

INSPECTION REPORT

FISHERGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

York

LEA area: City of York Council

Unique reference number: 121277

Headteacher: Mrs A Johnson

Reporting inspector: Mr M J Mayhew
22197

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th June 2002

Inspection number: 195149

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Fishergate York
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Duncan
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22197	Mr M J Mayhew	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage; English as an additional language; music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19741	Mr T Smith	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?
27679	Mrs S Twaits	Team inspector	Equal opportunities; mathematics; art and design; design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14842	Mrs S Cook	Team inspector	Science; information and communication technology; geography; physical education	
2893	Mr J Manning	Team inspector	Special educational needs; English; history; religious education	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Fishergate Primary School is housed in a large and pleasant Victorian building, situated to the east of York city centre. With 217 boys and girls on roll in the main school, it is about the same size as most other primary schools. Most pupils live close to the school, and come from a broadly average, but ethnically diverse socio-economic background. Nearly thirteen per cent of pupils (27) are known to be eligible for free school meals, a proportion that broadly matches the national average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils on the school's register for special educational needs, at 22 per cent, is also about average. None of the current pupils have been assigned statements of special educational need. Thirteen pupils speak English as an additional language, including four who are at an early stage of English acquisition, and the school has on roll five pupils from travelling families. There is a comparatively high rate of pupil mobility into and out of the school mainly as a result of parents' employment arrangements. Children's attainment on entry to the school covers a wide range, but is average overall. Nevertheless, most children's attainment in personal, social and emotional development is above that which is normally expected of their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides its pupils with a good standard of education. Standards achieved by pupils at age 11 are in line with the national average for English and mathematics and above them in science. There is some improvement in writing at the end of Key Stage 2, but standards overall in writing are still not where they should be. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. The quality of education is good overall. It includes good quality teaching and a curriculum that supports well the school's educational and pastoral aims. The school is well led and managed. It has made good progress in dealing with the issues raised at the previous inspection, and has maintained most of the strengths previously identified. When account is taken of all these factors, and the above average costs per pupil for a school of this size, the school gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in science are above national expectations.
- The school is well led and managed.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning, which help them to make good progress. They relate very well to each other and to the adults in the school.
- The school provides well for pupils' personal development.
- All pupils are fully included in the learning opportunities and other activities that the school provides.
- Pupils are well cared for. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' progress.
- There is an effective partnership with parents and the local community.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 are not as high as they could be.
- The organisation of the teaching and timetabling of some of the non-core subjects, in order to develop those skills and knowledge that are found across the subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since that time there has been a slight overall improvement in the results that pupils have achieved in national tests. The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall in 1997, but ten per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. This is not now the case because there is a higher proportion of good and very good teaching, and there is hardly any unsatisfactory teaching. The governors and staff have dealt with all the issues raised at the previous inspection, and the quality of the assessment systems is now very good. There is better provision for pupils' spiritual development, and pupils' behaviour has improved. The school's partnership with parents is good, and the school is led and managed well. Overall, this represents a good level of improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table shows that, over the past three years, the school's results have been stable in science, average or above average in English, and varied between below and above average in mathematics. Scores are similar when compared with all schools nationally. The trend in results has been slightly upwards over the past four years, but not as good as the national trend. This is despite the proportion of pupils reaching the higher than expected Level 5 in each of the subjects matching the national proportions. Inspection findings show that current Year 6 pupils attain nationally expected levels of attainment in English and mathematics, and above these levels in science. Standards in reading are as expected, and standards in speaking and listening are above expected levels. However, too few pupils reach expected levels in writing. Accountable reasons for this include a high proportion of pupils in Year 6 who have special educational needs with regard to literacy, and the comparatively high rate of pupil mobility into and out of the school. There is no doubt that pupils' levels of prior attainment vary from year to year. The school's overall results at the end of Year 6 are set to rise in coming years. This is because the school has set in motion a number of effective strategies designed to raise standards, and because there is a high proportion of higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 than there are in Years 5 and 6.

Test results for pupils aged seven have also varied year-on-year, but were well above average in 2001 in writing and mathematics, and above average in reading. Inspection findings show that current Year 2 pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

The school has set itself some challenging targets, both for the current year and for future years. It is unlikely to meet the current year's targets, but the achievement of the targets for the future looks more promising.

Children in the Early Years Unit, which includes Nursery and the Reception aged children, learn at a satisfactory rate. Some learn at a good rate in some areas of learning, particularly the mathematical. By the time they enter Year 1, in Key Stage 1, most children currently in the Reception year are likely to achieve all the early learning goals. Their personal, social and emotional development is of a particularly high standard.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards meeting the targets set in their individual education plans, and those with English as an additional language make equally good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils are attentive in their lessons and enjoy their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils are well mannered and respectful of one another. They respond well to the strategies used to promote good behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils relate very well to each other, and to adults, who provide very good role models at all times. Pupils use their initiative well, and most have a mature sense of responsibility for their actions.
Attendance	Satisfactory; there is very little unauthorised absence. Most pupils enjoy coming to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage in the Early Years Unit is good. The teacher and her staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and apply it well.

The quality of teaching in the rest of the school is better overall than that noted at the previous inspection. There are considerable strengths in the teaching, some of which are common to lessons across the school. Most teachers manage their pupils well at all times, and relationships between teachers and pupils are good, so engendering a good working atmosphere with very little misbehaviour. Additionally, teachers have good knowledge across most subjects and plan their lessons well. It is in lessons that comprise all these elements that there is the greatest impact on pupils' learning. Whilst there is very little unsatisfactory teaching, there are aspects of some lessons that need improvement to ensure that all pupils are consistently challenged to make best progress. For example, not all teachers in Key Stage 1 consistently apply the school's good assertive behaviour policy and, on these occasions, little learning takes place. Nevertheless, literacy and numeracy lessons are well embedded in the school, and most are effective in taking pupils' learning forward.

It is a strength of the school that all pupils are fully included in what it has to offer. The quality of teaching reflects this strength because teachers, and their teaching assistants, try to ensure that each pupil receives equal and appropriate attention, and the work given usually matches each pupils' prior level of attainment.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a wide range of learning opportunities contained within a curriculum that is balanced over the long term. However, there are missed opportunities for developing pupils' knowledge and skills in some of the non-core subjects. The very good range of extra-curricular activities enhances well pupils' learning. The school ensures that all pupils are fully included in the learning opportunities provided.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; all statutory requirements are fulfilled. The school gives these pupils a good level of attention, with the result that they make good progress towards their clear targets as set out in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; these pupils settle quickly into school routines. Most achieve standards comparable with those of their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is good provision for each of the aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They respond well to the guidance given to them and the opportunities for them to learn.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a good level of care given to pupils. Staff have a very good knowledge of how well pupils are doing because they consistently apply the very good assessment systems.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Parents have positive views of the school, and most hold the school in high esteem. There is good information available to parents, including ready access to information about the work being covered in most classrooms and the progress that their children make.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads and manages the school well. She works closely with her staff, including the deputy headteacher, who supports well the priorities and strategies for improvement. Recently implemented changes to the management structure are beginning to have an impact on further improving the school's effectiveness.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors meet their responsibilities with enthusiasm and considerable competence, and work closely with the headteacher and staff to promote school development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school improvement plan is a detailed, strategic document that defines the actions necessary to achieve higher standards. Pupils' performance in tests is analysed and used to track their progress over time. The management of the school has begun to evaluate the effectiveness of its strategies, and sets challenging targets.
The strategic use of resources	The resources available are used well, especially to secure a beneficial adult:pupil ratio across the school. The headteacher and governors manage the school's finances prudently. The governors are aware of and beginning to apply the principles of best value.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources.	There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the pupils and the curriculum, with a beneficial ratio of staff to pupils. The accommodation is well suited to its purpose. There is a good range of learning resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>90+ per cent of parents feel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their children like school and make good progress • the teaching is good • the school expects their children to work hard and to do their best • the school helps their children to become mature and responsible 	<p>10 - 20 per cent of parents would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved behaviour • a better balance of homework • more information about how their children are doing, particularly for children in the Early Years Unit • a closer relationship with the school • improved quality of leadership and management

Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. The quality of teaching is good overall, with some significant strengths. Inspectors disagree with most of the negative views expressed by a few parents. They judge that pupils' behaviour is good, and that the school provides parents with a good level of information about their children's progress. Inspectors also judge that the school is led and managed well. However, inspectors agree that there is some inconsistency in the giving of homework in Key Stage 2.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Children enter the Reception year, in the Early Years Unit, with levels of attainment overall in line with what is expected for their age. However, most are above what is normally expected in their personal, social and emotional development, and in their attainment in speaking. They make satisfactory and sometimes good progress across the Foundation Stage of learning. By the time that they reach the end of the Reception year, most children meet the early learning goals in all areas of learning, and some are capable of working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics.
- 2 The table below shows attainment in English, mathematics and science in the rest of the school:

	National tests 2001 Pupils aged 7	Inspection judgements Pupils aged 7	National tests 2001 Pupils aged 11	Inspection judgements Pupils aged 11
English	Reading Above average	Reading Average	Average	Reading Average
	Writing Well above average	Writing Average		Writing Below average
Mathematics	Well above average	Average	Below average	Average
Science	Teacher assessment Above average	Above average	Average	Above average

- 3 Compared with similar schools, on the basis of the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2001 was well above average in reading, writing, and mathematics. Attainment by Year 6 pupils was average in English and science, and below average in Mathematics.
- 4 Statutory assessment results for Year 6 pupils have varied widely over the past four years since the previous inspection. Although the trend has been gradually upward, it has not matched the national trend. This is because there has been considerable mobility of pupils into and out of Key Stage 2, and fluctuations in each year group in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Consequently, although pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress over their time in the school, not enough reach, or exceed, the nationally expected levels of attainment by the time they reach the end of Year 6 to raise the school's average results to consistently high levels. Additionally, there has been a period of numerous teacher changes in Key Stage 2 over recent years, and this has had an unsettling effect on the standards attained, not least in mathematics, where there was a drop last year following two years of rising standards. Nevertheless, it is to the school's credit that it has virtually maintained at nationally average levels, or above, the proportion of pupils who attain the above-expected Level 5 in each of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

- 5 Inspection evidence shows that, overall, standards in the core subjects at the end of Key Stage 2, in terms of the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4, and above, compare favourably with the judgements of the previous inspection. Standards at that time were judged to be average in English and mathematics, and above average in science.
- 6 Progress in English and mathematics is satisfactory across Key Stage 1, and is good in science. Progress in speaking and listening is good across the school. Inspection evidence shows that current Year 2 pupils attain satisfactorily in English, including reading and writing, and in mathematics. They achieve well in science.
- 7 Progress in English overall, and in mathematics continues at a satisfactory rate through Key Stage 2, although progress in writing is not as good as in the other elements of English. The school is aware of this and has put in place strategies to raise attainment in writing, including a focus on raising the standards that boys achieve. The improvement in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 bodes well for the school achieving higher standards in the future, though these will take time to realise. Certainly, inspection evidence shows that there is a greater proportion of higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 than there is in Years 5 and 6.
- 8 The following table shows standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

	By the age of seven	Progress in learning	By the age of eleven	Progress in learning
Art and design	At the expected level	Satisfactory	At the expected level	Satisfactory
Design and technology	At the expected level	Satisfactory	At the expected level	Satisfactory
Geography	At the expected level	Satisfactory	No judgement possible	No judgement possible
History	At the expected level	Satisfactory	At the expected level	Satisfactory
Information and communication technology	At the expected level	Satisfactory	At the expected level	Satisfactory
Music	Above the expected level in performing	Good	Above the expected level in performing	Good
Physical education	At the expected level	Satisfactory	At the expected level	Satisfactory
Religious education	At the expected level	Satisfactory	At the expected level	Satisfactory

- 9 Pupils with special educational needs are identified as soon as possible after entry to the school. This is a good feature of provision that enables additional help to be quickly targeted on the needs of these pupils.
- 10 They make good progress in Key Stage 1, supported as they are by a very good early literacy programme. They continue to receive good support in Key Stage 2, and make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The level of need of some pupils is reduced as they progress through the school. Some gifted and talented pupils have been identified in Key Stage 2, and they receive special

work in mathematics and English in Year 6 to ensure that the curriculum fully meets their needs. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language, and those who come from travelling families, make the same rate of progress as their peers. None is at an early stage of English acquisition and all are fully included in class activities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 11 Pupils' attitudes to learning remain good. The great majority of pupils like coming to school and are ready to work. In general, they listen carefully to their teachers, or to others who are speaking, and respond sensibly. They settle quickly to each new task given to them, and usually work with purpose and determination. They particularly enjoy lessons when they are given lively and interesting work to do, such as those in English, when they were observed writing haikus (short poems) or taking part in role play and mime activities. Pupils do, however, become slightly restless at the start of lessons when introductions are too long, because they want to get on with the work.
- 12 Behaviour in class remains good overall, and is often very good, particularly amongst pupils in Key Stage 2. It does, however, slip on the very few occasions when they are not managed well. Around school, pupils continue to act sensibly, with behaviour on the stairs showing a definite improvement from that reported at the last inspection. Bullying is rare and pupils themselves report that it is handled well when the very occasional incident does occur. No such incidents were seen during the inspection. Exclusions remain very low and are dealt with properly whenever this cause of action is deemed necessary. The number of temporary exclusions has declined. Pupils genuinely care for their school and treat its fabric, fittings and resources well.
- 13 Pupils' personal development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The school strongly promotes pupils' understanding of right and wrong behaviour. School and classroom rules are drawn up by the pupils with staff and the school identifies in its aims those that reflect on this area of pupils' development. The school fulfils these aims successfully. The teaching in many subjects, such as English, history and religious education, contributes positively to pupils' personal development, a deeper understanding of life and the rules of a moral society.
- 14 There are good examples of pupils' empathetic writing in history, of thoughtful personal prayers and of sensitive poems that have a spiritual flavour. One child wrote in a poem about the quality of silence, "It was so quiet that I heard a leaf uncurl like a green tongue". The school celebrates different festivals such as Eid and provides good opportunities for pupils to visit a variety of places. For example, pupils visit a Sikh temple, a mosque, a Methodist church and a Catholic church as part of their religious education. They also visit Bradford to shop at Indian stores, and a Japanese visitor to school performed a tea drinking ceremony and taught pupils how to make origami models. These many visits and visitors to school positively enhance pupils' spiritual, cultural and social education.
- 15 Most pupils are confident learners who work well independently whenever opportunities arise. The youngest children in the Early Years Unit are well settled into school routines and already starting to develop good work habits. Pupils clearly understand the impact of their actions upon others and show respect for other peoples' feelings and beliefs. In assemblies, for example, all pupils sit in silence during moments provided for quiet reflection. The school continues to offer pupils a wide range of responsibilities, particularly in Year 6. These are willingly accepted, and the duties are carried out well. The school council now functions effectively and offers pupils of all ages a chance to have a say in general matters that affect them.

- 16 Pupils respond well to the many opportunities for them to take responsibility, for example answering the telephone and undertaking office duties, as well as acting as monitors and cloakroom assistants. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own prayers, which they do willingly. Adults in the school are very aware of their responsibilities as role models for the pupils, and act accordingly. A very notable feature of one assembly, when awards were given for various achievements, was the polite and sincere way staff not only congratulated pupils, but explained precisely why they were being mentioned. This clearly raised pupils' self esteem; many were visibly proud. Pupils are honest and trustworthy, and respect the school's and others' property.
- 17 The quality of relationships within the school has improved since the last inspection. It is now very good, and makes a significant contribution to the education provided. Pupils are polite, open and friendly, and work together well when opportunities arise. They co-operate well with each other in lessons, readily sharing materials, equipment and ideas. Older pupils help younger ones at lunchtimes and with board games. Good opportunities are provided, particularly in information and communication technology, and physical education, for pupils to work collaboratively together as a pair, small group or a larger team. Pupils also raise money for a variety of charities and are currently collecting stamps for a 'guide dog' appeal. The very good extra-curricular activities the school provides positively enhance pupils' social development.
- 18 Attendance remains satisfactory and around the national norm. The higher than average reported rate of unauthorised absence has, however, now fallen back to its previous low level as a direct result of the first-day contact scheme introduced last September. Punctuality is generally good. Almost all pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 19 The quality of teaching in the school has improved since the previous inspection. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage of their learning is good. The teacher, well supported by the nursery nurses, has a clear understanding of the needs of young children, and of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The teacher plans her lessons well. She ensures that there is a good balance between those activities directed by the staff and those chosen by the children. Consequently, children enjoy a range of activities that successfully build on their skills and knowledge across all the expected areas of learning. Classroom organisation is of good quality, with the result that all children receive close attention and effective support for their needs. The staff and children relate very well to each other, resulting in children feeling comfortable and happy and eager to learn.
- 20 Teaching is satisfactory overall across Years 1 and 2, although there is a significant proportion of good and very good teaching. This results in pupils making at least satisfactory, and often good progress in several subjects, but particularly in speaking and listening and in science. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good in over 50 per cent of lessons, and is very good in 23 per cent. It was unsatisfactory in one lesson. There are two classes in Key Stage 1 and the quality of teaching is similar across the classes. However, it is on the few occasions when the class teachers are engaged on other duties, away from their pupils, that the teaching of their classes is not as good and is occasionally unsatisfactory.
- 21 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall and, as in Key Stage 1, much of the teaching is good or very good. In this part of the school, 29 per cent of teaching is satisfactory,

39 per cent is good, and 32 per cent is very good. The significance of these figures is that pupils often make good or very good strides in their learning during lessons, although several pupils start from a low level of attainment and do not meet national expectations by the time that they leave the school at the age of eleven.

- 22 There are three good qualities of teaching that are common to most lessons across the both key stages, and which have a positive effect on pupils' learning:
- The management of pupils in lessons is good, because most teachers apply consistently the school's assertive behaviour policy. This means that there is little time wasted, pupils meet teachers' expectations for them to behave well, and usually focus on the tasks that teachers ask them to do. There are occasional exceptions, when lessons are unsatisfactory mainly because the teacher does not manage the pupils well and their behaviour deteriorates. This is because the teacher does not apply the assertive behaviour policy.
 - The teachers and pupils relate very well to each other. This engenders a good working atmosphere and means that pupils trust their teachers and feel comfortable about asking them questions, particularly when they have problems with their work.
 - Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and plan their lessons well. This means that they give pupils good guidance in their learning and generally ensure that they give pupils work that challenges them appropriately to learn at a good rate.
- 23 Teachers in most lessons use questioning effectively to identify with pupils their previous learning, and to make them think hard. The questions generally match pupils' levels of understanding because the teachers know their pupils well, including those pupils with special educational needs. Occasionally, however, teachers talk too much instead of allowing the pupils to proceed with their tasks, as in an otherwise satisfactory information and communication technology lesson. In this lesson, the teacher worked very hard to explain difficult concepts, when it would have been better for the pupils to use the computers to find out for themselves, supported by ongoing guidance. In the best lessons, as in a very good science lesson in Years 3 and 4 about magnetism, the teacher takes a lively approach to questioning, and ensures that all pupils are involved in discussion, thus making them feel valued and essential to the progress of the lesson. In this particular example, the pupils' showed by their answers to questions that they had listened carefully and learned many facts about magnets and magnetism.
- 24 The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well, and teachers use the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to good effect. Indeed, several teachers apply the format of the strategies to most of their lessons. This is effective, particularly in the first and last part of lessons. For example, teachers use the first part to explain to pupils what they are going to learn in the lesson. This has the effect of promoting pupils' interest in learning, as in a Key Stage 1 class music lesson. The lesson moved at a lively pace and pupils learned well because of the element of expectancy achieved. Similarly, some teachers use to good effect the last part of lessons when they check with pupils what they have learned. This helps pupils to take responsibility for their learning, and promotes their interest in the next lesson in the subject.
- 25 Lesson planning is generally effective in identifying appropriate work to take all pupils' learning forward, although not all teachers use the results of assessments effectively.

Occasionally, as in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils' rate of learning is sluggish because the teacher has not planned enough work for pupils of different levels of attainment. For example, higher attaining pupils complete their set task, and then waste time because there is no more sufficiently challenging work for them to do. In contrast, in a very good physical education lesson for Year 6 pupils, to do with outdoor adventurous activities, the teacher noticed when some pupils had completed their task, and had ready a more challenging activity that made the pupils think hard about how to tackle a demanding problem. Nevertheless, all classes contain pupils from across two age groups. This presents teachers with a considerable measure of difficulty in providing individuals with work that is matched to their range of prior attainment. Most teachers are successful in achieving this match for most of the time, especially in English and mathematics lessons.

- 26 There is good use of support staff and teaching assistants, who work hard and give valued support to pupils' learning, including groups of pupils withdrawn from their classes for short periods of intensive work in literacy. This means that all pupils generally have sufficiently close attention when it is needed, and feel confident to try new challenges. Good collaboration between teachers and support staff in lessons ensures that pupils with special educational needs are well prepared for follow up work. However, some of the work is too challenging for these pupils, and those with behavioural problems sometimes become distracted and demand too much of the teachers' attention.
- 27 Most teachers use available time well, and apportion appropriate amounts of time to different parts of lessons. Some teachers set time targets for pupils to complete their work, although this is not a strategy used consistently.
- 28 Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and give praise when it is appropriate. This encourages pupils to try hard to improve. However, there is little guidance given in the marking about how pupils can do better, although the marking of English and mathematics is better than in the other subjects. Pupils do not know at what levels of the National Curriculum they are achieving, nor what they need to do to achieve the next level.

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

- 29 The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage, in the Early Years Unit, is good and is suited to their needs. The staff make good use of available resources and plan a sufficiently wide range of activities that contribute well to children's progress in all areas of learning. There is a good balance between activities directed by the teacher and her staff, and those chosen by the children.
- 30 The school teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. This meets the needs of all the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Staff work hard to ensure that all pupils are included and have equal opportunity to do well in school. The quality and range of learning opportunities offered to the pupils in both key stages is satisfactory overall.
- 31 The time allocation given to literacy and numeracy is well used. However, whilst the curriculum is broad, there is some imbalance in the curriculum for the non-core subjects. Current timetabling arrangements mean that some subjects, such as art and design, history, geography and design and technology, are not taught regularly enough to enable pupils' knowledge and skills to build progressively. The school has not fully considered the balance of activities and subjects for pupils in the short term and, in some cases, the length of time given to lessons in some foundation subjects is too long and leads to reduced pupil concentration.
- 32 The school has dealt appropriately with the issues relating to the curriculum in the previous inspection report, especially with regard to including guidance for teachers in schemes of work. The school has effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. The teaching of the literacy and numeracy hour is consistent throughout the school and includes all the elements required by the national strategies. Teaching is sufficiently versatile to meet the school's own priorities for development. There are good links with other subjects in reading and writing. However, links between subjects are not sufficiently identified, particularly in Key Stage 2, with the result that teachers miss opportunities to give a wider context for learning.
- 33 Provision for numeracy is good. There has been a strong and successful focus on raising standards in mental calculation and teachers regularly use the time at the beginning of each lesson to improve their pupil's skills. However, in mathematics, links are not made often enough with other subjects and there are limited opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their work across the curriculum. The effectiveness of additional literacy programmes has been well tracked and it has made a good contribution to raising pupils' confidence and standards. Booster classes in mathematics, however, have not been so effective.
- 34 The school takes good advantage of its geographical location to provide opportunities for history studies, offering pupils the chance to know and understand their own culture and heritage. They study the Romans and Vikings in the local area and find out how York has changed over the years.
- 35 Those pupils who speak English as an additional language are well catered for and are fully included in the work of the school. Their different cultures and beliefs enrich the school life, and their contributions are valued. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator ensures that an appropriate programme for support is put in place. There is good quality planning between teachers and

support staff, and the well defined individual education plans, which include specific targets in literacy, numeracy, and social skills, are consistently followed and frequently reviewed.

- 36 The school has worked hard to implement its policies and schemes of work using national guidelines to aid planning. This aspect has improved considerably since the last inspection. Teacher's planning is closely linked to these schemes and is generally detailed and thorough. Most year group team leaders have monitored planning and thus ensure that all pupils experience a similar range of learning opportunities.
- 37 The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities in order to enrich the curriculum. Staff and outside agencies work together to provide such activities as an e-mail club, and football, table tennis, cricket, athletics, and singing clubs. All pupils take part in a good range of educational visits, as part of their work, to places such as a Sikh temple, local churches and St Nicholas field. The oldest pupils enjoy residential visits to West Yorkshire and Swaledale. Visitors to the school include theatre companies, local artists and specialist instrumental teachers. An annual European awareness fortnight provides opportunities for pupils to gain knowledge and understanding about other countries and good links between subjects are explored at such times. French and German are no longer taught in Key Stage 2, due to lack of available time. Pupils receive a good, well-planned personal, social and health education programme, linked to citizenship.
- 38 The school has a clear policy for sex education. Pupils in Year 6 find out about health and drug issues from teaching staff, and from their involvement in ' Wannabe', a drug education scheme operated by the local education authority.
- 39 The school is successful in promoting opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility and to take initiative. The older pupils are encouraged to take on responsible roles in school, such as assembly monitors, collators of award points, setting tables out for lunch and selling healthy food at breaktimes etc. There is a 'playground pals' and peer mediator scheme in operation to encourage good relationships and personal responsibility. The school council meets termly to discuss a range of issues. The school has good links with the community and this enhances pupils' learning. For example pupils use a local cemetery and St Nicholas field to support their work in geography, science and history. The school has very good links with partner institutions. It works closely with Fulford School, to ensure that there is continuity for pupil's education as they transfer to secondary education. Good links are particularly made in mathematics because a secondary teacher teaches extension work to the more able pupils.
- 40 There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents are pleased with the values and attitudes that the school teaches their children. The values that the school promotes are at the cornerstone of school life. Collective worship now conforms to statutory requirements, an issue at the previous inspection. Religious education and assemblies contribute well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development because pupils are given plenty of opportunities to reflect on discussions, and to expand on their thoughts in lessons that follow assemblies. The diversity of pupils' own cultures is celebrated and valued by pupils, staff and parents alike. Opportunities are provided for pupils to consider wider moral issues, such as the realities of war, pollution and the environment, as part of their science and geography work. There are good opportunities, particularly in information and communication technology and physical education, for pupils to work collaboratively together in pairs, in small groups or in larger teams.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 41 The school is a warm and caring institution, which pays good attention to the personal support and guidance of its pupils. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' care and general welfare have improved since the last inspection, and are now good. Suitable health and safety measures are in place, and followed closely by all staff. Everyday routines are smoothly but unobtrusively managed and pupils are practised in sensible movement around the school. In particular, the concerns previously reported about pupils' safety and behaviour on the stairs have been addressed successfully, and pupils now use them in an orderly and sensible way. Child protection procedures are effective, with the headteacher having designated responsibility for liaising with outside agencies. There is an adequate number of trained first aiders on hand throughout the day, including at lunchtimes.
- 42 There are good procedures for monitoring and eliminating unacceptable behaviour, and these are nearly always applied when necessary. An escalating series of sanctions are applied, so that all pupils know the rules and feel safe. They are clear that there is hardly ever any bullying. Those few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, or who speak English as an additional language, are very well integrated through kind and tolerant treatment.
- 43 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development have improved generally since the last inspection and are now good. Teachers know their pupils well, respond positively to their needs and now maintain high standards of behaviour effectively. They use praise to encourage effort and make good use of weekly celebration assemblies to recognise achievement in all areas of school life. A range of reward systems encourages pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem. The school continues to offer pupils a wide range of opportunities through which they can take on responsibility and develop their own personal values. These, for example, include the school council, which functions well. The introduction of personal planners for pupils has also proved successful. Pupils enjoy using them and feel that the weekly targets are having a positive impact on their general conduct and the way in which they approach their work.
- 44 Staff in the Early Years Unit assess children's attainment soon after they begin to attend full time in the Reception year. The school's assessment procedures for pupils in both key stages are very good. They monitor pupil's attainment in English, mathematics and science and in most of the non-core subjects. A recently introduced procedure to track pupils' individual progress throughout the school is in its infancy. When fully in place, it will enable the school to calculate the value added to pupils' learning year on year.
- 45 The use of assessment information to guide teachers' planning of lessons is satisfactory overall, but it is not used consistently across the school. Testing on an annual basis in English and mathematics informs teachers what pupils know and understand, and contributes positively towards target setting. Good practice in monitoring key learning objectives for each pupil has begun in mathematics, but this approach is not yet fully embedded into practice in all classes throughout the school.
- 46 Targets are set for year groups in literacy, and individual pupils write down what they hope to improve on a termly basis. However, these targets are not regularly reviewed. Some targets chosen by the pupils are not necessarily appropriate or attainable in the short term.

- 47 Pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily identified and given good support, both in lessons and when they work in groups withdrawn from the main classes. Several parents say how pleased they are with the amount and quality of support their children receive. There is good assessment of progress of those pupils on the early and additional literacy strategy programmes. The school has identified groups of particularly able pupils, who attain highly in mathematics and English. These pupils do more complex work than their peers, and make good progress as a result of the particular work they are given.
- 48 Attendance is monitored thoroughly. Registers are now maintained properly, and all unexplained absences are quickly identified and followed up promptly on the first day by the secretary, who contacts the parents concerned to find out why their child is not in school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 49 Parents express much stronger support for the school than they did at the time of the previous inspection. Their views are now mostly positive, and they collectively raised no significant levels of concern. Links with parents have improved generally, and a close partnership has been developed with them.
- 50 Almost all feel their children like school and that teaching is good. They feel the school has high expectations and is helping their children to become more mature. Most said they believed behaviour in the school to be good, though a number disagreed with this. The inspection found no evidence of unsatisfactory behaviour and generally agrees with parents' positive views. However, nearly 20 per cent of parents do not feel well informed about how their child was progressing. The inspection team found no evidence to support this view. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress, with annual reports continuing to provide a clear picture of their child's achievements over the previous year. However, the areas identified in them where improvements could be made are often not specific enough to be of any practical value. Newsletters and on-going correspondence, which includes regular updates from teachers about classwork, keep parents fully informed about life generally in school. The prospectus and governors' annual reports are well presented documents that meet all requirements. The prospectus is welcoming and detailed, and there is a good, helpful brochure for the Early Years Unit. Links with parents are particularly good at the early years stage, when parents are fully informed about what the school has to offer their children. Staff of the unit work closely with parents, especially in the first few weeks of their children's attendance, to ensure that they settle quickly and comfortably into school life
- 51 Parents are given clear information about the school's special educational needs policy and practice. They are kept well informed of the children's progress and are invited to reviews. Whenever they have concerns they are able to contact the class teacher and special educational needs co-ordinator.
- 52 The school offers parents formal consultation evenings throughout the year, and these are generally well attended. Many parents expressed their delight with, and are grateful for, the availability of teachers to talk with them. A number of parents help out in class, often with specific projects, and there is good support from parents for activities, such as plays, class activities and when teachers need help with pupils on educational visits. There is a home/school association, but the chair of governors and the headteacher are keen to further develop parental involvement in organising functions. Most activities arranged for parents are organised by the staff and/or governors. These helpfully include 'awareness' training for parents, for example in

teaching methods for reading. Nevertheless, the governors are pleased with parents' support for special events, which often include fund raising for specific initiatives.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 53 The headteacher's leadership of the school is good, and is an improvement since the previous inspection. She is a purposeful and knowledgeable leader who has set clear educational aims for the school, and has achieved a calm and orderly working establishment. There are three reasons why she has good oversight of the school and its workings. Firstly, she works regularly with the pupils in her capacity as special educational needs co-ordinator. Secondly, she regularly observes lessons across the school. Thirdly, she has established an effective management structure that places an appropriate level of responsibility on other members of staff, who report to her regularly. Of particular note is the relationship that the headteacher has with her deputy, who provides highly valued support to the management of the school through long experience. She is ideally placed with her range of duties to focus on specific curriculum and teaching matters, and acts as a 'second hand' to the headteacher. They meet regularly, share all concerns about school matters, and make day-to-day decisions. Other members of the senior management team carry out their duties well. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of the recently introduced system of team leaders for each year group. However, it is noticeable how well teachers in some year groups plan together to ensure that their work in lessons matches the needs of their pupils, and fulfils medium and long term curriculum planning.
- 54 There are clear priorities for school improvement, as set out in the detailed school improvement plan, which the staff and governors regularly monitor and evaluate. The school's priorities are based on the school's aims to achieve high standards in all aspects of pupils' development, within a challenging and stimulating environment. In several respects the school achieves its aims. Of particular note is the way the school includes all pupils in what it provides, so that all pupils have equal opportunity to learn and make progress. Additionally, the school takes full advantage of the range of cultural backgrounds evident, and enriches the curriculum it provides. Parents are pleased with this aspect of the school, and note its significant improvement since the previous inspection exactly five years ago in 1997. Overall, the school has made a good level of improvement since that time. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have risen slightly, although there has been variation from year to year in individual subjects.
- 55 Other improvements include the establishment, from the beginning of the current school year, of an Early Years Unit comprising children who would normally be in separate Nursery and Reception classes. This unit is developing well under the leadership of an experienced and committed teacher, who works enthusiastically to provide a good start to children's education. As a result, the Foundation Stage curriculum is already firmly established, and the teacher and her staff have clear plans to further develop the unit.
- 56 There is a good system for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, the former of which has improved since the previous inspection. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and most subject co-ordinators regularly observe lessons taught by their colleagues, often as part of the school's performance management arrangements. These observations often focus on specific teaching skills, such as how well teachers manage their pupils or, in the case of mathematics lessons, the effectiveness of the initial, mental 'starter' of lessons. However, as yet the system does not sufficiently identify those aspects of teaching and lessons that are particularly effective in promoting pupils' learning, so adding to teachers' professional development. For

example, currently there is not enough attention given to how well lessons proceed when pupils are taught by teachers who are not their regular class teacher. These occasions happen when class teachers have regular time away from their pupils to carry out other duties, such as subject co-ordinator responsibilities, or to observe lessons in other classes. Inspection evidence shows that teaching on these occasions is not always as effective as it might be.

- 57 The governing body plays an essential and valued part in shaping the direction of the school. Under the leadership of their recently appointed chair, who is knowledgeable and proactive, the governors pursue their responsibilities with enthusiasm and developing expertise. Along with the staff, the governors have a strong commitment to improve the school's provision and achievements, and a good capacity to do so. In order to carry out its work effectively, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators keep the governors well informed about the work of the school. Additionally, each class has its own governor who takes a special interest and discusses the work of the class with the teacher. The governing body gives good support to the leadership of the school, for example in seeing through most of the issues identified at the previous inspection, and in critically questioning policy decisions. For example, staffing arrangements regularly feature in governor and senior management discussions.
- 58 The governors are fully aware of the school's strengths, of which they are proud, and rigorously pursue those aspects of the school that still need improving, such as achieving consistently high standards. All statutory responsibilities are fulfilled, including the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship, an issue at the previous inspection.
- 59 The school is well staffed with conscientious, committed and well-qualified teachers, some of whom work on a part-time basis. Currently, the ratio of teachers to pupils is better than in most primary schools because the governors feel that this is one way to achieve high standards. They can achieve this beneficial ratio because they now manage the budget prudently, and keep a close check on spending. The management of support staff, teaching assistants and volunteers is very good, and pupils benefit well from their work. The school provides well for the training of student teachers, who play an important part in the school's life. There are good systems for mentoring staff new to the school
- 60 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator has made a good start in implementing the new Code of Practice, and monitors regularly pupils' individual education plans and their use in lessons, both within whole class arrangements and in small group and individual teaching situations. The school makes good use of teachers provided by the local education authority to assist pupils from travelling families and those who speak English as an additional language. All these pupils are fully included in all school activities and make the same rate of progress as their peers.
- 61 The school makes good use of its available finances, and deals well with the difficulties of funding brought about by the comparatively high rate of pupil mobility into and out of the school. Recent improvements in budgeting arrangements ensure that the headteacher and governors manage the budget with the benefits to pupils uppermost in their minds. The use of funding is considered carefully. For example, more efficient use of the school's photocopier means that there is scope for improving educational resources. There is good use made of specific grants, for example to support pupils having difficulties with their literacy skills, and to implement local and national initiatives.

- 62 The headteacher and governors are developing well their ability to closely evaluate the school's effectiveness, and now use the results of statutory assessments, and other data, to help them decide on future action. The governors satisfactorily apply the principles of best value, including comparison of the school's results with others, and setting challenging targets for the school to achieve.
- 63 The accommodation provides well for the teaching of the National Curriculum and satisfactorily for children in the Foundation Stage. The school makes good use of its facilities, and has clear plans to make the building even more effective, for example to improve the facilities for the Early Years Unit. Resources for learning are mostly satisfactory, although they are good in religious education, history, music and information and communication technology. Resources for pupils who receive special lessons in literacy are very good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64 The headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- (1) raise standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 2. This should be accomplished by:
- ensuring that pupils take a more responsible approach to correcting their own spelling mistakes;
 - giving more opportunities for pupils to use computers in order to help them improve the drafting and presentation of writing;
 - devising straightforward guidelines to help pupils to see how to improve their writing;
 - encouraging pupils to look more critically at their own work and to set themselves achievable targets in discussion with teachers.

(Paragraphs: 90, 92 & 161)

- (2) Improve the organisation of the curriculum for the non-core subjects, but especially in art and design, design and technology and geography. This will involve:
- ensuring that elements of all non-core subjects are taught on a more regular and efficient basis;
 - identifying in the curriculum links between subjects, so that lessons are planned to ensure knowledge and skills are built upon systematically.

(Paragraphs: 31, 32, 117, 118, 125, 129, 140, 152 & 161)

The governors should also state in its action plan how it intends to deal with the following minor issues:

- the need to build on the already well-established system for monitoring teaching and learning in lessons to make it more rigorous and specific in nature;
- the training of identified teachers on how to carry out effectively the monitoring of teaching and learning in lessons;
- the identification of those strategies in teaching that have the greatest impact on pupils' learning, and sharing them amongst staff.

(Paragraphs: 20, 23, 25 & 123)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	12	17	14	1	0	0
Percentage	0	27	39	32	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	18	217
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	27

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	37
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	33

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	21	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	13
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	31	30	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (88)	83 (84)	89 (91)
	National	85 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	15
	Girls	19	19	20
	Total	31	32	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (88)	89 (91)	97 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	18	16	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	16
	Girls	13	10	14
	Total	25	24	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (79)	71 (86)	88 (90)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	14
	Girls	11	13	15
	Total	21	26	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (59)	76 (72)	85 (72)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	-
Black – other	1
Indian	-
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	5
Chinese	2
White	-
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	24.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	157

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	36
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5.1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	592,906
Total expenditure	616,168
Expenditure per pupil	2,455
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,657
Balance carried forward to next year	3,395

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	200
Number of questionnaires returned	106

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	49	7	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	44	6	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	53	11	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	54	6	8	4
The teaching is good.	51	45	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	47	12	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	32	8	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	39	7	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	42	42	9	5	2
The school is well led and managed.	40	43	13	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	52	4	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	40	7	0	8

Other issues raised by parents

- 65 A number of parents of children in the Early Years Unit expressed their dissatisfaction with the amount of information they receive about their children's progress.

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

- 66 The school has fully implemented the new curriculum arrangements for children up to the end of their Reception year. It is developing well the Foundation Stage within an Early Years Unit, which comprises the nursery and the Reception class. This unit was formed at the beginning of the current school year. It is well staffed with one full time teacher and three nursery nurses. The unit also makes good use of volunteers who assist the teacher and other staff.
- 67 Children are admitted to the unit on a part-time basis at the age of three. They attend on a full time basis from the beginning of the term in which they reach the age of five, and stay in the unit until they transfer to Year 1 in Key Stage 1. This arrangement causes some difficulties for the staff in maintaining accurate records of children's progress. Children are regularly assessed in their acquisition of skills in the six areas of learning, and these assessments give worthwhile information. However, the teacher is aware that there is a need for a more easily implemented and maintained system, in order that time can be used more efficiently, and that activities can be more accurately matched to children's needs. Currently, the arrangements whereby the full time children do focussed literacy and numeracy work at various times in the day is working well. However, a more rigorous and efficient approach to assessment would reveal better the needs of some of the higher attaining part-time attending children, who might also be included in some of the focussed work.
- 68 There are 58 children currently in the Early Years Unit, 23 of whom attend on a full time basis. Children enter the unit with generally average levels of attainment. However, many have higher than expected levels of personal, social and emotional development, and of speaking skills. A few children have special educational needs. Children make generally good progress in the unit, across all the areas of learning, because the teacher and the nursery nurses work well together, providing as they do a well-balanced range of learning experiences. The teaching staff work closely with parents to ensure that their children have a smooth start to their education at school. Many parents expressed their delight with the way the school provides for their children in the Early Years Unit. They say that their children are confident, happy and keen to attend. Indeed, one child started at the unit during the week of the inspection. The staff and children made her and her mother very welcome, and the child quickly settled into the unit's routines and made friends. A few parents voiced their dissatisfaction with the level of information given to them about their children's progress, and the work of the unit. The inspection found no grounds for these concerns. Indeed, the staff go out of their way to inform parents and to discuss with them. Evidence of this approach was seen at the beginning of sessions, when many parents brought their children into school, stayed with them for a short while, and took the opportunity to talk with staff.
- 69 Children quickly settle into the unit because the teacher and her assistants plan an appropriate range of learning opportunities in a welcoming and secure environment. Consequently, most children reach the early learning goals in all the expected areas of learning by the time they transfer to Year 1; some exceed the goals.

- 70 The curriculum is appropriate and is based upon a series of topics that give children opportunities to develop skills and knowledge across all the expected areas of learning, for example the topic about 'minibeasts', chosen for study during the week of the inspection.
- 71 The quality of teaching for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good for a number of reasons:
- the teacher and other staff have secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and are suitably experienced;
 - the staff successfully encourage children to become fully involved in their work and to take increasing responsibility for their actions;
 - classroom organisation and the use of available adults are of a high quality, often resulting in children having individual or very small-group attention from each adult;
 - staff value highly each child's contribution to daily activities, and show this by taking the time to listen to them, so raising their self esteem.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 72 Children make good progress in this area of learning. Across the Foundation Stage, children gain confidence in choosing activities because the staff provide a sensitive structure to develop this skill. Staff constantly encourage children to feel confident about what they can achieve because they give each child close attention when they are doing their work. Children play and work well together, and share the equipment. As they grow older they value each other's achievements. Most children, when choosing an activity, do so with firm intention, and then concentrate on the activity for increasing amounts of time. They take a strong interest in what they are doing, and most are happy to explain their work. For example, two children tried very hard to write and decorate greetings cards for their mothers, and explained what the drawings represented. From the outset, children are expected to take responsibility for the equipment. It is a measure of how well this is achieved by the speed with which children clear away after they have finished their work. For example, children helped each other when they cleared away large wooden blocks that they had used to make a bridge. Through taking responsibility, children grow in personal stature.
- 73 Children particularly enjoy and take an active part in 'snack time'. These are very social occasions, when staff successfully encourage children to share information and to talk about what they have been doing. In one snack time, one of the youngest children proudly showed and talked about his new T-shirt, which the other children admired, and sensibly appreciated for its looks. This raised the child's self-esteem and confidence in himself. In the many opportunities provided for children to play in the enclosed outside area, children particularly develop personally and socially. They construct 'houses' and 'castles' from a range of resources, and are pleased when others use the completed structures in their play. Similarly, staff encourage children to use role-play as a means of expression. On one occasion, a girl dressed as a princess, visited her castle. The girl was particularly proud of her role and enjoyed her moment of special importance.

Communication, language and literature

- 74 Children make good progress in this area of learning because teachers place great emphasis on extending children's range of experiences, thus increasing their vocabulary and understanding. The staff take every opportunity to support children's development of speaking and listening skills, whether in whole class discussions, in

'focussed' learning activities, or incidentally throughout the day. Staff make a point of valuing each child's contributions, and use questioning very skilfully to support children in expressing their thoughts and feelings.

- 75 Children enjoy listening to stories, whether told to them by adults, or by listening to recordings, which many control themselves. They are keen to express their interest in books, and take delight in recounting events, such as those in the story of the 'Very Hungry Caterpillar' or when listening to and discussing a story entitled 'Goodnight Josie'. Whilst the youngest children begin to form letters in their writing, such as when writing freely on the class large white board, it is when they attend full time that most acquire skills to make their writing legible. They do this in specific lessons when they practise letter recognition and handwriting. At the beginning of the Reception year, most children name and sound out all the letters of the alphabet and, by the time they enter Year 1, most children write reasonably clearly. Higher attaining children move quickly from copy writing to independent writing, although the extent of their writing could be improved through more opportunities to practise writing independently whole sentences. Notably, higher attaining older children know that sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop.
- 76 Children make satisfactory progress in reading. By the time they have attended the unit for a short time, most children recognise their own names when they are written down. Older children can read simple sentences, and construct correctly simple three-letter words, such as 'pin' and 'sit', because they know the letter sounds. In simple exercises, they find out who or what they are reading about when they use clues such as 'I eat grass' and 'I give you wool' to answer questions.

Mathematical development

- 77 Staff make a point of emphasising children's mathematical development. They do this through giving children many opportunities in everyday activities to become aware of number, and in the focussed numeracy activities that the children who attend full time do each day. Much of the talk that takes place on a one-to-one basis, when children are engaged in their ongoing activities, is based on developing number recognition and skills. Children make good progress in their mathematical learning. By the time they are in the Reception year, they count and recognise numbers to five, understand mathematical relationships, such as 'bigger than' and 'smaller than', and recognise simple shapes and repeating patterns. By the time they reach the end of the Reception year, average and higher attaining children correctly add and subtract one to and from a number. They recognise and name correctly a square, rectangle and triangle, and some higher attainers recognise and describe more complex shapes such as a hexagon. Through class topics, such as minibeasts, they learn about mathematical ideas, such as symmetry. For example, children making beetles and other insects from play dough and plastic attachments relate to the number of legs and wings that the creatures have, and balance their models by ensuring that they have the same number on each side. Older children begin to understand a clock face, and nearly all of the children who attend full time can write correctly numbers to ten; some can write them independently to 12. However, a few children write some numbers in reverse. Higher attaining children complete simple number equations correctly, such as '6 and 6 make 12'. Children develop estimation skills when they guess how many marbles there are in a jar, and then count them to see if they were right.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 78 Children build on their general knowledge to help them understand more about the place where they live and how things grow and develop. Children delight in planting seeds, and watch them grow over time. They use magnifying glasses and wonder how they work. Over time, children use all of their senses to investigate a good range of scientific characteristics. The current topic about 'minibeasts' leads to a good range of scientific activities. For example, children look closely at living snails, tadpoles and fish and discuss their features. Staff assemble interesting resources for children to use, for example a large African snail contained in an aquarium. Children discuss how the creatures move, and relate this to their own movements.
- 79 All children enjoy using construction sets. They use glues and tapes to make models of creatures, and find out how strong their models are. Children have a good sense of time and place, and many of the youngest can name in order the days of the week. On questioning, most children know that they live in York, and can describe how they come to school. There is a computer in the unit, but it is used infrequently, so children do not develop as well as they might their knowledge of some important equipment used in the world around them, or their possible uses, for example for art. Nevertheless, staff take every advantage of talking with children about everyday life. For example, when a girl showed the class her 'pretend' 'phone, this prompted a discussion about mobile 'phones, to which most children made a contribution and shared their knowledge.
- 80 Role-play activities provide well for this area of learning. For example, during the inspection, children used one of the outside wooden buildings as a 'petrol station' and took on the roles of a garage owner and a driver.

Physical development

- 81 Children make good progress in developing their physical skills. Many activities in the Early Years Unit challenge children to be accurate in their work, for example as they construct models, paint, and use pens and pencils to draw, and to begin to form early writing marks on paper. They have very good opportunities to take part in outdoor play activities when they use a range of tricycles, bikes, and other wheeled toys, which they control well. The staff have good oversight of the children during these times, and are imaginative in the way that they organise the outdoor play area. Many of the activities arranged outside are challenging, and children make good progress as they adapt to the different equipment set out.
- 82 No formal physical activities were seen during the inspection, but children are fully aware of the spaces around them, and of the need to take care in their movements. They handle equipment carefully, for example when mixing ingredients to make chocolate chip buns, and when using a range of materials to make their models of minibeasts.

Creative development

- 83 Children entering the Early Years Unit quickly learn the names of many colours, and work with crayons, paint and felt pens. Their colouring techniques develop well. However, the continuous activity facilities for painting are limited, as there is only one painting easel available in the classroom for pupils to use. Nevertheless, when children do use the easel they explore the effects of paint. One girl was surprised when she experimented with mixing colours and made brown, which she added to her design. Staff do provide periods of intensive painting activities when children paint pictures with specific themes, for example of the queen at the time of her golden

jubilee. Paintings done at this time show that children have a good eye for shape, and they add features such as eyes, a smile, and a crown, using colour sensitively.

- 84 Facilities for three-dimensional modelling are good, and children happily use play dough and other modelling mediums to produce realistic portrayals of insects, often cutting and sticking paper, card and straws. Children enjoy cooking, and make chocolate buns and jam tarts
- 85 Study topics are used well in the unit to promote children's creative skills and learning. The current topic, about 'minibeasts', gives children many opportunities to explore creativity, yet at the same time to find out about aspects of other areas of learning, such as science and mathematics.
- 86 Children in the Early Years Unit enjoy making music. They sing regularly, not just in specific music lessons, but also as they do other work or at the end of the day during story time. For example, they sing 'When you're happy and you know it' tunefully and from memory.

ENGLISH

- 87 Standards in reading for seven year olds have varied recently but are usually above the national average. There were good results in 2001 when the school reached standards well above similar schools. In writing at age seven, results have ranged from well above to below the national average. In 2001 standards were well above those of similar schools. Girls have consistently performed better than boys. At the age of eleven, results have not been as good, but many pupils leave and others move into the school after the age of seven. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs tends to increase in Key Stage 2. The most recent results at eleven have been in line with similar schools and the national average. The difference between boys and girls is less marked at this stage, though girls still do better than boys.
- 88 Standards seen during the inspection reflect this volatile picture. At age seven, standards in reading and writing are average overall but are above average in speaking and listening. Boys and girls are very confident in discussions in class. They have a good grasp of vocabulary and can use words like 'adverb' and 'adjective' with clear understanding in fairly complex sentences. Teachers give all pupils, including those with special needs, the chance to take part in discussions. They teach them turn taking by using a conch-shell to indicate the speaker, and the pupils all enjoy this structured approach to the work. Even livelier pupils respect the class rules.
- 89 In reading, pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a range of sources to find out the meaning of words, and to gather information about famous people in history and in religious education. The majority of teaching in Key Stage 1 ensures that pupils are taught well the basic skills of reading and writing. For example, one teacher employs a variety of approaches to consolidate pupils' learning, with role-play supported by flash cards to help them demonstrate the use of adverbs in sentences. They then construct their own sentences to show how these parts of speech are used. Provision for lower attaining pupils is very good through the early learning support materials. The excellent resources encourage them to want to read, and many make good progress in their learning. Pupils learn to write accurately and, in most cases, attain standards normally expected by the age of seven. Some of the more able pupils compose effective alliterative poems, such as, 'Slimy, slithering scaly snakes shed their skin'.

Their imagery is equally vivid, for example 'It was so quiet that you could hear a shoelace untie'.

- 90 At age eleven, results are currently average in English, except in writing, where the performance of the boys in particular has been disappointing this year. The school is unlikely to meet its very challenging target for 2002. Progress in reading and in speaking and listening has been sustained, and pupils are confident in these aspects. They use computers with good understanding to research work in several topics and they can apply their reading skills across the subjects of the curriculum. For instance, they use reference books confidently in history and science when preparing their written work. The range of attainment is very wide in writing. There is a high proportion of pupils in Years 5 and 6 with special educational needs but too many pupils, mainly boys, have failed to fulfil their earlier promise. The booster classes have not helped them sufficiently to raise their standards. Many are too easily satisfied with their work, which is often brief and untidily presented.
- 91 On the positive side, a significant proportion of pupils achieve well. Their writing is lively and mature and some have a flair, which produces memorable turns of phrase, for example, 'What I hate about my sister is she is always dashing around cleaning up her spotless bedroom like a fly that can't decide where to rest.' This was produced in Year 4, where standards are clearly above average in writing. Pupils in the middle years in Key Stage 2 have produced very good work using information and communication technology, such as a class magazine that is very well presented. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 work hard too. In one class, they unravelled the meaning of a difficult poem and could explain why particular phrases, such as 'odour of spices,' were appropriate for a peacock, because the bird had originated in South East Asia. Most can read better than they write. Much of the structured writing is well executed because the teachers prepare pupils well in class. The more able writers in Year 6 employ deft turns of phrase like, 'Are zoos terrible prisons or do they give sanctuary to animals?' They can express strong feelings, such as, "I am depressed to see our world of nature being ripped apart." Their retelling of 'Little Red Riding Hood' has amusing ideas, such as the wolf driving a sports car. The response of pupils in many lessons in the older classes is good because their teachers plan well and are enthusiastic in their approach.
- 92 The disappointing results in writing have occurred despite the good quality teaching that takes place regularly in most classes, where pupils show good skills when closely monitored by their teachers. The quality of the teaching overall is good. There are many strengths:
- lessons are well planned and cater for the needs of the wide range of age and ability in most classes, including those pupils who are especially able;
 - questioning involves all the pupils at a level to which they can respond and helps them to develop their ideas and expression;
 - the literacy hour is adapted well to suit the different moods and interests of the groups, with time allowed for pupils to finish off their writing;
 - the pace of most lessons is well judged and varied so that pupils do not become bored: teachers often set clear time targets so that expectations of pupils are clear;
 - support staff are well deployed and are flexible enough to help pupils with different needs, both in the classroom and in withdrawal groups.

There are some areas to improve:

- teachers do not give pupils the responsibility for correcting their own spelling in their books even though most know how to use dictionaries and spell-checkers;
 - not enough opportunities are provided for reluctant writers to use information and communication technology to help them improve their drafting skills, presentation and motivation;
 - pupils' individual targets in reading and writing are not sufficiently clear for them to see exactly what they must do to improve their levels of attainment.
- 93 The teaching of the literacy hour is consistent across the school. It includes all the elements required by the National Strategy and is versatile enough to meet the school's own priorities for development. There are good links in reading and writing with other subjects. For example, pupils read widely when undertaking research for history projects, using note-taking skills that have been learned in English lessons. They also practise a range of writing techniques for reports and evaluations in science and design and technology. Provision for literacy is sound overall, with some good features.
- 94 The leadership and management of English are sound, although the co-ordinators have changed very rapidly over recent years. As a result, it has been difficult to establish a clear and consistent pattern of assessment and evaluation of pupils' progress. Consequently, target setting is not as accurate as it should be.
- 95 There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, especially in the teaching. This is now more consistently good, with no unsatisfactory teaching. The trend in standards at ages seven and 11 has risen over time with occasional dips. Presentation of work is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection, apart from some lack of application by reluctant learners in the older classes.

MATHEMATICS

- 96 In the 2001 national tests taken by pupils age seven, the proportion meeting the national expected Level 2, and above, was well above average. For pupils aged eleven, the proportion reaching the nationally expected Level 4, and above, was close to the average. Compared with similar schools, the proportion of seven year olds reaching the expected level, and above, was also well above average, but below average for eleven year olds. The school's performance across the four years up to, and including, 2001 fell below the average for pupils aged eleven, although there were wide variations year on year. Boys tend to score better than girls, a point noted by the school, and for which appropriate strategies are in place to rectify. There has been a period of numerous staff changes in Key Stage 2 over recent years and this has had an unsettling effect on the standards attained. There is now a stabilisation of staffing and the newly appointed co-ordinator is well placed to promote higher standards.
- 97 Inspection evidence shows that, by the end of Year 2, and at the end of Year 6, current pupils meet national expectations. This represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection. Standards of work observed during the inspection are satisfactory at both ages. Pupils enter school with average attainment and most make satisfactory progress, although the National Numeracy Strategy is well implemented and is benefiting pupils by providing a good structure for raising standards. As a result, many pupils are now making good progress and standards are set to rise. Those pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers. Higher ability groups are well catered for through appropriate tasks planned to challenge them to reach above expected levels. This is particularly evident in classes at the end of Key

Stage 2. Similarly, less able pupils receive good support from class teachers and non-teaching staff, and often make good progress.

- 98 There is good emphasis placed throughout the school on developing pupils' numeracy skills, and teaching is good across both key stages. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is sometimes very good, where the pace is brisk, all work is appropriately challenging and varied, and the teachers have high expectations of pupils to achieve well. The work is well matched to pupils' prior levels of attainment and the teachers have very good classroom management skills. In the good lessons, pupils are encouraged to explain their working out and teachers asked challenging questions for the most able pupils.
- 99 Pupils' good efforts are regularly praised and work is marked consistently, encouraging pupils and giving them good advice about how to improve their work. Assessment is good, pupils work being regularly assessed by teachers. As a result, a system of tracking pupils' progress throughout the school, recently introduced by the new co-ordinator, is leading to an improvement in planning appropriate work for all pupils. However, pupils do not yet know what levels of attainment they have reached, nor what they need to do to move up to the next level. The use of assessment to guide daily planning is good.
- 100 Teachers generally plan their lessons well, using the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines, and a strong emphasis is placed on development of mental strategies and the teaching of number. Crisp and well paced mental mathematics starters to lessons and the regular use of a range of mental strategies has had the effect of strengthening pupils' understanding of number. Pupils are particularly confident in mental work and this is a strength in the school.
- 101 The use of mathematics language has a high profile and pupils regularly use the appropriate terminology. Mathematics skills are used and developed in other subjects, but this practice is in its infancy. For example, in science, pupils collate data and create charts and graph their findings, using computers to illustrate them.
- 102 At the end of the Foundation Stage most pupils can recognise numbers up to 10, some beyond this number, and understand what 'one more' or 'one less' means. They enjoy being involved in a minibeast hunt in the hall and accurately count how many wings, legs and feelers various pictures of insects have. At the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils know numbers to 1000. They understand simple symmetry and can interpret information from bar charts. They are less secure about two- and three-dimensional shapes. Many pupils can total money to £1 and give change using the appropriate coins.
- 103 At the end of Year 6, the higher ability groups can mentally calculate percentages of complex whole numbers and use a range of strategies to reach the correct answer. They are aware of self-checking strategies, and use two-step 'function machines' accurately, thus starting to understand algebra. Years 3 and 4 pupils recognise quite complicated patterns in number and add mentally tens, and tens and units to 100 using a range of strategies. Pupils are confident in explaining their strategies to solve problems. The majority of pupils present their work well in a logical well-organised manner.
- 104 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables is good overall, and word problem solving is a strength. Teachers have clear learning objectives for their lessons, and they share these with their pupils, who are thus fully aware of what it is they are to learn. Occasionally, pupils are not expected to produce many

examples of work and expectations, particularly for the average and higher ability groups, are insufficient for the amount of work to be done in a lesson. In good lessons, the teachers set time targets for completion of tasks to encourage pupils to concentrate and to complete their work and this is good practice.

- 105 Most pupils enjoy mathematics. One Year 2 pupil said, "It's brill! It's my favourite." Attitudes are good, as is pupils' behaviour in lessons. Pupils generally work well, both individually and co-operatively in pairs when required to do so.
- 106 The subject co-ordinator is a very good role model for teaching and has prepared a detailed action plan for the subject. He is well equipped to raise standards in the school. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching is in its early stages and there are plans to develop this part of his role. Information and communication technology and its links with the subject, as well as links with other subjects, are not sufficiently identified. However, the recently implemented assessment and recording procedures, once embedded into practice, will inform teachers and enhance their daily planning to better address individual needs. Resources are satisfactorily earmarked to enhance learning and are used appropriately throughout the school.
- 107 There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in that the quality of teaching has improved and is now good, with some very good teaching in Key Stage 2, and standards are set to rise.

SCIENCE

- 108 The school has maintained the higher than average standards noted at the previous inspection. The inspection confirms that all pupils learn at a good rate and achieve well by the time they leave. This includes those pupils with special educational needs, those from a traveller background and those who speak English as an additional language. Assessments by teachers in 2001 showed that standards attained by pupils at the age of seven were above the expected standard. The results of the national tests in science in 2001 for 11 year olds were as expected for pupils of this age, and were average when compared with schools with a similar intake. These test results do not reflect the good knowledge pupils have as the result of the many opportunities to investigate and experiment for themselves, and the encouragement they get from teachers to think like 'young scientists or professors'. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved since the last inspection. Their good, and occasionally very good, behaviour in lessons ensures that time is not wasted on class control. Pupils' level of attentiveness has a positive effect on their learning.
- 109 An analysis of work, and talking to pupils, show that pupils have an inquisitive approach to science, which builds on work undertaken in the Foundation Stage. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn through first hand experience. Those in Key Stage 1 use information they have gained from first hand experience to compare and contrast, to make predictions and to draw conclusions. For example, following a visit to the local cemetery, and other local environments, including the playground, pupils discussed knowledgeably which locations had a higher concentration of particular 'minibeasts' than others. They gave good reasons why certain insects such as butterflies are likely to be found near particular flowers in the cemetery. Teachers question pupils well to draw upon what they observe and recall. They elaborate on pupils' answers to help them to build on their existing knowledge. Pupils, especially the higher attaining, have a good knowledge of the different aspects of science and talk at length about their previous experiments involving gravity and friction. They are fully aware of the dangers of electricity and explain succinctly how to make an electrical circuit. Pupils are keen to research information from books.

They can quickly name parts of a flower, and what conditions are necessary for plants to grow. Pupils bubble over with enthusiasm to talk about their work, and their keenness to learn shines through.

- 110 The strong emphasis given throughout the school to investigation through practical activities of scientific concepts gives pupils good insight into scientific principles. Pupils particularly enjoy these activities because they take pride in using their previously acquired knowledge as a basis to pose and test their own theories. The encouragement to think like 'young scientists or professors' raises their self esteem and gives them enormous pride in what they are doing. An effective example of a scientific approach to testing was seen in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, on magnetism. The teacher discussed with pupils at the beginning of the lesson what they knew about magnets. This elicited a wide range of responses and highlighted pupils' misconceptions. Pupils diligently worked in pairs to investigate what objects in the classroom were magnetic. The teacher's thorough and demanding questions led pupils to understand that magnets are attracted to iron and iron alloys. All pupils made great strides in their understanding of magnetism because of the clever and fun way the teacher repeatedly reinforced the main concepts.
- 111 By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils are confident to discuss their wide knowledge of most aspects of the science curriculum. For example, they speak at length about their work on forces, such as gravity and air resistance, and explain coherently the many experiments they have undertaken. Pupils at this age have a good understanding of fair testing and of how tests need to be set up to make them fair. Written work shows pupils have a good factual knowledge about the earth and planets but work on how the human body works is limited. However, discussions with pupils show that they have a good knowledge about the workings of the heart.
- 112 Pupils have good opportunities to write about their work, and so reinforce their learning. They use a variety of methods to record their findings from investigations, using charts, diagrams and graphs. The presentation of work has improved since the last inspection and is often good. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to record their findings from experiments.
- 113 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and is good, and occasionally very good, in Key Stage 2. Teachers use questioning skilfully to probe pupils' understanding and knowledge, such as "Why does this happen?" and "How do you know?" They give pupils opportunities to speak at length about their ideas and what they know. This helps teachers assess what pupils need to learn next. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson the teacher realised that some of the higher attaining pupils had gained the required knowledge from their experiment, so modified the lesson to allow them to deepen their knowledge by research. Teachers tell pupils what they are going to learn, and the rate of learning matches the teachers' expectations of pupils to work at a high level of concentration. Lessons are motivating and well paced in Key Stage 2; less so in Key Stage 1. The question and answer sessions at the end of lessons are particularly effective in assessing what pupils have learnt. In Key Stage 1, tasks are not always as demanding as they could be for the higher attaining pupils, and this is also evident in written work in their books. Work is regularly assessed at the end of each unit of work and the results of these are beginning to be fed into teacher's planning, to good effect.
- 114 The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Planning is monitored and evaluated. Pupils' work has been scrutinised and lessons have been observed and feedback given to staff.

ART AND DESIGN

- 115 It was possible to observe only one lesson during the week of inspection. As a result, judgements of standards are made from observation of this lesson, and from looking at teachers' planning and at samples of pupils' finished work in sketchbooks, in a portfolio of work, and in displays around the school. Pupil's attainment at the ages of seven and 11 broadly matches that normally found.
- 116 Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language perform as well as other pupils. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are introduced to sculpture and use their senses of touch and sight to describe the range of materials from which they are made. Years 3 and 4 pupils have looked at art in nature, and specific works by John Galsworthy, and Years 5 and 6 pupils create simple montages depicting movement. The same pupils print mask shapes from card and make three-dimensional space age masks illustrating facial expressions, such as friendly and scary. They use pastels and charcoal to make observational sketches of Clifford's tower. However, many of the sketches lack careful observation and detail and completed work sometimes gives the impression of being hurried. The support given by teachers and support staff is good and encourages the children to make choices and to talk about their work. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupil's written evaluations of their own artwork are often sensitive and mature. Displays of pupils' work are colourful and reflect the value that the school places on their achievements and involvement. Pupils say that they enjoy their artwork and are enthusiastic.
- 117 Whilst achieving satisfactory standards overall, progress could be better if lessons were planned more regularly to ensure that pupil's skills, knowledge and understanding are continuously developed as they move up through the school. Currently, art lessons in Key Stage 2 are timetabled in 'blocks' of work. Whilst pupils learn about and experience the normally expected amount of art over their time in the school, they sometimes have to go a whole term without art lessons. This means that there are long breaks in their learning, and they forget much of what they have previously learned. For example, there is little evidence of skills such as observational sketching, shading, cutting, brush control, and colour mixing being progressively built on throughout the school. Additionally, there is not enough consideration given to the development of basic skills, such as the use of line, tone and colour and to reinforce pupils' visual memories through regular observational drawings.
- 118 Currently, not enough links are made with other subjects such as English, design and technology and science, and pupils use their sketchbooks inconsistently. Some are used well as purposeful working files, whereas others are used for finished pieces of work. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils have limited knowledge of the work of famous artists. Some final pieces of work are often hurried and do not always reflect pupils' ability.
- 119 The school uses national guidance as a basis for its scheme of work, in which there is not a broad enough range of activities or media for the pupils to experience. However, information and communication technology is increasingly used to enhance the curriculum. For example, Years 1 and 2 pupils have used computers to create colourful pictures of habitats for minibeasts and pupils in Years 3 and 4 have used them to create work in the style of Matisse. Assessment practice is good; pupil's attainment is regularly assessed after each unit and recorded accurately.

- 120 The subject co-ordinator is quite new to her post. She is very enthusiastic and has started to monitor teaching and the quality of pupils' work. She has created a good action plan to develop the subject further and has started to audit resources, which are adequate to support the existing curriculum. She has plans to review the present scheme of work in order to make better links with other subjects and to ensure that pupils build progressively and regularly on their skills. Visiting artists, including a sculptor, have been used to enrich the curriculum and pupils have been involved in the Millenium bridge design project and in quilt design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 121 Only two lessons could be observed during the inspection week because of time tabling arrangements. Judgements about standards were made from observing these lessons, from discussions with pupils and teachers, and from looking at samples of pupils' work.
- 122 Standards achieved are those normally expected of pupils at the end of both key stages, and pupils make satisfactory progress. They develop a satisfactory understanding of the technical language of the subject and are aware of health and safety issues. They have good opportunities to evaluate their designs and products, and to consider how they could improve them. Pupils do not, however, always complete their final products to an acceptable quality and the presentation of recorded work is often untidy.
- 123 Teaching overall is satisfactory. Where lessons are good, the work planned is challenging and successfully builds on pupils' skills. Throughout the school, there are good opportunities for pupils to generate ideas for products, to develop and plan methods and to choose what materials and tools they may need. Occasionally, lessons are overly teacher directed and this results in pupils following a 'worksheet recipe.' This approach deprives pupils of the opportunity to test their own ideas. In contrast, in a good lesson for those in Years 5 and 6, pupils ordered a range of instructions and created a paper proforma of a 'PE' bag, before cutting materials and sewing them together by machine, with the help of a parent helper. Good open-ended questioning prompted pupils to consider their proforma, and to evaluate and alter their designs in the light of what they had learnt. Teacher expectations of pupils to achieve well are generally appropriate. However, in some classes, expectations for the amount of work and quality of presentation are not as high as they might be. Pupils are aware of the aims of each lesson and the last part of lessons is used well to consolidate learning, and gives pupils the opportunity to consider what they have learnt.
- 124 Pupils in Key Stage 1 can make a simple vehicle with a chassis and axles, and decorate the body of the vehicle. They successfully plan their design and consider the things they will need to make it but their plans and their finished product are often poorly presented. Year 3 and 4 pupils consider the ingredients for healthy eating. They discuss food preferences and make a healthy sandwich. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 design a model shelter and consider appropriate coverings and shape to protect from bad weather. They evaluated their work sensibly, reviewing how they could improve it and the problems they encountered in its construction.
- 125 Teachers' planning is satisfactory and is based on national guidance. However, there is an insufficient range of varied activities in the present scheme of work. For example, pupils have too few opportunities to use construction kits, control technology or to incorporate simple mechanisms such as pneumatics and hydraulics into their designs. Due to timetabling arrangements the subject is not taught often enough,

with the result that pupils do not regularly build on their skills and knowledge. Additionally, there are missed opportunities for developing skills through links with other subjects, such as science, art and information and communication technology.

- 126 Pupils' progress is assessed after each unit of work and this is well recorded, informing teachers the following year of what each child can and cannot do. However, the results of assessment are not consistently used to inform daily planning.
- 127 Pupils' attitudes to design and technology are good. They concentrate well, show interest and can work individually or co-operatively in pairs. Behaviour is good in lessons because teachers make their expectations clear and have good management skills.
- 128 Resources are satisfactory, but there is a lack of sufficient construction kits and control mechanisms that would enhance the teaching of the subject. The co-ordinators role in monitoring teaching and pupils' work, and leading the subject, is in its early stages. She does not yet have a clear overview of the subject or awareness of standards. Although some sampling of teachers' planning has been undertaken this is not systematically done and does not have an impact on raising standards.

GEOGRAPHY

- 129 Pupils in Key Stage 1 and in lower Key Stage 2 reach satisfactory standards. Evidence was gained by scrutinising their written work and in discussions with them. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards at the end of Key Stage 2 because geography had not been taught since the autumn term. Standards suffer because there is too long a gap when the subject is not being taught. Pupils forget what they have learned, their skill development suffers, and the pace of their learning is lost. As a result of the long gap since their last work, pupils in Year 6 could recall little of their previous work. The school operates a two-year rolling programme for geography. Teachers' planning for the subject shows that pupils will cover over the two years the expected programmes of study. Pupils' knowledge of geography was better at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be as expected at the ages of seven and 11. This is particularly so in mapwork when, previously, pupils were judged to be above average in their mapping skills; being able to use six-figure co-ordinates. Now, pupils have only a rudimentary understanding about co-ordinates.
- 130 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of the environment and the effects of litter and pollution. This was well demonstrated in an assembly, when pupils explained what needed to be done to overcome such problems as graffiti and why it is important to stop people leaving litter. Pupils know that life in Mexico is different from their own and have a satisfactory knowledge of the facts they have learned. They are keen to give their opinions about their favourite Mexican foods and clearly enjoy learning about other countries. Displays with questions and labels help pupils to appreciate what different environments are like, such as the seaside, and what facilities and activities they would expect to find in resorts such as Blackpool. Pupils are taught to interpret simple maps and identify physical features, such as mountains and rivers. They know how to use a globe, know their address and, when prompted can name the countries of the British Isles.
- 131 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 build on their knowledge of the environment and different habitats learnt in Key Stage 1. They study what land in York is used for, and identify and categorise on a map the different facilities, such as businesses, shops, places of

leisure and residential areas. Their mapping skills are developing satisfactorily because they have enough opportunities to use maps. Pupils enjoy planning holidays in different locations, and deciding what to take with them.

- 132 Pupils in Year 6 recall facts about the water cycle, which they had learned about in the autumn term, but their recall of other work from that time, or earlier, is hazy. They report that they would like to do more geography work and to make additional field trips. They enjoyed the work they undertook early in September, about Scotland or other countries, as part of the school's 'European' fortnight. This work was of a reasonably good standard and pupils recalled it well because they had been involved in their own research. Occasionally, pupils use the Internet to research for information. Pupils interviewed are confident and familiar with using an index in an atlas but are much less so in the use of co-ordinates and scale. Their mapping skills are not well developed.
- 133 No lessons were observed, so it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching. Planning of the units of work is satisfactory, although lessons in upper Key Stage 2 do not provide sufficiently for pupils to record what they have learnt. Work in Years 3 and 4 is often neatly presented, marked satisfactorily and is assessed well. Residential visits for older pupils promote greater knowledge of aspects of geography, such as the study of a river. Geography makes a satisfactory contribution to developing pupils' literacy skills in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 but this is not so in upper Key Stage 2, where there is little recorded work. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn in mathematics such skills as using co-ordinates or scale.
- 134 The co-ordinator for geography is new to the post and works in the school for only two days each week. This makes it difficult to manage the subject successfully. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and keen to develop the subject. She has observed lessons in Key Stage 1 and looked at planning. A portfolio of pupils' work that is evidence of a particular standard is being produced. This should help staff make accurate assessments of pupils' attainment. There are still insufficient globes and atlases, although resources have generally improved since the last inspection.

HISTORY

- 135 Standards in history are in line with national expectations at ages seven and 11, although a significant proportion of pupils of all ages produce above average work on topics that interest them. Their speaking and listening, and reading, are generally better than their writing. The teachers use the local resources very well to motivate pupils and to give them a better sense of their own history. For instance, they use time lines from the Roman period to the present day showing local events, such as the tragedy of Clifford's Tower, and local characters, such as Guy Fawkes.
- 136 Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about the history of toys and, after a visit to a nearby museum, they can arrange toys in chronological order. Following a lesson on how customs and dress change over time, the pupils write imaginatively about life on a beach in the period when their grandparents were young. They describe how people used to watch Punch and Judy shows and used bathing machines. Teachers give pupils opportunities to visit interesting places, which results in good writing about life in the past, such as 'It was spooky having to go to bed with a candle. Shadows danced on the walls.' There is accurate recounting in letters to friends of life in World War II, explaining why gas masks were needed and reminding them about the need to take ration books to shops. Higher attaining pupils reach a good level and overall standards are sound. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are fully involved in the speaking and listening activities in class and enjoy the subject.
- 137 Pupils' enthusiasm for history continues as they grow older. They particularly enjoy lessons where they are involved in research. For example, the teacher in a Year 3 and 4 class set demanding tasks, using a range of reference books. Groups were asked to research different aspects of the Tudor period, such as clothing, jobs and food. This they did efficiently and with no fuss. They then had to report back to the rest of the class. They did this well because the introduction was sharp and reminded them of key words related to the task, and because the teacher gave them a precise deadline, so that they knew what was expected and how long they had to do the work.
- 138 Writing in the pupils' books shows imagination and an understanding of the different periods they study. In an account of the revolt of Boudicca, their account of the aftermath of the action was thoughtful and mature. They posed interesting questions to Henry VIII, such as why he called his ship 'The Mary Rose.' Higher attaining pupils draw inferences from maps and explain why houses were first built on the road near their school. They point out the nearness of the river. As with younger pupils, those in Key Stage 2 learn a lot from visits to places of local interest. After a field trip to Skipton Castle they were able to see how language develops. For example, they related that the word 'windows' is derived from 'wind-eyes'. There are good links drawn by teachers between literacy and history. For example, pupils were taught the importance of note making when they watched a video. More able pupils act as note takers for groups and report back the key points to their classmates.
- 139 Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some very good features. Teachers plan work well as a team, use a range of interesting resources and are starting to relate pupils' achievements to actual levels of attainment. A portfolio of pupils' work is proving to be helpful to teachers in judging progress over time. Leadership and management of the subject are sound. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, with better systems for assessment now in place.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 140 By the ages of seven and 11, pupils attain standards similar to those seen in most schools. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, are from a traveller background or who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because classmates or adults help them on a one-to-one basis. Although standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection pupils are now more familiar with some aspects of the curriculum, such as the control and modelling element. There is good progress in developing the subject. Pupils now receive regular weekly lessons and the teaching of the subject has improved. The school has also made improvements in the resourcing of hardware and software and the training of staff. There is now a computer suite and interactive board, which allows staff to demonstrate on a large screen what pupils are to learn. This is used effectively by teachers. The school has computers in some classes but these are often outdated and not compatible with the new computers, and are rarely used. However, they could be used to support some aspects of literacy and numeracy teaching and learning.
- 141 In Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 2 have appropriate keyboard and mouse skills, and are confident in using the computer for inputting data. Higher attaining pupils do so quickly. Pupils log on, access the appropriate program, click on the right tools for making X and Y axes and use survey information about seaside holidays to produce a chart. They understand the data and answer questions correctly, such as, "Which was the most popular destination?" They need the minimum of reminders about how to close down their program. Younger pupils in Year 1 access similar information but often need support from adults when the task is too challenging. Work involving word processing shows that pupils can write their own sentences and use clipart to enhance their work. Pupils produce colourful and eye-catching pictures using an art package.
- 142 Key Stage 2 pupils have some opportunities to word process their work and show that they can present their work well, using colour, graphics and different font sizes. However, they do not have enough opportunities in English lessons, or across other subjects, to practise their skills. As a result, their skills in word processing are not as well developed as they could be. For example, higher attaining pupils do not know how to use a spellchecker, and were unsure of some basic tool commands. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of spreadsheets and use them to record water usage for domestic purposes. They understand the power of computers in working out mathematical computations, and know which tools to use for different calculations. Pupils are familiar with the Internet and greatly enjoy researching information. One pupil, when demonstrating his ability to find information from the Internet, found out with lightning speed the World Cup football results. Pupils enjoy using a graphics package to produce some colourful abstract pictures in the style of Matisse. Younger pupils use computers to compose their own music in response to a particular picture.
- 143 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 respond enthusiastically to the challenge of a new program, where they 'instruct' the computer to control the operation of an electric fan. The teachers introduce the concept of sensors and timers through skilful questioning and thorough explanations, using simple examples. This helps pupils to think of many examples, such as traffic lights, automatic doors, security alarms, and many domestic appliances that use sensors or timing devices to control their operation. Pupils in one class gain a better understanding than in the others because of the better opportunities to explore the program for themselves, and to discover independently what instructions are required to make the fan work in the way they want. The teacher in this lesson used the higher attaining pupils, who had quickly

gained a good understanding, to explain and demonstrate how the fan could be turned off for a set interval before restarting. This demonstration, together with the additional explanations and questions posed by the teacher, led to a greater understanding by all pupils. ICT is used mainly satisfactorily in other subjects of the curriculum. A good link was made to geography in a Year 3 and 4 lesson. In this lesson, pupils successfully wrote an e-mail to children in a Birmingham school. They are aware that they must be careful about what personal information they include in their electronic mail.

- 144 The pupils' attitudes to their work are good and they work with enthusiasm. They are keen and thoroughly enjoy using the range of information technologies. Older pupils gave an audible intake of breath when introduced to a program new to them. Pupils listen to instructions carefully, treat equipment with respect and are eager to develop their skills.
- 145 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and is usually good or very good in Key Stage 2. Teachers are well prepared and organised, and support individual pupils well. They use questions skilfully to probe pupils' thinking and have high expectations of pupils to stay on task. Parents, students and support staff provide good support. The school is beginning to assess pupils' work in ICT but this practice has not had time to impact on the standards pupils achieve.
- 146 The ICT curriculum is well managed. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and, together with senior management, has produced a good action plan to further develop the subject. The co-ordinator has been involved in setting up a website together with some Year 3 and 4 pupils as part of a British Council initiative, so that children in other areas of the country can access the site.

MUSIC

- 147 Some aspects of music have a high profile in the school because the co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. For example, all pupils thoroughly enjoy and take an active part in regular singing sessions. These are lively occasions, and the quality of singing is high. Overall attainment in music is satisfactory in both key stages, and equals national expectations for pupils in Year 6. However, pupils attain above expected levels in the performance aspect of music. The previous report judged attainment to be satisfactory at ages seven and 11. During this inspection, separate key stage singing assemblies were seen, as well as two lessons in Key Stage 1 and two in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and English as a second language participated fully in all music activities, and made similarly good progress to their peers.
- 148 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn to play ocarinas as part of the music curriculum. A visiting specialist, supported by the class teachers, conducts these lessons. This approach is effective because all pupils learn at a rate appropriate to their prior levels of attainment, and their confidence in their own ability improves through playing together and achieving attractive sounds. Additionally, pupils learn from an early age to read formal musical notation, which supports their learning to play recorders when they reach Key Stage 2.
- 149 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good, mainly because the teachers plan and effect a range of 'fun' tasks that the pupils happily carry out. As a result, lessons move at a pace that keeps all pupils fully involved in the work. For example, in a lesson about pitch, the teacher had high expectations of the pupils to produce good quality singing. She did this through clearly explaining what the lesson was about,

and then involving them in whole class rhythm and pitch exercises, such as a practise exercise called 'boom chicka boom'. Similarly, in an another exercise, pupils responded accurately in hand movements and voices to the pitch of xylophones. The success of the lesson was apparent in the confidence and quality of singing individuals showed when they volunteered to lead the song 'Who's got the penny.' Most pupils are attentive during lessons because the teachers have good management and control skills. For example, regular reminders by the teachers in whole-class ocarina lessons to 'play only when I say' ensures that no time is wasted, and pupils' learning proceeds at a good rate.

- 150 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is also good, with some very good features. The subject co-ordinator's musical skills permeate to other teachers, who follow well the planned curriculum. Pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2 have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of musical terms, such as harmony and rhythm, and they can name a few well-known composers, such as Pachelbel. By the time they are in Years 5 and 6, most pupils play percussion instruments sufficiently competently to compose in small groups 'mysterious' pieces, which they play to their classmates and evaluate for mood. Pupils at this age have extended their musical knowledge, and many understand such terms as 'ostinato' and 'pentatonic scale.'
- 151 The school makes good use of events and visitors to enhance its music curriculum. For example, many pupils learn to play tuned instruments, such as keyboard, violin and guitar, from visiting specialists, and a Flamenco choir visited the school. There is a very active 'singing club' in which pupils learn and perform songs from a range of musical eras, such as rock and roll, although few boys take part in this club. Nevertheless, singing sessions for the whole of Key Stage 2 ensure that both boys and girls are fully included. Indeed, the quality of performance in these sessions is high, particularly when they sing together in harmony, or when singing two songs at the same time, such as 'Pack up your troubles' and 'It's a long way to Tipperary'.
- 152 A future development for the subject rightly focuses on using music more for pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum, although there is some way to go before this can be achieved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 153 Pupils in Key Stage 2 reach nationally expected standards in the development of games and outdoor adventurous activities. High standards have been maintained in swimming since the previous inspection. In Key Stage 1, pupils gain an appropriate level of fitness through their 'Fitness for Life' activities. These were the aspects of physical education seen during the inspection, which were different from those of the previous inspection, except in the aspect of swimming. Pupils who speak English as an additional language or who are from a traveller background attain similar standards to their peers. Pupils with special educational needs also often attain as well as their classmates because they receive individual help from adults, who demonstrate what it is pupils have to do.
- 154 Planning for physical education indicates that all aspects of the curriculum are taught, and work carefully builds on previous learning. The school places a strong emphasis on pupils learning to swim, and they benefit from regular lessons. As a result, by the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils have learnt to swim. By the time they leave the school at 11 nearly all pupils can swim 25 metres, and many obtain recognised awards involving considerable skills in the water. Nearly all pupils in a Year 3 and 4 class swam across the baths using a reasonable breaststroke. About half of the class showed a good level of confidence when swimming in deeper water and

retrieving objects from the bottom of the pool. In this lesson, lower attaining pupils gained enough confidence to swim with floats and those with special needs gained the confidence to enjoy being in the water. The higher and average attaining pupils were given good opportunities to practise their strokes and, because of the good level of instruction, improved their techniques. Staff have a good knowledge of the subject and communicate this well to their pupils. As a result, pupils make a good level of progress. A feature of the lesson was the good support provided by adults who went in the pool themselves. They helped individual pupils gain confidence and independence through a well-structured programme of activities. Staff use imaginatively a wide range of motivating aids that greatly enhance pupils' learning. All the pupils enjoyed their lesson.

- 155 Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are introduced to outdoor and adventurous activities in lessons as well as having opportunities to benefit through residential visits. Pupils enjoy the problem-solving game, when they have to work together in small teams to think through how they will cross 'the swamp' without any of their team falling in. A high level of discussion is generated when they work out how they can place their mats so that they will all be able to cross safely. Both classes collaborate and co-operate very well with each other, so that they are increasingly successful and learn from their mistakes. Teachers' make the game progressively more difficult to ensure that pupils will have lots of opportunities to discuss their strategies and improve their teamwork. Pupils show extreme care when one of the team has to carry a jug of water across 'the swamp'! Pupils respond enthusiastically and thoughtfully to fun activities when they work in pairs or small groups to produce shapes of letters of the alphabet with their bodies. They produce interesting movement positions that show originality and flair. The teaching of one lesson was good and very good in the other. In the most effective lesson, the teacher's question and answer session at the end of the game was excellent. Time was given for pupils to reflect on what they had learned, and they were able to evaluate their performances and teamwork. This is an improvement since the last inspection and also makes a good link with pupils' social and moral education. Pupils appreciate that they were developing good teamwork. One pupil observed, "We were listening to each other". Years 3 and 4 pupils have satisfactory games skills of throwing, batting and catching and they improve these with practice. They make a good rate of learning because of the good level of instruction they receive from the teacher.
- 156 Pupils in Key Stage 1 undertake rigorous activity in their 'Fitness for Life' work. They keep up a tremendous level of activity in timed bursts. Many are competent at skipping and are able to run, jog and jump with agility. Many follow instructions swiftly and stop on command. Pupils are enthusiastic about their exercise and many keep up a good pace, even when they are quite exhausted; which they were at the end of one lesson. Teachers give good opportunities to pupils to practise their skills and they ensure that most pupils work hard. The teaching in one lesson was satisfactory and in the other it was unsatisfactory. Teachers in both lessons did not make enough teaching points for pupils to improve the quality of their performance. The teacher in the unsatisfactory lesson did not keep good enough control of the pupils. As a consequence, a few pupils acted in a silly and unsafe manner, which apparently went unnoticed by the teacher.
- 157 The co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has worked alongside other colleagues and has observed some lessons in netball and dance. Assessment procedures are good and assessments are carried out at the end of each unit of work. The results from these assessments have not had time to impact on the standards pupils attain. The resources for the subject have improved since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 158 The provision for religious education is good. Standards observed in lessons show that pupils at ages seven and 11 achieve the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Much of the emphasis in Key Stage 1 is on the oral elements of the subject and there is a limited amount of extended writing. When pupils do write, teachers help them to construct accounts of stories about festivals from the Bible by using a suitable range of writing frames, such as storyboards. Some of the resulting stories are very well constructed with a coherent sequence of events. For example, the account of the Easter story in pictures and words was well done. It showed that pupils had understood the significance of the stories they had read. As they get older, they show good knowledge of the way different religions use symbolism to represent certain ideas and beliefs. Teaching encourages pupils to think about ceremonies such as marriage and how it is surrounded by symbols. Good links with the local Methodist Church are evident. Pupils have had the chance to take part in role-play in the church to help them understand better the rituals of the wedding service.
- 159 In Key Stage 2, pupils are introduced to more sophisticated issues, such as how the creation is interpreted in different religions. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length to help them to develop their thinking more deeply. From Year 3 onwards pupils learn more detail about different religions and faiths. In a lesson on the Sikh religion pupils were very interested in a video that raised some quite difficult ideas about spirituality. Encouraged by good questions from the teacher they were able to interpret many of the symbols of this religion, such as the knife for bravery. The teacher reinforced their learning by using artefacts that made the experience even more memorable. Pupils have also visited different places of worship and this gives them a new insight into how other people express their belief in God. Older pupils construct flow charts to show how such people as Peter, Paul and Constantine tried to spread the Christian influence. There is some lively and imaginative writing in Years 5 and 6, produced in the form of pen-portraits in a letter, which gives a view of how Jesus might have been viewed by his contemporaries.
- 160 The quality of teaching is sound overall, with some good aspects across the school. The main strengths are:
- very good use of resources such as video material, artefacts and worksheets to give pupils good visual stimulus of difficult ideas;
 - good team work by teachers in planning lessons in Key Stage 1 to make the best use of subject knowledge;
 - using aspects of the local community well so that pupils can experience at first hand what effect places of worship have on people of different faiths;
 - helping pupils to develop their understanding of spiritual, moral and cultural issues by relating them to their own lives and in a religious context.
- 161 The areas to improve are:
- encouraging pupils to write more in lessons rather than simply illustrating their thoughts, so that they gain a wider understanding of the topic;
 - pacing lessons better in Key Stage 2, so that pupils do not lose the initial impetus of good teaching by having to listen for too long.
- 162 The subject is well led, with good adherence to local guidelines. There has been a very good start to using assessment information to provide levels of attainment for pupils in order to track their progress. Many of the positive features from the last

inspection have been sustained, such as pupils' interest in the subject and their ability to speak knowledgeably about it. Work is now presented better on the whole.