining pupil explained how he had to 'secure the fabric with an elastic band to form the clothes', whilst an average attaining pupil spent quite some time working out how to secure the veil on her 'Princess Puppet'. The range of resources is good and gives free rein to pupils to use their imagination. More emphasis is placed on making rather than designing. Planning the design is oral rather than written so that, when pupils evaluate their work, they have to draw and label their finished product as well as indicate how the completed puppet could be improved upon next time.
- 79 The entrance to the school is impressively flanked by a large, carefully made, papier-mâché Egyptian mummy with gleaming gold and blue mosaic squares. Inside the hall, a green spiky monster made by younger juniors clearly demonstrates why pupils say 'Design and technology is really fun.' Pupils in Year 6 have a very clear sense of the processes involved in designing and making and use their current work, designing a buggy, to illustrate the importance of drawing an annotated diagram to show what materials to use and how to join them together.

- 80 Pupils clearly have high levels of motivation and it is equally clear that teachers have good knowledge of the subject. It is likely that pupils' average attainment overall is due to the small amount of time devoted to the subject so pupils have comparatively few opportunities to practise and develop their skills to a higher standard.

GEOGRAPHY

- 81 Only a little geography teaching was seen during the inspection, so that judgements are based largely on examinations of pupils' work, discussions with them and an examination of teachers' plans and records. At the ages of both seven and eleven, pupils reach standards that are close to average. Attainment has been helped by the imaginative use of localities and events beyond the classroom but prevented from being better by the relatively low level of recent attention to the subject whilst the provisions for teaching literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology were being reviewed and improved.
- 82 At the age of seven, pupils have a sound understanding of some major features of places, especially in their own locality, and can discuss a good number of these in general terms. For example, almost all pupils know and use accurately a good vocabulary when studying settlements along rivers. They use naturally and confidently terms such as 'mountain', 'stream', 'bridge', and 'village' and they can relate these more distant places. They offer sensible reasons for why some settlements have grown to be towns and cities and others have remained villages. They know that it is important to protect the environment; higher attainers speak very sensibly about how to look after their own school and village. Between the ages of seven and eleven, pupils progress soundly in all aspects of their work in geography. The attainment of many pupils has benefited from work on New Zealand that has been well-resourced and made very interesting by contact with pupils who have attended the school, are currently spending several months in New Zealand and who are to return soon to the area and the school. Contact has included the use of email, so that attainment in information and communication technology has also been enhanced, as have pupils' personal, social and emotional development stemming from the continuing connection. Almost all eleven-year-olds have a well developed vocabulary with which to discuss the subject. They know that 'the meridian' passes through Greenwich, which is close to London. They can explain the use of the terms 'northern/southern/western and eastern hemispheres'. They are less certain about the names of the continents and many pupils confuse these with countries. Many pupils make good use of the index and tables of contents in reference books, including atlases, and higher attaining pupils use accurately simple co-ordinates in order to locate places on a map.
- 83 Since the last inspection, the overall provision for geography has been maintained at a satisfactory level, whilst major reviews have been undertaken of other subjects. The school's plans to review the provision for the remaining subjects, including geography, are well-timed and rightly include not only a review of the subject content but also how to improve its currently informal methods of monitoring teaching, learning and standards. Its very effective systems for improving its provision put it in a good position to make these further improvements

HISTORY

- 84 It was only possible to observe one lesson of history during the inspection. Judgements draw on examinations of pupils' work, conversations with them, analyses of work done and a scrutiny of teachers' plans and records as well as the one lesson.

- 85 At the ages of both seven and eleven, pupils reach sound standards overall. Some work (for example, that which drew on an educational visit paid by older pupils to York) is of a good standard but other aspects of the subject are not covered in sufficient depth for overall standards to be better than average. Pupils speak of the subject with considerable enjoyment and are proud of the work they have done and of the praise that they receive for their very good behaviour when away from school. This very good behaviour was also seen in the lesson observed.
- 86 By the age of seven, most pupils have a sound sense of time and can recognise objects such as toys and clothing that their parents or grandparents might have played with or worn. They learn especially well when past events are made real for them, as, for example, when a member of staff shared with them her memories of life during the Second World War. Pupils benefit from the well-planned links that are made with other subjects and on these occasions they make good progress in all the subjects concerned. Accounts written in their own words benefit attainment in English as well as in history; placing the times of Jesus in the context of Ancient Rome consolidates pupils' understanding in religious education as well as in history. Similarly effective links improve attainment in the junior years. For example, good standards were reached when pupils studied York in Roman and Viking times, partly because map work in geography helped pupils to see how the city had developed between then and now. Many pupils reached good standards in the work on Vikings as they produced 'newspaper' articles that explored and deepened what they were learning.
- 87 The imaginative provision for many aspects of the subject ensures that attainment in history has remained satisfactory during a time when much of the school's attention was fixed on making improvements to provision and attainment in other subjects - notably literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. However, coverage of the subject is patchy and any monitoring of teaching and learning has been informal and unsystematic. The school's plans to extend the good practice in the monitoring of literacy and numeracy to other subjects, including history, are timely.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 88 It was not possible to see any teaching of information and communication technology during the inspection. Judgements on pupils' attainment and their attitudes are based on an examination of work that they had done and on conversations with them. No judgements can be made on teaching, although the curriculum taught is sound, as is teachers' planning.
- 89 Eleven-year-olds reach standards that are in line with the national expectation. Seven-year-olds reach standards that are generally in line with the national expectation, although in some aspects, notably word-processing, they achieve higher than this. At the time of the last inspection, standards were roughly average although aspects of provision were in need of improvement. These improvements were given a substantial boost in 2000 when additional computers were provided and an area of the school was designated for their use. Staff expertise has improved because of a well-planned programme of training and this is having a growing impact on the standards reached by pupils. The higher standards that are being reached by younger pupils are largely due to their having had the benefit of the improved provision for a larger proportion of their time in school than have older pupils - who are still feeling the effects of the earlier limited numbers of computers and the teachers' lower levels of confidence and expertise. The school's recent vigorous programme of improvements and the enthusiasm of pupils and staff puts the school in a good position to continue to improve. In order to fully realise pupils' potential there is a need to make the teaching of the subject more systematic.

- 90 By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of computers and understand the uses of their main parts. They know the names of, and can use accurately, the mouse, the keyboard and floppy discs. For example, they use a drawing programme and the mouse to draw pictures of houses. They use the keyboard in order to word process and many pupils are adept at this. The higher attaining pupils can use the menu, choose fonts and print out their work. Almost all pupils realise that computers have an important part to play around the home and in the community, as, for example, in burglar alarms and shop tills. Most eleven-year-olds use computers for activities such as making posters that are often of good quality, word processing at a satisfactory level and using a digital camera with reasonable confidence. Work on data processing and on controlling, for example, a floor robot, are at a generally satisfactory level. At all ages, pupils with special educational needs are well supported and so make good progress.
- 91 Pupils of all ages and levels of attainment are enthusiastic about their work in the subject and talk intelligently about what they have done and how it is becoming both harder and more interesting as they use the newer resources. They work responsibly and, for example, keep careful records on individual computer record sheets of the work they have covered.

MUSIC

- 92 It is not possible to make a judgement on standards or teaching since no lessons were observed. From talking to pupils and from watching a video of the millennium workshop based on The Creation it is plain that pupils have a good response to music and perform well. Their singing, including that of the youngest pupils, is tuneful and rhythmic and the words are very clear.
- 93 Pupils are taught by a specialist music teacher who comes into school every Friday. They have opportunities to listen to music before assembly. Year 6 pupils explained how they are asked to describe the music by composers such as Debussy and Holst. They sing each week and higher attaining pupils explained how to sing a two-part round. Because of the restrictions of time, pupils cover each aspect of music rather thinly and have little experience of different forms of composition. Pupils talk animatedly about music though they have little knowledge of musical terms. Junior pupils learn to play the recorder and play in assemblies. Higher attainers play tenor and treble recorders as well as descant.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 94 Pupils reach standards that are in line with the national expectation at the ages of both seven and eleven. In order to do this, the school has to overcome a number of difficulties caused by its rather cramped premises; it does this successfully and with a good deal of determination and imagination.
- 95 During the infant stage, pupils develop a proper range of skills involving gymnastics, games and dance. Their attitudes to adults and other pupils is very good and they behave very well. In gymnastics, seven-year-olds move safely around the floor at high and low levels, and are aware of themselves and others whilst doing so. They move imaginatively to music, jumping, turning and gesturing in ways that reflect the feelings engendered by the music. They create and perform dances very well. For example, their contribution to a recent presentation, 'The Creation', was at a very high level, that belied their years. Much of the success of this work stemmed from very good choices of themes and music by adults, followed by teaching that got the best from pupils and then well-focused practice that resulted in pupils developing very good co-ordination and control. Pupils at all levels of attainment contributed well and the contribution of the

higher attainers was very moving. Pupils much enjoy games, and their skills are around the level expected of seven-year-olds.

- 96 Eleven-year-olds reach overall average standards, although in some aspects of the subject standards are good. In dance, pupils create, practice and perform in response to a range of stimuli. When these experiences are refined, practised and improved, as in the performance of 'The Creation', attainment is high not merely technically but also artistically. As with pupils in the infant class, some of the dance sequences understandably moved parents at the performance to tears. In common with much of the school's work in physical education, the high standards reached were a triumph over the school's limited facilities. Attainment in games is at a generally average level, although a small proportion of pupils control a ball very skilfully when catching, throwing, kicking and stopping. Tactics are developed to a sound level alongside other skills; pupils speak with wry amusement about the way that they are taught tactics when it is too wet to use the field for games - but they recognise that it works for them and improves their performances. The creative use of facilities beyond the school ensures that the provision for gymnastics, swimming and athletics are such that good standards are reached in swimming and sound standards in the other aspects.
- 97 Behaviour is very good and pupils appreciate the lengths to which the school goes in order to provide them with experiences that the school premises do not offer. These include ten week intensive swimming sessions several miles away; about one-half of the current eleven-year-olds can swim 800 metres or more. Sixteen to eighteen-year-olds at a college some miles away, working alongside the school's own staff, help to develop the gymnastic skills of juniors. Athletics provision is enhanced by the use of a track within walking distance of the school. Pupils respond very well to the experience of orienteering as part of annual educational visits that include work in a number of other subjects.
- 98 The provision for the physical education and the standards reached by pupils have remained satisfactory since the last inspection. It is difficult to improve standards further within the constraints of the premises, but the school is well placed to maintain both standards and provision at its present sound level.