

# INSPECTION REPORT

**DACRE BRAITHWAITE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
(VOLUNTARY AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Summerbridge, Harrogate

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121627

Headteacher: Ms Mirren Hyam

Reporting inspector: Mrs Sonja Öyen  
7167

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 195156

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Summerbridge  
Harrogate  
North Yorkshire

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Telephone number: 01423 780285

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Jenny Robinson

Date of previous inspection: May 1997

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7167	Mrs Sonja Öyen	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Music The Foundation Stage Equal opportunities	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
13723	Mrs Jean Overend	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
17907	Mr Michael Bowers	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Geography History Physical education Special educational needs	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Dacre Braithwaite School is a very small, voluntary aided Church of England school in an isolated situation on Braithwaite Moor, ten miles west of Harrogate. Pupils come from a wide area and from differing social backgrounds. All are from white ethnic groups and no pupil has English as an additional language. No pupil takes free school meals. Many live on outlying farms and their parents and grandparents also attended the school. As a growing number of parents choose the school, nearly half of the pupils come from outside the school's actual catchment area. Since the last inspection, the number on roll has risen to fifty-four. The number of pupils leaving and joining the school was high last year. The number in each year group varies from three to eleven. The headteacher teaches the class of 24 junior pupils and the 30 younger pupils are in another class, but pupils from Years 2 and 3 are taught English and mathematics as a separate group. On starting school, not all pupils have had pre-school education and their attainment varies although most are average for their age. In the school, 14 pupils (25 per cent: broadly average) have been identified as having special educational needs. One pupil has a statement of special educational need and three others receive support from outside agencies.

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

Dacre Braithwaite is a good school that serves its community very well. It fulfils its aim to be '*a friendly community where courtesy and self-discipline are nurtured.*' The pupils achieve well because of good teaching and because the curriculum interests them. Most pupils attain the level expected for their age and standards are starting to rise because of improvements in the quality of teaching. The school is very effective in teaching skills and knowledge so that pupils become true mathematicians, scientists and geographers. The headteacher's very good leadership and clear vision for the school are well rooted in Christian principles. She has forged very good relationships with parents and the community, so that all work together for the good of the pupils. The school gives good value for money.

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

- It develops well-rounded, confident individuals who think for themselves.
- Year 6 pupils achieve good standards in geography, especially in local fieldwork.
- An interesting, strong curriculum develops the junior pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) in a purposeful way;
- Much good, lively teaching ensures that pupils learn well and enjoy their work;
- The headteacher leads by example in wanting the best for the pupils;
- It draws well on the expertise and support of parents and others to enrich the pupils' experiences and assist their learning.

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

- Standards in spelling, handwriting and presentation of work;
- The rate of learning for pupils in Years 2 and 3 in literacy and mathematics;
- The effectiveness of school management and administration;
- The way the school identifies what it does well and where it needs to improve.

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

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

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1997. It has sustained the many strengths identified then and acquired a few more. Aspects of the three key issues remain, particularly the need for the teachers to focus more in their planning on what pupils need to learn. Given her heavy teaching commitment, the headteacher has rightly taken a pragmatic approach to school improvement

and ensured that change is understood by all. This has increased the level of consultation with parents and also strengthened the work of the governing body. The governors and headteacher have a clear view of the challenges facing the school as they are analysing assessment evidence. The strong commitment of all to continue to improve has been strengthened by the appointment of a Key Stage 1 manager. Her good teaching has boosted the overall profile of teaching in the school.

## STANDARDS

The table of standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests, is omitted as there were less than 10 pupils in the year group.

In the 2001 Key Stage 2 national tests, the school did well in English and science. Standards in mathematics were similar to those in most schools but were lower than in similar schools. The Key Stage 1 results were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, and placed the school in the lowest five per cent of similar schools. However, the high incidence of special educational needs and a lack of high attainment kept the grade low. Inspection evidence shows a more positive picture.

Standards are good in speaking and listening and average in reading and writing. Most pupils are confident in expressing their views. While many are fluent, avid readers by the end of Year 2, too many lack expression as they read aloud. Although a significant number are only in the early stages of writing in Year 2, they make good progress in the junior years, especially in Years 5 and 6, and generally reach the level expected for their age. Year 6 pupils know how to organise their writing and how to use language to good effect. However, the quality suffers because they make spelling and punctuation errors and do not present their work neatly enough. This also lowers the quality of work in other subjects. The programme to improve handwriting and spelling in all year groups has not yet lifted standards significantly. Mathematics standards are average and show signs of rising because of good teaching and a clear focus on developing pupils' number skills. Many Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are already attaining the level expected for their age. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils are doing better than this, especially in number. This is also evident in science where the pupils do well in scientific enquiry. The school's challenging targets for this year's national tests for 11-year-olds are realistic given current attainment. In art and design, design and technology, history, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education, standards are as expected for pupils' ages. It was not possible to judge overall standards in music. In geography, standards are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of support from the teachers and from other pupils, who consolidate what they know by telling others. They often attain the level expected for their age.

On starting school in the reception year, pupils' attainment varies but is broadly as expected for their age. There are signs that progress is accelerating for the infant pupils.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; the children are willing to learn, are interested in lessons and enjoy school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; most pupils show a high level of self-discipline in school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils of all ages and from differing social and cultural backgrounds mix well and this makes the school a happy family.
Attendance	Satisfactory; a number of pupils take holidays in term time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall. It has improved at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. Teaching is good in six lessons out of ten and very good in two out of ten. There is occasional very good teaching. This mirrors the national picture. Nevertheless, the teaching is not strong enough to boost the progress of pupils in Years 2 and 3 when they are taught as a separate group for literacy and mathematics. The pupils are not always challenged enough. Throughout the school, the pupils are not learning well enough how to check their spelling and how to present their work to a high standard.

All the teachers are highly committed, conscientious and industrious. They prepare lessons carefully and work well as a team. The headteacher is an inspirational teacher who gets the best out of her pupils. She sets a good model in challenging the pupils and asking for their views. The teacher of the youngest pupils has successfully organised her small room to provide different activity areas but spends too little time with the reception year children for them to achieve well in all six areas of learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory for the Foundation and infant pupils, good for the juniors because of the focus on relevant topics that develop pupils' knowledge and skills equally well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory; pupils receive help in the classroom and take a full part in school life. Learning targets are often too vague to guide staff in providing for their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; the staff celebrate pupils' achievement. They are very successful in developing each pupil as an individual who knows how to behave and who treats others with consideration. The school promotes local culture and heritage very well but is less effective in developing pupils' multicultural awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good; the staff know the pupils and families very well; the information from tracking pupils' progress is used to set targets and to decide what they should learn next.

The school enjoys a very close, fruitful partnership with parents who help in school and also help their children learn at home. They raise substantial funds for school resources. Statutory requirements are not met in physical education, as the school is not able to teach swimming. It makes satisfactory arrangements for gymnastics, dance and other activities.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key	The very good leadership of the headteacher sets the tone for the school; she has a clear vision well rooted in Christian principles. She carries a heavy management load and has yet to make best use of the skills of

staff	others.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; the governors are very supportive and actively involved in decision making. The chair is working with the headteacher to effect change and support management responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; the school compares itself with others and analyses carefully how well the pupils are doing.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory; the school is using its budget and reserve funds prudently to employ support staff and release the headteacher; space and resources, including ICT, are not always best used.

Recent changes in staffing have widened the range of subject and management expertise. The class of 30 Foundation and infant pupils does not have full time classroom support and the shape of the room inhibits the range of possible activities. The school makes very effective use of its extensive grounds to provide an outdoor curriculum. The space for administrative work is minimal. Resources are satisfactory. The headteacher's committed, caring leadership drives the school on. Governors consult parents, pupils and staff; they compare the school with others and set realistic challenges.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The good leadership of the headteacher;</li> <li>• The teaching is good and helps their children to make good progress;</li> <li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school with problems and questions;</li> <li>• Their children are expected to work hard;</li> <li>• Their children are becoming mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities provided outside the curriculum.</li> </ul>

The team agrees with the positive views of the parents. For a school of its size, Dacre Braithwaite offers more than most in after-school activities and educational visits.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards are average in English and mathematics. In science, standards are average at the end of Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards have risen in science since the last inspection and have been sustained in other subjects, apart from in geography where standards are now good for Year 6 pupils. However, caution must be used in comparing standards as the number of pupils in each year group varies widely. For example, this year, as last, there are fewer than ten Year 6 pupils. It is unrealistic to use percentage terms to compare the performance of Dacre Braithwaite with other schools because of the distortion when one pupil may account for 20 per cent or more. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the number of pupils with special educational needs varies in each year group. Last year, over half of the Year 2 and Year 6 pupils were identified as having special educational needs. This year, the incidence is much lower.
2. Most Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are attaining the level expected for their age. The targets of 100 per cent Level 4 attainment in English and mathematics in the 2002 national tests for eleven-year-olds are challenging in mathematics and very challenging in English, especially in writing. The content of pupils' writing is often good, especially in imaginative and expressive work. However, the quality is spoilt as pupils make errors in spelling, slips in punctuation and show vagaries in handwriting. For a significant number of pupils, this could make the difference in them gaining Levels 3, 4 or 5 in writing. This is not particular to English. In mathematics, the pupils often set out their work untidily and in science they spell terms incorrectly even when merely copying words already on the page. The current work of the higher attaining pupils shows their potential to attain the higher Level 5, especially in reading, the content of their writing, the use and application of number, and in science.
3. Last year, all the Year 6 pupils attained Level 4 in English and science. In addition, all met their individual targets apart from one in writing. Several pupils did better than their target. In a few cases, the pupils were only a few marks away from attaining Level 5 in English and in mathematics. The school is starting to use such information to help it evaluate pupils' achievement over time and see where there are implications for teaching and learning. For example, the headteacher has compared each pupil's Key Stage 2 attainment with that from Key Stage 1. This has highlighted the good progress made in science at Key Stage 2 but the slower rate in English and mathematics. When the performance of pupils at the school in 2001 is compared with what they achieved in 1997, standards in English have stayed the same but they have fallen in mathematics. However, national standards have risen and the school is not doing as well as it did. It has kept pace with the rise in science.
4. In science, standards are average at Year 2 and good at Year 6 where the pupils have good scientific enquiry skills. This strength in predicting, testing and evaluating findings is also evident in geography where standards are good. This is a new strength for the school. It reflects the headteacher's focus on developing the pupils' skills in a subject as well as their knowledge. As a result, pupils become competent mathematicians, scientists and geographers. They use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to help them as they resolve problems and questions often linked to local matters. For instance, when looking at local water supplies, the pupils used Ordnance Survey maps to locate and compare the sites of reservoirs and used spreadsheets to

analyse the use of water. In evaluating their findings, they realised relationships between factors and suggested how water supplies could be sustained. The standard of their work was more typical of much older pupils and represents good achievement. The pupils do well because of good teaching and because the content interests and motivates them.

5. Over time, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The attainment of the children as they start in the reception varies significantly. Not all have had pre-school education and personal and social skills vary widely. Generally, attainment is as expected for pupils' ages. The children are making satisfactory progress and on course to achieve the early learning goals (the national standard) in all six areas of learning by the end of the reception year. Many are making best progress in personal, social and emotional development because of the way they mix with others of all ages. Parents at the meeting with inspectors commented on the way their children grow in confidence and independence. Higher attaining children are also achieving well in reading and number.
6. Good teaching for pupils in Year 1 is accelerating their learning in English and mathematics. A scrutiny of pupils' work since September shows that many have made good progress in reading, have started to write on their own and to add and subtract numbers to twenty.
7. Most Year 2 pupils are on track to attain Level 2, as expected for their age, in the national tests and teacher assessments. They are learning about punctuation, grammar and spelling rules but do not always apply their knowledge in their writing. Like the older pupils, the Year 2 pupils make errors in simple punctuation, such as not using a capital letter to start a person's name. They write a fair story and use language well to explain and describe. This is well seen in their science accounts. While pupils do well in reading, there is little evidence of high attainment in writing or mathematics. Most pupils are working competently with addition and subtraction to twenty and know basic information about shapes, space and measures.
8. In the 2001 national tests, the pupils fared badly when compared with others nationally. The results placed the school well below average in reading, writing and mathematics and in the bottom five per cent of similar schools. Although there was some high attainment, most of the pupils either did not attain Level 2 or only just attained the lowest level, Level 2C. Only in mathematics was the attainment stronger. There was a high incidence of special educational needs but work from previous years and school results in national tests show that the pupils have not always made enough progress in the infant years. Many have started Key Stage 2 still in the early stages of reading and writing. Their good progress at Key Stage 2 has only allowed them to catch up rather than move ahead.
9. The school is now using data from tests and teachers' assessments to track pupils' achievement over time and to set targets for individuals as well as year groups. This is giving the school a more informed picture of how well it is doing and where it needs to amend the curriculum and to change emphases in teaching. For example, an analysis of the Year 6 pupils' science results in the national tests last year showed weaknesses in pupils' knowledge of materials and their properties. This year, the work centred on a visit to the local quarry has heightened pupils' knowledge and skills in grouping and classifying rocks and soils.
10. In English and mathematics, the school is aware of the key areas for improvement in spelling, handwriting and mental mathematics but has done less to pinpoint the exact

weaknesses in those areas. As a result, the teaching is not focussed on specific aspects and standards are not rising noticeably. Given the greater emphasis on handwriting and spelling, the standard of presentation of work has not improved enough since September. The pupils spell words correctly in tests and do neat handwriting at practice times, but their work is too often of a lesser quality. In mathematics however, the pupils are showing developing facility in handling and using numbers. The regular sessions of solving problems and looking at ways to use number, such as doubling, rounding up, splitting into tens and units, are helping the pupils to see number relationships. They are also dealing with number confidently in other subjects. For instance, in science Year 2 pupils collected information on people's favourite foods, and Year 6 pupils then compiled a bar chart with key to explain the categories.

11. As in the last inspection, standards in ICT are satisfactory. The school has kept pace with national trends and has done particularly well in ensuring that pupils use ICT as a learning tool. Pupils are acquiring new skills and knowledge as part of work in other subjects. They see purpose in what they are asked to do and try things out. In 1997, word processing was identified as a strength. Now pupils generally attain the standard expected for their age in all aspects, although their level of proficiency varies greatly in using the keyboard. This reflects the practice they get in using the computers and other ICT equipment. Some older pupils are very adept in keying in information, changing the style and appearance of print on screen and inserting items from other files, including pictures from the Internet.
12. Standards are satisfactory in art and design, design and technology, history and physical education. It was not possible to judge standards of attainment in music as no lessons were seen. However, pupils' singing in assemblies and class was unsatisfactory – the pupils lack verve and find it hard to sustain a melody. In contrast, pupils are doing well in playing the recorder and reading music.

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

13. The school has maintained very high standards in these aspects since the last inspection. Parents are rightly confident that their children behave, work and develop very well. All the parents and carers who returned the questionnaire agreed that their children like school and many commented on how their children thrive in the happy, family atmosphere.
14. The pupils' high levels of self-confidence, ease with each other and concern for others reflect the ethos of the school. The parents praised the way the school develops each child as an individual and encourages initiative, responsibility and self-discipline. These personal attributes were very evident in the pupils' enthusiasm for what they did and their open and willing approach to help others. They showed a positive self-image in terms of their own learning and often mature skills in evaluating their own work.
15. The pupils' very positive attitudes to learning begin in the foundation stage. The nine children in the reception year have settled quickly into school routines and are happy and at ease with the older pupils in the class. On some occasions, however, the ebullience of the six and seven year olds overawes the less mature children who seek reassurance from adults. All are more confident when working as a group. They are keen to know what they will be doing and show delight in new activities, such as mixing colours on their hands and making a home for the toy sheep Baatat. They work amicably together, share resources and control each other. One girl's *Don't*

*snatch!*' ensured that two others waited their turn to use the towel when washing their hands. They sit still and sustain their attention for long periods of time. When the classroom assistant had to deal with a sick child, four others sat quietly waiting until she returned. Although they continued with the activity for a while and then chatted about what they were doing, they made little fuss and showed a good level of maturity. This is also evident when they confidently tidy away or get ready to go outside and show a good level of self-reliance.

16. This enthusiasm, confidence and good self-discipline is also evident in pupils in the infant and junior years. They also have very good attitudes to their work; they listen carefully in discussions and conversations, organise what they need and use their initiative as they know that the adults appreciate their ideas and views. This was well seen when a group of Year 2 pupils of their own accord decamped en masse from the classroom to a table in the middle room where they could stand to do their colour mixing. The pupils are interested in what they do and sustain good levels of concentration. There is usually a buzz in lessons as the pupils discuss the tasks and help each other to complete them. They persevere, are keen to see work through and often follow up ideas at home.
17. Pupils' behaviour is very good and supports their learning very well. The pupils know how to behave in and out of school and can generally be trusted to act sensibly. Only in one or two lessons seen did a small number of pupils, usually boys in Years 2 and 3, misbehave and disrupt others' learning. Their inattentiveness and restlessness stemmed from the slow pace of the lesson but quickly dissipated when they were encouraged to recite a poem loudly. The pupils are genuinely courteous, polite and quick to react when they see that there is something to be done. This is typified in the behaviour of the older pupils who serve meals at lunchtimes. They show a high level of care, responsibility and self-control in managing the others on their table and ensuring all enjoy their meal. Parents commented that the pupils' behaviour on educational visits is exemplary and letters in school testify to this. In the playground they mix and play together very well and the older pupils involve younger ones in their games. No instances of oppressive behaviour or bullying were evident. Although one pupil was excluded from school for a fixed period last year because of unacceptable behaviour, this was the only incident in recent years.
18. Relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils and themselves are very good and are a strong feature of the school giving it a warm, family atmosphere. The pupils greet each other spontaneously as they meet and are sensitive to, and supportive of, the needs and feelings of others. The older pupils were very aware that the headteacher was feeling unwell and took it on themselves to assist the inspection team. All the pupils showed a good level of initiative in organising themselves. They were quick to do their jobs, such as clearing dinner plates or removing chairs from the lunch hall, and also willing volunteers when anyone asked for help. They cooperate sensibly and are very patient and thoughtful with younger pupils or those who are having difficulties. When two Year 5 and 6 boys tried to help another in compiling a spreadsheet on the computer, both showed sympathetic patience as they repeated instructions and then mutual delight when he succeeded. Pupils with special educational needs form very good relationships with the adults who support them. They also respond very positively to the help they get through the school's 'buddy' system when more able peers share their knowledge and work with them.
19. All the pupils take an active part in school life and willingly take part in additional activities, such as after school clubs. The pupils' concern for others and motivation to help are also very evident in the way they organise fund raising events, such as the

Bring and Buy Sale for the Blue Peter appeal. The pupils have limited experience of meeting others with different beliefs and cultures but they show a good understanding of the importance of valuing others. They were quick to extend sympathy to local American families following the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001.

20. Attendance is satisfactory overall. There is no unauthorised absence and levels of authorised absence are broadly average. During the week of the inspection, more than a quarter of pupils were absent because of influenza. Parents sometimes take family holidays in term time and this adversely affects the learning of their children. The parents ensure that their children are on time to start the school day promptly and pupils waste little time in coming into classrooms.

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

21. The inspectors endorse the parents' view that the quality of teaching is good. It has improved since the last inspection. The recent appointment of the teacher to work with the infants has strengthened the profile of teaching and boosted the pupils' learning, especially for those pupils in Year 1.
22. The teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons seen. It was good in 51 per cent and very good in a further 17 per cent. This is very similar to the national teaching profile but care should be taken in interpreting the statistics as each lesson is equivalent to more than four percentage points.
23. The strongest teaching is given by the headteacher. As the parents commented, she inspires the pupils and works with them to help them make connections between new information and what they already know. This ensures that they learn well across the curriculum. Her love of literature and interest in local heritage comes through in the topics she chooses and the way she discusses books and events with pupils. Her high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and achievement are also shared by the teacher who works with the infant pupils.
24. Two part-time teachers work with pupils from Years 2 and 3 in the mornings and over a week share the literacy and numeracy teaching. A scrutiny of teachers' planning and the pupils' books, as well as the teaching seen, indicates that the overall quality, although satisfactory, is not as strong as that in the other classes. The pupils are not being pushed to learn and make up ground previously lost in the infant years. The separate teaching for Year 2 and Year 3 pupils and then their return to other classes in the afternoon is not fully effective. The teachers do not always pitch things right for either year group. In science, for example, the challenge for the Year 2 pupils is not sufficiently different from that for Year 1 pupils to accelerate their learning. Conversely, the challenge for the Year 3 pupils is often too high and this slows their learning as they cannot always cope.
25. The quality of teaching for the children in the reception year is satisfactory. The teacher has a good awareness of the principles of effective early years' teaching. She has given a lot of thought and time to making the most of the room and using the furniture to create defined learning areas so that groups of children can work at different tasks. This has created an attractive and purposeful learning environment which is well organised and structured. The children have quickly learnt where things are kept and how the classroom runs. However, there is a tendency for the reception children to use only one part of the room and for the two other year groups not to see the resources, such as the sand tray and Toy Shop, as part of their learning experiences.

26. During the inspection, the teacher more often worked with groups of Year 1 and 2 pupils while the classroom assistant or a parent worked with the reception children. Her planning showed that this was not always the usual arrangement. She plans conscientiously and ensures that the other adults are well briefed as to the purpose of the activity and how to go about it. She also prepares interesting and often absorbing activities. When she teaches them herself, the children's learning increases in pace. For example, in a reading session, three reception boys began to see the pattern of the words '*It should be a ...*' because she skilfully drew their attention to the initial letters and to the repetition of the phrase on each page. She joined in their conversation about the pictures but steered their attention with questions such as '*Well done but can you read that word too?*'. This was a productive short session that not only included good reading teaching but also strengthened the bond between her and the children.
27. Several common strengths characterise the teaching throughout the school and contribute to the happy ethos of the school and to the pupils' positive attitudes to learning:
- All the teachers plan conscientiously what they will do. They prepare the materials needed so that everything is to hand. They often display the structure of the day and what pupils will be doing. The headteacher makes good use of one board to notify the pupils of their homework. The teachers encourage the pupils to be involved in some parts of the preparation such as getting resources or rearranging tables. There is an air of informality but within an organised structure. As a result the pupils know what is expected of them; they often anticipate teachers' requests or instructions, organise what they need and are ready to start lessons promptly.
  - The teachers allow the pupils leeway to develop their own ideas. This promotes well the pupils' skills as independent learners. The older pupils know they can make use of the computers to support their work and if they follow up topics at home, the headteacher will be interested in what they find out. The teachers also use the pupils' suggestions and this increases their motivation and level of involvement. When the headteacher agreed that a Year 6 pupil could put on a play, the other pupils gave their full support in rehearsing and producing it. This reinforced their learning in several areas of the curriculum and allowed the headteacher to make key teaching points on aspects such as the format of play scripts and playbills.
  - The staff work well as a team. They get on well together and with the pupils. The support staff know what they are to do and use their time sensibly to get things ready. In some sessions, the teacher draws them into class discussions. For example, the support assistant acted as a critical audience for Year 2 and 3 pupils who were learning how to improve their skills in reciting poetry. The teachers and support staff work together to provide encouragement and support for pupils with special educational needs. The good quality discussions and prompts as well as quiet words of praise help to keep the pupils focussed on their tasks. In a geography lesson, many pupils benefited from the support of an assistant as she responded to their questions while helping one pupil organise the task.
  - The use of "buddies" is an effective teaching and learning strategy in the junior class to support pupils who are having some difficulty. The pupils readily respond to the teacher's request '*Can you help out?*' Higher attaining pupils work with and guide others. This is beneficial to the learning of both partners. In explaining and

discussing what is happening, the higher attaining pupils clarify the connections they have made between old and new learning. This is often in terms that the other pupil grasps quickly. For instance, one Year 6 boy's clear instructions, repeated several times and amended when things went wrong, enabled another to create a spreadsheet on the computer. As a result both pupils got a feeling of personal success.

- The teachers are skilled at keeping several activities on the go at the same time. When groups are working on different tasks, the teachers use their time efficiently to give pupils feedback on how well they are doing and to question them about what they will do next. The quality of this work is often very good and drives the pupils' learning on several fronts. In one very well managed session, the teacher taught Year 1 pupils how to use additional computer functions to develop their creation of pictures, started a group sewing, helped Year 2 pupils to improve their colour mixing and regularly commented to other pupils on what they were doing as they worked with other adults. All the pupils achieved well as the teacher set very clear criteria for their learning. Not a minute of her or the pupils' time was wasted and every pupil got her attention when needed. As a result, the pupils concentrated hard on their tasks and enjoyed what they were doing. The boys and girls stuck at their sewing despite the frustrations of not being able to thread the needle. Complaining to one another prompted one to show the others how wetting the end of the thread helped. All then were able to carry on without going to the teacher.

28. Other common aspects sometimes constrain the pupils' learning and the quality of the teaching.

- The teachers do not always share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils or set different learning targets for pupils of differing attainment. Few display the lesson purpose or return to it at the end of the lesson. Although the teachers share what the pupils have done with the class, they frequently miss the chance to summarise what has been learnt and to help pupils to see how well they have learnt a new strategy, used an old one or remembered key facts. In an English lesson for the older juniors, this was a key missing element in a session where much of the teaching was otherwise very good.
- Although the teachers discuss their teaching, they tend to separate what each will do and this has resulted in a loss of continuity and cohesion for the pupils, especially in English and mathematics. This is accentuated by the fact that pupils do work in one book for one teacher and in another for a different teacher. The inconsistency also shows in the differing standards of presentation accepted from the pupils.
- Marking is not being used rigorously enough as a tool to develop the pupils' learning. Not all pupils' work has been marked and in some pupils' books, especially in Years 2 and 3, there is much unfinished work. All the teachers make comments to the pupils on their work but there is little specific guidance on what they need to do to improve or how they might meet their targets. An exception to this is the frequent use of comments from the teacher to the Year 1 pupils about their writing. These remind the pupils of targets and also extend their work. Good examples are, '*Remember to use a capital letter to start a sentence*' and '*Tell me what she liked to do*'. The teacher is also engaging in good dialogues with parents when they make comments about their children's reading.

- Too often the teachers do not take full account of the pupils' needs, particularly those with special educational needs or the younger pupils in the class. One pupil was unable to determine the mood expressed in a poem as the text was too complex. Similarly, by placing a reception child near the end of a long counting line the teacher unwittingly hampered the child's participation as the numbers were too high.
- Not all teachers' planning identifies clearly what each group or individuals are to learn and how this will be achieved in the different sessions. Some planning is very skimpy and merely indicates what will be done and how it will be organised. This makes it difficult for the teachers to evaluate what the pupils have learnt.

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

29. The overall quality of the curriculum is good. The pupils experience a broad range of worthwhile opportunities and the older junior pupils particularly benefit from a coherent, well planned curriculum that is relevant to their needs and which often builds on local links. This motivates and interests the pupils and contributes greatly to their personal development.
30. A strong feature of the curriculum is the way it enables the pupils to become independent learners who think things through for themselves, and who are competent mathematicians, geographers, historians and scientists. The curriculum quality for the older pupils has been strengthened since the previous inspection. Topics such as the study of the environment of Pateley Bridge not only develop the junior pupils' knowledge and skills in geography but also in English, mathematics, ICT and science. As part of conducting fieldwork and research, the pupils are encouraged to use their initiative and organise their own learning. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, especially the higher attaining, as the focus on problem solving and investigations allow them to extend their ideas and skills.
31. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It covers all six areas of learning although the area of physical development is not as rich as the others. The school is aware of this and is developing the quality by providing more equipment to use outdoors. As the Foundation Stage children are in a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2, they follow the same themes and topics. On the whole, this works well as the teacher takes their needs into account and where appropriate, as in mathematics, has the higher attaining children working with Year 1 pupils. While appropriate emphasis is placed on learning through play and first hand experience, opportunities for the children to make their own choices of what to do are limited. This often, but not always, reflects the constraints of the accommodation and the organisation of the timetable.
32. As well as religious education, the curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 includes all subjects of the National Curriculum although the school is not able to meet all statutory requirements in physical education because of accommodation limitations and difficulties of access to a swimming pool. An appropriate emphasis is given to English, mathematics and science. Although the time given to science is comparatively low this does not diminish the quality of the science curriculum. From starting school, the pupils are encouraged to observe and comment. Also the system of running science alongside physical education at Key Stage 2 allows the headteacher to provide concentrated science teaching to pupils in Years 3 and 4



while qualified sports coaches work with the older pupils for an hour and then this situation is reversed.

33. The school has successfully adapted the guidance of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to reflect the needs of the school. For instance, to raise standards in the use of number, the school includes short sessions of mental mathematics to supplement work done in mathematics lessons. Similarly, sessions of group reading have been taken out of the literacy hour and placed at the start of the day so that parents, teaching and support staff can guide small groups and give them more frequent reading practice. The school is also using the Additional Literacy Strategy to boost the reading and spelling skills of pupils in Year 3.
34. The importance of drama, role-play and debate are recognised by the school and pupils' oral confidence and vocabulary are developed well through these activities. Pupils also benefit from regular sessions using published materials to develop their problem solving skills and their ability to explain their thinking and apply their skills when appropriate. This also typifies the ICT curriculum. The school places equal importance on the pupils using and applying their ICT skills as on acquiring them. As a result the pupils know when as well as how to use particular programs and the older pupils naturally turn to the computers to record and present their ideas and also to carry out research.
35. The systematic development of skills is less evident in art and design and design and technology where there is overlap in provision. While the pupils acquire skills and learn techniques, more emphasis has been placed on the quality of the product than on the learning process. There are insufficient opportunities to develop the link between the design process and making skills in design and technology.
36. The music curriculum is satisfactory. In response to comments in the last inspection report, the school raised the profile of singing but this has not been effective in raising the quality of singing. In contrast, the expertise of a volunteer has lifted significantly the pupils' skills in playing the recorder and reading music.
37. The work of local sports coaches who work with the junior pupils strengthens the physical education curriculum. The school compensates for not having suitable accommodation to provide dance and gymnastics by occasionally using the local sports hall and the sports facilities at the nearby American base. At the time of the inspection there was no teaching of swimming in school time although some pupils go swimming with their families. Parents give of their time and expertise to contribute to the curriculum in and out of school hours. For example, a parent worked with a group of Year 1 pupils to prepare the ingredients and cook mushroom soup. Older pupils had recently benefited from working with a member of the local community who introduced them to the use of microscopes as part of their investigations into the local geology.
38. Although a minority of parents feel there should be more extra-curricular activities, the range and number of clubs run by the school is in line with most primary schools and is satisfactory overall. The school does more than many in running a club for the infants as well as activities for the junior pupils, mainly in sport. Twelve pupils, including eight boys, attended the recorder club. This provided a good quality experience that extended the musical skills and knowledge of those just beginning to play as well as the more advanced players. Other clubs are well attended and all are a good opportunity for pupils to interact with other adults and pupils from other year

groups. Sports activities organised by the community and a good programme of educational visits extend this provision.

39. To combat the isolated nature of the school, the headteacher, governors, parents and pupils have worked hard and been successful in forming very good links with others in the community. As a result, the curriculum is highly relevant and meaningful for the pupils. For example, the school makes effective use of fieldwork in the school grounds and the local area in geography and history. The school welcomes and actively encourages visitors to share their experiences and expertise. For example, pupils have benefited from working with a member of the Women's Institute in sewing, making lace, and using a range of different materials. Similarly, older pupils have learnt how to use a microscope and make specimen slides from working with a member of the Microscope Society.
40. Links with the business community also enrich the work of the school and provide sponsorship for projects, such as the playground. The school has constructive links with partner institutions. Qualified specialist coaches from the local sports college work the pupils in aspects of physical education, such as football, orienteering and gymnastics.
41. The school's very good provision for pupils' personal development reflects both the mission statement and the very good model set by the headteacher in valuing each pupil as an individual. The pupils learn about themselves and about citizenship through a timetabled programme of personal, social and health education that includes aspects of sex education and drugs education. Other social issues, such as care for the environment, run through science, religious education, physical education, geography and English. Pupils are encouraged to be increasingly aware of health issues during lessons and as part of school life. At lunchtimes, the pupils who serve others try hard to ensure that all try a little of everything. The pupils know that the slices of carrot at the end of the meal are to help to clean their teeth. Pupils are also encouraged to discuss issues and current events. In discussing the concepts of democracy and dictatorship, older pupils applied what they knew of choosing and voting for local councillors to deciding how they should choose a team captain for the school.
42. As reported in the last inspection, the very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development underpins the whole of school life. The parents are very happy with the Christian values promoted by the school. Throughout the curriculum pupils are encouraged to reflect on aspects of life. In science, for example, the pupils used microscopes to wonder at mini-beasts. Good use is made of the wildlife area and woodland to develop the pupils' appreciation of the natural world and what they can do to protect and manage it. Through looking at the life and work of special people, such as Dr. Barnardo and Bill Gates, pupils debate issues of belief and personal values. 'The prayer of a duck' had inspired pupils to write their own prayers from the perspective of others. Daily acts of worship include time for reflection, prayer and praise.
43. The school provides very well for pupils' moral and social development. The school rightly prides itself on being a caring family and from their earliest days in school the pupils are encouraged to consider others. They are taught to know right from wrong and to value their place in the community so that they can debate and contribute to school rules with understanding. All the staff listen to and show respect for the pupils and each other and the school council provides opportunities for the pupils to take decisions for themselves and others. In lessons, moral and social issues are debated

and pupils are encouraged to follow up their concerns. A good example was the work done by Year 6 pupils to put on a play for parents that reflected their feelings about the impact of the foot-and-mouth outbreak.

44. The staff provide many very well planned opportunities for pupils to help one another and to work together. The “buddy” system provides new pupils with an older friend to help them settle in to the school. This provides older pupils with responsibility and younger children with very good role models. Pupils are made aware of those less fortunate than themselves and they support local and national charities.
45. The good provision for pupils’ cultural development has been sustained since the last inspection. The school ensures that pupils have a very good awareness of the local culture and heritage through house names, local studies, educational visits and work with local people. Worthwhile initiatives in the recent past to develop pupils’ awareness of other cultures, such as a visit to Bradford, have not been included as part of the planned curriculum for this year. A good step to alert younger pupils to life in other countries is the emigration of Heyshaw the toy hedgehog to live with a family in Nicaragua with letters and photographs to show where he is and what he is doing. Links with the nearby American base have provided opportunities to experience American culture when the children visited to play baseball and try ten-pin bowling. A recent, and potentially strong, initiative is work with other small schools in the diocese to look at issues of social and educational inclusion in a school that has no pupils from ethnic minority groups or who speak English as an additional language.

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

46. All the staff are effective in supporting the pupils. They take a keen, caring interest in them, and their families, and in helping them to get the best out of their time in school. Nevertheless, as noted in the last inspection, gaps in required health and safety systems and procedures to ensure pupils’ welfare make this aspect satisfactory overall.
47. Parents are very happy with the care and support their children receive. There was high praise for this aspect of the school’s work from the parents who attended the meeting with inspectors. Similarly, 75 per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire strongly agreed that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. Inspectors echo the parents’ view that the headteacher encourages the pupils to think for themselves and gives them scope to try out their ideas, to take the initiative and to appreciate the talents and achievements of others. As a result, the pupils are well-rounded individuals who know their own minds and can discuss issues maturely and confidently. Parents, pupils and staff know each other very well. The very good relationships give pupils the confidence to seek help if they need it. Problems are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from adults and other pupils so that they play a full part in school life.
48. Procedures for child protection are secure and all staff are familiar with the policy and procedures. The coordinator has arranged further training for the staff to keep their awareness levels high for this important aspect.
49. The governors meet all but a few statutory requirements for health and safety. Several procedures to log information are not rigorous enough. The school has recently decided to use LEA. health and safety expertise to improve and ensure best practice and the health and safety coordinator has organised a training programme to keep

staff up-to-date in aspects such as first aid. Risk assessments have been completed for school visits but not for other aspects such as the parking of cars on the sheltered playground where pupils often play. A strong feature of the provision is the work done to teach pupils how to keep themselves safe and how to cope in emergencies. The school draws on expertise from the police and the hospital for the 'Crucial Crew' (drugs education) and 'IMPs' (Injury Minimisation Programme) sessions.

50. All the teaching and support staff have a good knowledge of the pupils and how well they are progressing personally. The teachers share their knowledge with the parents and pupils so that literacy and numeracy targets can be set. The pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own progress by completing self-assessment sheets which are then included in the end-of-year reports to parents. The parents praised highly the weekly Barnabas assembly when their children's achievements, in and out of school, are shared with and celebrated by all.
51. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are also good. The headteacher takes the lead in expecting pupils to behave responsibly at all times. She and the other staff place a high level of trust in the pupils and are quick to praise and reward them when they behave well. The pupils and their parents value the stickers and comments made. A good feature of the provision is the shared ownership of the school rules with the pupils. The pupils participate in compiling the codes of conduct for events such as packed lunch, dinnertime and times in the school's wooded area. As a result, all understand and accept the rules. Assemblies and circle time sessions are also used well to promote acceptable and responsible behaviour.
52. The monitoring and promotion of good attendance is satisfactory. The school keeps track of absences and parents are conscientious in letting the school know the reasons for their children's absences. The headteacher is aware that parents do not keep their children away from school unnecessarily and is working with them to minimise the disruption to learning when pupils go on holiday in term time. There are good procedures in place to inform the parents when the school is closed because of poor weather conditions.
53. The need to establish more structured assessment procedures was a key issue in the last inspection. The school has made good improvement in developing efficient systems to track the pupils' progress in the short and long term. This is giving the school vital information to evaluate its effectiveness (a second key issue) in ensuring pupils make consistent progress (a third key issue) and in guiding the teachers in their planning.
54. As well as assessing pupils' attainment in their first term in school and using national tests for seven and eleven year olds, the school is also making use of tests, such as those in reading and spelling, to monitor how well pupils in other year groups are progressing and to set performance targets. Compared with 1997, the school has not only a much stronger evidence base to evaluate the impact of teaching on the learning but also key information to track the pupils' progress from reception to Year 6. As the year groups are often too small to warrant statistical comparisons in attainment, this monitoring of achievement is a vital cog in the school's evaluation system and in the governors' ability to judge the value added by the school.
55. The teachers keep good records of the pupils' progress across the curriculum. This begins in the reception year. The teacher is making effective use of her observations of the children and samples of their work to record their work in the six areas of

learning. This is at its best in the area of communication, language and literacy although national guidance (stepping stones) is not being used rigorously enough to pinpoint the children's level of development and what they need to learn next.

56. A good initiative, given the classes of mixed year groups, is the use of assessments at the start and end of topics. For instance, the teachers make good use of concept maps in science. Here the pupils compile a word web to show what they already know about a topic. Similarly, very good use is made of mental mathematics assessments to indicate pupils' levels of accuracy and competence. This is possible as the tests are graded to meet the needs of the full age range of pupils in each class. The teachers use the information well to plan the next activities and to adjust plans to meet the pupils' needs.
57. The school follows national recommendations on the identification and provision for pupils with special educational needs. Plans are in hand to ensure that the school meets the new rights and duties resulting from recent legislation and follows the revised Code of Practice. The special educational needs register is updated regularly. The school makes effective use of outside agencies to provide specialist support such as in speech and language. This ensures that pupils' specific needs are met and that the school fulfils the conditions of statements of special educational need. While all pupils who require them have individual education plans, the quality of the plans varies considerably. Some give clear guidance on how the targets can be achieved and how a good rate of learning can be sustained. Others are too general to give clear direction to the teaching.
58. An assessment initiative is the identification of gifted and talented pupils. However, this is currently part of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and as such, does not use national guidance on identifying and meeting the needs of very high attaining pupils.

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

59. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to enjoy very good relationships with its parents. The partnership with them is a central strength of the school and reflects the headteacher's awareness that the parents' loyalty and support is vital to the school's existence. She is very effective in sustaining and promoting good ties with the families and in working with them for the benefit of their children and the school. Parents talked of 'a partnership' and the openness of the headteacher to their views and ideas.
60. The overwhelming support from the parents is well seen in their response to the inspection – nearly every parent and carer returned the questionnaire and 17 mothers came to the meeting with inspectors. A significant number of parents also sent letters and additional comments in praise of the school. There was 100 per cent agreement in seven of the twelve areas covered in the questionnaire. The only areas of some disagreement were about extra curricular activities, homework and being kept well informed about their children's progress.
61. The inspection team endorses the parents' positive views and judges the concerns to be unwarranted. Like many small schools, Dacre Braithwaite offers a limited programme of after school activities but the visits out are more varied and numerous than in many other schools. The school has an agreed homework policy and the headteacher is looking at ways to ensure that pupils follow this consistently. The

school works hard to keep parents informed but the fact that parents disagreed or ticked the 'Don't know' box indicates chinks in the communication system.

62. The school provides very good information for parents through day-to-day contact, half-termly newsletters, an informative school prospectus and comprehensive governors' annual report to parents. All written information is in a clear format and gives a lively view of the school. For example, the inclusion of pupils' work and snippets from staff and governors give the newsletters high reader appeal. Parents' evenings are very well attended and the parents welcomed the quality of the information about their children's progress, especially those in the infant years. Good numbers of parents attend evening sessions to inform them about curriculum matters and several parents commented that they found them entertaining as well as informative. Video evidence also shows that parents and other family members support the school in good numbers for performances such as the Christmas plays.
63. The written annual reports for parents on their children's progress are of very good quality and parents appreciate the time and thought that the teachers give to writing them. The reports are extremely detailed and provide a clear indication of where progress has been made. Good features are the references to the targets that the pupil has achieved as well as targets for the next terms, and the section for pupils to comment on their own progress. Parents of children with special educational needs are invited to the progress review meetings and to the agreement of new targets.
64. The school values its parents, canvasses their opinions and listens carefully to their concerns. The governors and headteacher have acted on them where possible. For example, by reviewing pupil induction procedures and providing play equipment for the reception year children, the school has improved two areas that the parents felt were lacking in quality. New parents to the school warmly praised the way pupils showed them around. Parents are active and enthusiastic fund-raisers for the school and for identified charities. Many parents help out in school and offer assistance when requested. Their support in the classroom enables the pupils to benefit from daily sessions of guided reading and activities such as baking. Parents also help out with the wildlife garden, visits, plays and after school clubs. The pupils' reading and homework diaries show that parents also offer considerable support at home.

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

65. The very good leadership of the headteacher unites the school and sets a clear way forward. Her vision for the school is firmly rooted in Christian principles and in a high commitment to helping the children achieve their best. The parents recognised these qualities in their response to the questionnaire. The highest percentage of strong agreement (92 per cent) was that the school was well led and managed.
66. The headteacher is the linchpin of the school and, as judged in the last inspection, *'she leads, first and foremost, by example'*. This is evident in her teaching and in her relationships with and consideration of others. Although the governors have increased her time out of the classroom to a day as a result of a key issue in the last inspection, this is barely sufficient for her to deal with administrative matters. She has very little time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning by observing lessons and working alongside others. In monitoring teachers' planning and scrutinising pupils' work she has highlighted areas for improvement such as the quality of teachers' marking. By working with the staff to revise the marking policy, she has alerted all to the procedure of marking but this has not in itself raised the quality of marking, especially in helping pupils to see what they need to do to improve their work. Similarly, not enough focus

is being placed on seeing how effective the teachers are in teaching handwriting and spelling and where there may be common or individual areas to improve. The use of monitoring and evaluation to pinpoint exactly what needs to happen and how, and to set short term targets in specific aspects, such as ensuring that by half term all teachers share lesson objectives with pupils, remains an area for improvement in the otherwise good management and governance of the school.

67. Parents value the way the headteacher consults them in making decisions. This is well exemplified in their involvement in compiling the school's mission statement. The inspectors agree with the parents that the school is successful in developing well-rounded, confident pupils who enjoy learning alongside one another. In one parent's words, *'They make friends here they will have for life.'*
68. The headteacher maintains her teaching, leadership and management roles at much personal cost in time. The secretary makes effective use of computerised systems as part of dealing with routine tasks but the headteacher deals with much administrative work as well as the management of special educational needs, child protection and Performance Management. The problem, not least in terms of confidentiality, of the use of one small room by staff, visitors, secretary and headteacher will be alleviated by the provision of a separate room for the headteacher in the extension and reorganisation of the school planned for later this year. As the school has very limited hours allocated to a caretaker, the headteacher is dealing with problems such as blocked drains and the flood that threatened the school the weekend before the inspection. Despite this, her preparation of required documents for the inspection was meticulous. Her comprehensive, astute and honest evaluation of the school shows she has an in-depth understanding of the school and has rightly identified relevant priorities for school improvement. However, pressures on her time and too few delegated responsibilities have resulted in some oversights in required procedures and a slower pace in implementing school improvement plans than she would like.
69. The current system of the full and part time teachers sharing subject and key stage management is not wholly effective. All have an overview of what and who they teach, but have less awareness of what others are doing and its impact on standards. For example, the joining of Year 2 and 3 pupils for literacy and numeracy places responsibility for standards in English and mathematics with four people. No one person is assuming direct leadership in evaluating the effectiveness of what is being done. Such aspects slow the rate of school improvement.
70. Improvement since the last inspection has been good overall. The school has sustained its strengths and dealt with the substance of the key issues. A few aspects remain as areas for improvement. The teachers are now using comprehensive assessment systems and procedures to assess what the pupils can do and to plan the next steps in teaching and learning. Similarly, changes to the format of the school development plan, and to the process of evaluating the school's work, have increased the active role of the governing body in strategic planning. Nevertheless, the school still lacks regular, clear information on how effective it is in key areas such as the quality of teaching and learning, and also in the effectiveness of decisions about the allocation of funds and resources. Although the headteacher keeps the governors regularly informed about what is being done, too little is recorded of the outcomes and the impact on standards. This weakens the governors' ability to track how well the school is meeting its targets. Recent changes in and an increased amount of team teaching, with breaks in continuity for the pupils, also make the process of gaining such information a high priority.

71. Many of the governors, including the chair, are new to their role but all are very supportive and proud of the school. They have a good awareness of the school from regular visits. Through talking to the staff and looking at pupils' work, the nominated governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs have a sound overview of the provision and of the standards of work in pupils' books and on display. However, governors have tended to rely on the headteacher to decide whether standards are high enough. They have explained the dips in standards in the last few years as a facet of the changes in cohort size rather than looking critically at the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement. The headteacher's detailed analysis of the attainment of the five Year 6 pupils in the 2001 cohort provides a useful model for future evaluations of the value added by the school. The governors now also have evidence from Performance Management to assist them.
72. A good feature of the work of the governing body is their consultation with parents about school matters. Pupils also have their say through the School Council. The chair of the governing body is fully aware of the responsibilities of her role and that of the governing body. In seeking ways to use the skills of the governors to deal with management aspects, she has revised the workings of the committees so that they now take a more active role in holding the school to account and evaluating critically how well the school is doing. This active stance promises well for the future. Although the governing body fulfils most of the statutory requirements, a few relating to pupils' welfare are not met. These do not affect the level of care unduly and have been brought to the governors' attention.
73. Overall financial planning and monitoring are sound. The governors are using the services of a bursar to monitor spending and to advise on costing action plans. Too many of the plans do not give a true picture of the cost as they only refer to teachers' time and teaching supply cover.
74. As in other small schools, Dacre Braithwaite spends considerably more per pupil than in most primaries. It is well staffed for the number of pupils, given the headteacher's teaching role, but spends less on education support staff. In the infant class, given that there are thirty pupils from three different year groups, including nine foundation children, the school provides a relatively low amount of classroom support to ensure the pupils achieve well. This is a particular concern in the afternoons. Parents are providing much valued assistance in supporting different groups.
75. As last year, the school budget is swelled by a substantial amount from additional national grants. These are being used as intended, such as the additional teaching for Year 2 and 3 pupils in literacy and numeracy in order to raise standards, but the effectiveness is not as good as intended. The school is using other funds to employ curriculum specialists in areas where the teachers' expertise is less strong. This is effective in physical education as the work of the specialist physical education coaches is adding greatly to the quality of the curriculum. The funding for special educational needs pupils is being used to employ experienced support staff and the good quality of their work in the classroom indicates that this is good value for money.
76. Since the last inspection the governors have used national grants to upgrade and increase the number of computers. The placement of the equipment in the classrooms has provided tools for learning that are generally used well. However, the infrequent use of the computers in the middle room diminishes the effectiveness of the overall ICT provision.



77. The parents raise substantial amounts of money for the school. Last year they raised the equivalent of £150 per pupil and this has been used to fund transport for pupils on visits, to purchase computers and large play equipment for the foundation children. These items are of good quality and highly suitable to develop the children's physical skills.
78. The appointment of an experienced early years teacher has strengthened the quality of the teaching for the infants and the pool of subject and management expertise. However, she does not as yet have many management responsibilities to offset the burden on the headteacher. The teacher is aware of the need to improve the provision for the foundation children so that it is more in line with national guidance. Her action plan, however, does not indicate how the outcomes will have a bearing on standards or the children's achievements. This also typifies other school action plans and makes it difficult for governors to appreciate the link between agreed school targets, year group targets and action plan targets. For example, the plan for writing merely specifies '*increasing the number of pupils achieving Level 3 and Level 5*' but does not indicate what is seen as a reasonable increase.
79. As in the last inspection report, the range and number of resources for learning are adequate. The school's limited resources for gymnastics are enough for the space available. The accommodation is unsatisfactory overall and remains a key concern for the school. Although the school has two teaching rooms and a middle multi-purpose room, the layout of the rooms and the smallness of the area for school administration and staff constrain what people feel they can do. The staff, pupils and parents make the best of the situation and, apart from physical education, the curriculum is not adversely affected. The staff and pupils are well used to clearing and rearranging the middle room for assemblies and group work. In many respects, the school makes more use of the outdoors than most schools especially for physical education and geography. It benefits from having an extensive site with wildlife area, wood and field as well as open views but the weather often curtails activities. During the inspection very strong winds and rain put paid to sessions in physical education.
80. The school gives good value for money. Given the range of the children's attainment in entry to school, pupils' progress is at least satisfactory. This is because the quality of education is good and there is strong leadership. The school adds significant value in the way it develops each pupil as an individual and offers a curriculum that is meaningful and relevant. Parents understandably value the school and what it offers their children.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

- a) raise the quality of the presentation of pupils' work by celebrating pupils' best work and using it as a model for others, and by ensuring that all staff follow the agreed marking and assessment policies so that pupils gain a consistent message and know how to improve their work;  
(Paragraphs 2,10, 28, 66, 101, 103)
- b) strengthen the quality of the evaluation of the school's effectiveness and strategic planning by analysing more rigorously evidence from monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and the standards pupils attain;  
(Paragraphs 66, 70, 71, 78, 102, 1232, 127, 134)
- c) enable the headteacher to step up the programme of school improvement by delegating to others more administrative matters and school management responsibilities;  
(Paragraphs 68, 69, 78)
- d) improve the quality of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy for pupils in Years 2 and 3 by sharing good practice, improving the teachers' subject knowledge and raising their expectations of what pupils can achieve.  
(Paragraphs 24, 28, 108, 111, 114, 118)

In drawing up the action plan, governors may also wish to include the following:

- the provision to develop pupils' multi-cultural awareness;  
(Paragraph 45)
- the gaps in health and safety procedures.  
(Paragraphs 46, 49)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	10	9	0	0	0
Percentage	0	17	44	39	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	54
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.67
National comparative data	5.60

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

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

*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)	2.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.6
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a
Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	154531
Total expenditure	148087
Expenditure per pupil	2962
Balance brought forward from previous year	4331
Balance carried forward to next year	10775

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	54
Number of questionnaires returned	51

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	35	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	27	0	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	37	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	43	6	0	4
The teaching is good.	84	16	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	31	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	71	29	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	92	8	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	23	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	49	18	0	4

### Other issues raised by parents

- the problem of limited accommodation;
- their children experience a good overall education.

## **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**

82. The satisfactory quality of teaching and curriculum for the youngest children has been sustained since the last inspection. The teacher is aware of the limited provision in some aspects, such as creative development. The quality is improving as she adjusts the provision to meet the needs of the nine children who are at differing stages of development in all six areas of learning. The teacher uses her assessment of how well the children are doing to decide what they should do next. There are regular opportunities for the children to learn through practical experiences. However, because of the nature of the mixed age class, the youngest children do not always benefit from the expertise of the teacher to extend their learning. There were more times during the inspection when another adult supervised and guided the children while the teacher worked with the Year 1 and 2 pupils. When the whole class is together, the reception year children generally cope well although the more immature find it hard to hold their own amongst the more boisterous Year 2 pupils.
83. When the children start school, their attainment varies greatly but is generally as expected for their age. Not all have attended pre-school groups and while some are very confident, others are more reticent and socially immature. All the children are on track to attain the standard expected for their age in all six areas of learning by the end of the reception year. Given their current progress, the higher attaining pupils are likely to be working towards or at Level 1 of the National Curriculum especially in reading and number.

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

84. The children make good progress in all aspects of this area. Many have already met many of the early learning goals in this area, especially in self-care, behaviour and self-control, making relationships and attitudes. This is due to the teacher's high expectations that they will be largely self-sufficient but also to the model set by the older pupils in the class. The children generally settle quickly as they often know others in the class, and the teacher's smiling and warm manner reassures them. This shows up well in the mornings when the older ones guide in the younger ones and the teacher greets each in turn. The children quickly learn the class routines and where things are kept so that many show a good level of independence and self-reliance. Many show a good ability to sit still and listen to others.
85. The children are keen to know what is happening and eager to get going. They enjoy what they do and are happy and confident working on their own or with parents and the classroom assistant. There was much enjoyment and comment as three children painted one another's hands. *'That's tickling!'* and *'It's magic!'* were two of their responses as they watched intently. They continued painting and commenting even when the classroom assistant was called away, and then sat and waited patiently for her return. When playing outside, the boys tend to show more bravado but in class, the boys and girls get on well together. They cooperate well. For example, three children organised each other in deciding who would be the customer and who the shopkeeper.

## Communication, language and literacy

86. Achievement in language for communication is stronger than in reading and writing. On the whole, the children are confident in talking to others about what they are doing and in asking for help. They benefit from hearing the speech of the older pupils and from the conversations they have with them. Several are mature, articulate speakers who find it easy to explain what they are doing and to direct others. A few others are more reticent speakers and need to be coaxed to chat. The teacher and classroom assistant are both very effective in drawing the children into discussions. They know each child well and how to encourage them to participate. This is also proving important in developing their reading and writing skills. While a few have made a good start, others are at an early stage of awareness of letters and their sounds. In one session, the classroom assistant spent at least five minutes with one child helping him to name objects and then to isolate the initial sound. Prompts such 'Are you sure? Listen again' helped him to focus on the sounds.
87. Similarly, the teacher's good questions and shared enjoyment of the book helped three boys to read 'Wrong colours'. There was much hilarity in seeing blue bananas but the teacher's comments, such as 'Follow with your finger' focussed them on the words. By the end of the session, they were correcting each other as they read the repeating phrase *It should be ...*. During this session, the teacher took every opportunity to get the boys to talk about words, numbers, colours and letters. Such good group work is helping the children to learn and to develop a liking for books. The girls are generally doing better in reading and writing. The teacher is using some good ploys to interest them all, such as the need for each child to find his/her name and place it on the day's attendance list. However, there are not enough opportunities for the children to have a go at writing for themselves. While most write their name without help and the higher attaining children are beginning to spell simple words on their own, others are only at the early mark making stage and developing pencil control in forming letters. The teacher is keeping samples of the children's work but is not making best use of the stepping stones to indicate the child's exact stage of attainment and the next steps in learning.

## Mathematical development

88. The teacher makes good use of practical activities to reinforce the children's awareness of number, shape, pattern and size. A task much liked by the children was to match numbers found in the sand tray to other numbers on a cupboard top. They went on to order the numbers once they had found them all. Three children much enjoyed buying toys in the class shop. However, they struggled to identify the numbers on the price labels and to pay the correct number of pence. They needed the support of an adult to take their learning on.
89. A scrutiny of the children's books shows that the higher attaining children are getting off to a good start. They are solving addition and subtraction problems to 10, and recording their answers using numbers and function signs. The gap between them and others is wide. In some aspects, they are doing better than Year 1 pupils. For example, one child quickly caught onto counting in twos and fives when giving correct amounts of money. They are also learning well because of the good teaching of the teacher who, in the sessions seen, worked predominantly with the Year 1 pupils.
90. The teacher's good guidance for the adults that help in class helps to ensure that the sessions are purposeful. When working with a parent, a boy showed he could count



29 coins correctly without help and then, when prompted, went on to organise them into a circle.

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

91. As the children work on the same themes as the infant pupils this breaks the curriculum into separate subjects and results in loss of cohesion. However, occasional good links are made that are meaningful for the children. A good example was the task to design a house for Baatat, the toy sheep, and to make it with wooden blocks and a construction kit. The teacher skilfully paired two children so that one would benefit from the confidence of the other. Both worked with a will and as they chatted about what they were doing, they labelled items that they knew from their experience of farms. They used the toy to check the height of the walls and then selected different pieces to overlap the roof. They went on to embellish the sheep pen with farm vehicles lined up outside and other animals nearby. The finished house was most impressive in its detail and proportions.
92. The children are learning about life in Nicaragua through the letters being sent by the family that have adopted Heyshaw, the toy hedgehog. However, these are displayed on a board that is way above the children's reach in the cloakroom.
93. The children are making good progress in meeting the early learning goals for ICT. Most of the children confidently use the computer mouse to open up a program, click on icons and move the cursor. They know how to roam around programs, how to change functions such as from the brush to the pencil, how to change the colour and also how to print out their work. They also know how to start and stop the tape recorder.

### **Physical development**

94. The range of the provision is limited. There are some good activities to develop the children's coordination, control, manipulation and movement – such as the house for Baatat – but the limitations of the space curtail large-scale work in the classroom. The children learn to use a range of tools. Although two girls showed developing control in cutting out shapes and then gluing them down, others have some way to go to hold a pencil and brush correctly.
95. The children have daily sessions of play outdoors with the other pupils and also physical education sessions of outdoor games and activities. During these times and as they move around the classroom and school, they show good coordination and confidence in running around and playing with others. In the session seen during the inspection, several children were unhappy to be out in the cold wind but responded to directions to play '1, 2, 3 follow me' when the teacher drew them in.
96. In another outdoor session when the children used the wheeled toys, seesaw and skipping ropes, they exerted a lot of effort and showed good stamina in keeping going. A few children managed to skip and turn the rope and there was much fun when two boys held a rope end and their turning got out of synchrony. Boys and girls got up considerable speed as they pedalled the tricycles furiously and then steered around parked cars and the half wall. The use of the small playground raises some concerns because of the hazards and the need for a marked course and other resources to tax the children and refine their skills.

## **Creative development**

97. As in knowledge and understanding of the world, the children follow the themes and programme of work for the infant pupils. This means they have shared music sessions and learn how to use different media. Their achievement is satisfactory but the rate of their learning is hampered by the limited provision which in turn reflects how the space is used. For example, the children have few chances to paint as the paint is tidied away after the allocated session to allow other activities to take place.
98. The children know that if you mix primary colours such as red and yellow, you make orange. Three children were mesmerised by the shades of orange they made on their own hands before making a handprint. The good interaction of the classroom assistant during this session meant the children explored several colour combinations and went on to create a shade of green by trying out red and purple. The children also create pictures on the computer screen. They have produced their own versions of Mondrian and Lowry pictures that show an awareness of key stylistic features.
99. In their play in the toyshop the children create different scenes with customers and shopkeepers. In one session, two children were part of an imaginary family who went to buy a dog and were not sure which one to choose. This was much enhanced by the wide range of ornaments and items available in the shop.

## **ENGLISH**

100. Standards in speaking and listening are good throughout the school. They are broadly average in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence indicates that standards at Key Stage 1 are higher than in the 2001 tests, when the school's results were well below average. At Key Stage 2, standards are similar to those in the 2001 tests – pupils are on track to reach at least the level expected for their age. Standards have risen at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection.
101. Pupils' ease in using language is well seen in their discussions, conversations and dramatic productions. It also accounts for the good content of their writing, especially in Years 5 and 6. However, the standard is lowered by errors in spelling, inaccuracy in using punctuation and untidy handwriting. They also draw on their language skills to understand what they read. They cope competently with different texts across the curriculum and tackle a range of literary styles.
102. The headteacher's analysis of the 2001 test results confirmed weaknesses in handwriting and spelling. The school has begun a year-long programme of improvement to raise standards. Parents and governors have agreed to support this. Indeed, to give kudos to the 'Writing Project', the governors will award annual prizes for the best handwriting and the most improved handwriting in each year group. The action plan gives a secure framework for action but omits the vital monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and links through this to precise areas for improvement. Although the headteacher is named as the major person to monitor arrangements, the shared leadership of English makes the tracking of improvement potentially easier. To date the focus seems to have been on the subject leaders' own classes rather than on all year groups and the progress the pupils are making towards their targets. This weakens otherwise good quality of leadership and management in English.

103. A scrutiny of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' work shows the potential for higher standards. It also provides little evidence that the quality of spelling and handwriting has risen after a term of more intensive spelling and handwriting teaching. The pupils do not readily resort to spelling strategies and rules in their work nor do they apply what they practice in handwriting sessions to their everyday work. The work on display does not accentuate excellent exemplars of handwriting to set the standard. Similarly, not enough has been done as yet to pinpoint exactly what all the staff need to do to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
104. Nevertheless, at Year 6, there is evidence of improvement in pupils' writing style and their competence in using different features of language for effect. There is much individuality in content. This reflects good teaching and an exciting writing curriculum that spreads across other subjects and into the life of the school. Pupils regularly create posters and leaflets for school events and write to pupils, parents and others outside school. This is often done on the computer but the use of ICT is not a clear strand in everyone's planning.
105. On National Poetry Day the pupils wrote in the style of Richard Long. A walk around the school looking and listening led to phrases such as *'tall trees swaying wildly'*. Pupils show a good feel for language. Having studied the story of Beowulf, the pupils' summaries in rhyming couplets included, *'I'll go and slay that ugly beast. When I'm finished he'll be deceased.'* They use paragraphs, complex sentences, a range of clauses, similes and metaphors, parentheses and devices such as 'SUDDENLY!' – all aspects that characterise Level 4/5 work - but often miss attaining really well because of avoidable errors and slips. The pupils put enormous effort into detail in pictures but do not give the same to their handwriting style, or to checking their work and ensuring that they copy accurately. This reflects a weakness in previous and current teaching.
106. The quality of the work by the older boys and girls of all attainment levels is a result of the headteacher's good ability to interest them in different types of text. Classic literature has been used as a good starting point for other work. For instance, pupils wrote an eye-witness account of the demise of the Lady of Shalott and included some pithy advertisements. The headteacher shares her love of literature with the pupils and is successful in getting them to try a range of authors and poets. Current favourite authors include Michael Morpurgo and Terry Pratchett.
107. There is less evidence of enhanced learning for all pupils at Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. The overall quality of teaching for these pupils is satisfactory. It is good for Year 1 pupils but is not as strong for pupils in Years 2 and 3. The teacher of the Year 1 pupils has secure subject knowledge and explains clearly to the pupils what they need to do. Comments like *'Think where it starts'* and *'A really good try there. Think again about the end letter'* keep the pupils' full attention on the key features of forming letters and spelling words.
108. The teaching for the pupils in Years 2 and 3 is not strong enough to accelerate their learning and ensure that they make up lost ground lost in previous years. The pupils are looking at different texts and completing lots of worksheets but are not being helped to remember the key features or the strategies they need to know to improve their work. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils are writing independently using accurately punctuated sentences but they make simple spelling errors and present their work untidily. Given their current rate of progress, they are unlikely to gain Level 3 in writing even though their work shows the potential to do so.

109. The teachers follow the guidance of the National Literacy Strategy. A weakness in their planning is the emphasis on what the pupils will do rather than what they are to learn. The separate English planning for Year 5 and 6 pupils on Fridays, (when the class is taken by another teacher), leads to unnecessary parallel studies.
110. Daily sessions of guided reading with parents, teachers and classroom assistants are purposeful and an efficient use of time. The teachers' prepared guidance for the others gives a clear focus to their work. All the adults manage the pupils well and keep them focussed on the reading tasks. Many pupils are making good progress but a common area of weakness is in the lack of expression in pupils' reading. This begins in the reception year. Throughout the school, the higher attaining readers use good expression to interpret speech, events and characters and events. Other pupils are often monotone although confident.
111. Some infant pupils are slow to take off in reading. In some year groups, there is a huge gulf in pupils' reading attainment with the higher attaining pupils at least two years ahead of their age. The teaching of reading is not focused enough on making key strategies explicit so that pupils know what to do and how to improve their reading. This is one reason why Year 2 and 3 pupils are not making faster progress. One area is the difficulty many pupils have in using a dictionary, which is one reason why pupils do not look up word definitions or check their spellings. Pupils also find it hard to use notes and bullet points when they plan their work.
112. Not all the pupils' work has been marked. In the better marking the pupils are given positive feedback such as '*Stunning! Keep this standard up*'. However, few comments refer specifically to the pupils' targets or to what they need to do next time to improve. The headteacher is making good use of timed writing tasks to assess the pupils' attainment and progress and to identify areas of difficulty.

## **MATHEMATICS**

113. Standards are average. This sustains the judgements given in the last inspection report. Many of the Year 2 and 6 pupils are already attaining the level expected for their age and the higher attaining Year 6 pupils' work shows aspects of higher Level 5 attainment. Standards are rising because of the teachers' high expectations of the pupils.
114. The overall teaching of mathematics is good although there are some differences in the quality between the three classes. The teaching in the class of Year 2 and 3 pupils does not always have sufficient pace or content to challenge the higher attaining pupils, especially in the initial number sessions. When given a challenge, such as using coordinates to play noughts and crosses, Year 2 pupils learn quickly and get pleasure from their success.
115. An improvement since the last inspection is the teachers' use of number investigations and challenges, which interest the girls and boys. In all classes, the pupils achieve well in number because of the good provision and emphasis on developing pupils' skills and facility in using the four rules. The Year 1 pupils are learning quickly as their teacher makes effective use of a range of practical activities and counting games that motivate and interest them. Lively sessions of quick-fire counting forwards and backwards and doubling numbers to 20 are helping pupils to develop an appreciation of number relationships which they use in different situations. Questions such as, '*Can you make 15p a different way?*' prompted Year 1 pupils to use 5p coins rather than only 1p coins.

116. The morning often gets off to a swift and productive start with a mental mathematics session for the Year 2 and junior pupils. The school is making effective use of a commercial scheme to sharpen the pupils' skills in solving number problems mentally. The pupils work hard as they know they have only a short time to complete the set work. The older pupils showed a good level of accuracy and speed in calculating answers to problems, such as  $16 \times 6$  and  $0.6 = \frac{\quad}{\quad}\%$ . Although the parents expressed some reservations about the repetitious nature of related homework, the teachers keep careful records of the aspects that pupils find difficult and then set new targets and select an appropriate level of challenge for the work in school and at home. This has dealt satisfactorily with the issue noted in the last inspection report of the higher attaining pupils not always being challenged enough.
117. The infant pupils learn to count and order numbers and how to record their answers. By the age of seven, most are confident in adding and subtracting numbers to 20 and understand number value to a hundred. They count in twos from a given number and double and halve numbers accurately. Many apply this when dealing with problems such as counting money and interpreting data. Although the pupils know the names of many two-dimensional shapes, including more complex shapes such as a hexagon and an octagon, their knowledge of shape, space and measures is not as strong as that of number. Evidence from school test results also shows that this is a weaker strand at Key Stage 2. Although the younger pupils were encouraged to estimate the number of coins in a pile and then to determine, *How many out were you?* a scrutiny of the older pupils' work showed less emphasis on estimating and on measuring length and volume.
118. The class of pupils from Years 2 and 3 is making satisfactory progress. The teaching is satisfactory but lacks the liveliness and clear sense of purpose to really move the pupils' learning on.
119. The older juniors make good progress although results show that the girls do not do quite as well as the boys. The headteacher copes well with the range of attainment in the class of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. A feature of her good teaching is the way she challenges the pupils and encourages them to talk about what they have found out. She also pairs pupils so that they help one another. This is particularly effective in enabling those with special educational needs to benefit from talking to a partner. As a result, they achieve well. In a good lesson when the Year 4 pupils achieved particularly well, the headteacher's brisk, direct questioning and use of a number line helped the pupils see the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages.
120. By Year 6, pupils show a secure understanding of place value and demonstrate a good ability to use different number procedures to solve mathematical investigations such as exchanging English monies into foreign currencies. They know how to calculate perimeters and areas and how to record, present and interpret data in graphs and charts. For example, when investigating the qualities of two-dimensional shapes, they carefully drew up charts to record the number of faces, edges and vertices.
121. Good features of the teaching are the teachers' secure mathematical knowledge and their assessment of pupils' progress during lessons with subsequent changes in plan. In all the lessons seen, the teachers questioned the pupils about their thinking and praised their achievements. They also took time to follow up the pupils' ideas. As the teachers share the purpose of the lesson with the classroom assistants and parents who help, the pupils receive purposeful support and guidance during the main

part of the lesson. In the plenary sessions, other adults are not always involved and chances are missed to share different ways of working out and recording answers.

122. The shared responsibility for mathematics ensures that the staff discuss pupils' progress and curriculum planning. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and the headteacher has monitored some teaching and learning. As a result of this, and her analysis of how well the pupils are progressing, she has raised the school's targets for Level 3 and Level 5 attainment. The good links between mathematics and other subjects are a positive step to raise standards. In science and geography the pupils have produced tables of results, bar charts and line graphs. A good example was the use of Venn and Carroll diagrams to help the pupils identify the services in Pateley Bridge that support both the local population and the tourist industry.

## SCIENCE

123. Standards are above average at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. Inspection evidence indicates that all pupils are attaining the level expected for their age. This is better than in many schools and confirms the good 2001 national test results at Key Stage 2 and teacher assessment at Key Stage 1. No science lessons were seen at Key Stage 1 so it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching for the infant pupils.
124. A scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work shows a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' knowledge and skills in science. This reflects the good leadership of the headteacher in deciding to work with the junior pupils in small groups. As a result the pupils are achieving well. Good teaching for the junior pupils is also fostering the development of their skills in predicting, observing and evaluating what they find. In the 2001 national tests, several pupils attained Level 5, a level higher than expected for their age and inspection evidence indicates that higher attaining pupils are again on course to do as well. In the infants, however, there is less evidence of work to extend the higher attaining pupils.
125. Year 6 pupils already show a good awareness of the need for planned investigations and fair testing. They draw on what they know to predict outcomes and make precise and accurate observations using hand lenses and magnifying glasses. In a good lesson, the headteacher's good planning and skilled questioning ensured that pupils in Years 5 and 6 made good progress in carrying out an investigation and also acquired new scientific knowledge. The pupils busily investigated the effect of gravity by suspending objects in plastic bags and measuring the downward force. Having compiled tables of measurements they hypothesised that when the objects were immersed in water the up-thrust would result in a lesser downward force. As the experiment went on, they were quick to recognise a pattern in their findings and to check when one immersed object did not follow the trend. They found that the bag was beginning to let in water and realised its effect on their findings. These pupils were totally involved and their response was excellent. They shared out tasks and responsibilities, engaged in scientific dialogue and used apparatus and equipment sensibly and safely. When recording their results, two pupils compiled tables on the computer. This was much enhanced when a higher attaining pupil supported another who has special educational needs by explaining and showing what to do.
126. The way the pupils present their work varies in quality. A common problem is the way the pupils spell key scientific words incorrectly even though each project begins with the introduction of new scientific vocabulary.

127. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a scheme of work that draws on national guidance. The curriculum is altered to take account of gaps in the pupils' learning after an analysis of pupils' performance in the national tests. A good feature of the refined assessment procedures is the practice of asking pupils to create maps of what they know before they start work a new topic. This enables the teachers to focus on aspects that the pupils are unsure of and to develop others. The headteacher also regularly makes effective use of activities to assess what pupils have learnt and can do, but there is less information on the quality of teaching and learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

128. The last inspection report indicated that pupils' attainment was just in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. There has been good improvement since then in the quality of the ICT curriculum and standards are now satisfactory throughout the school. A few of the Year 6 pupils are very competent in some aspects of ICT such as data handling and searching the Internet.
129. The school has kept pace with the rise in standards seen nationally and does far better than many schools in using ICT as an integral part of the pupils' learning across the curriculum. A key strength of the good provision is the way the teachers expect and encourage the pupils to use their ICT knowledge and skills to find and record information. The computers in each classroom are regularly used although not as much as they could be as part of literacy and mathematics lessons such as in routine work to rehearse spelling, grammar, punctuation and number bonds and multiplication tables.
130. Over time, the pupils learn to use other ICT tools such as a programmable toy and tape recorders. The teachers are using national guidance to structure what they teach and all requirements of the National Curriculum are met. A gap in the provision for control technology will be filled later in the year when the junior pupils are shown how to use sensors as part of their science work. Similarly, the planned purchase of a digital camera will provide chances to widen the ICT curriculum.
131. The infant pupils get off to a good start as they are taught how to use and combine different functions. They learn to use the keyboard to type sentences and how to control the mouse to click on the relevant icons to change the font, colour and size of the print. They rapidly learn how to drag and drop information, how to create graphs and pictograms and how to save and print information. In a lesson seen, the teacher's good, explicit instructions and demonstration helped Year 2 pupils to learn how to drag a line to a desired shape and then how to use the spray can and colour menu to create a picture in the style of Mondrian. Two girls were completely absorbed as they explored different ideas and then printed out their work. The finished pieces showed they had not only learnt how to fill in shapes but also how to select different shades of colour.
132. The junior pupils build on these skills. They learn to use word processing facilities such as different fonts to present their work and create posters, rules, story drafts and databases. The pupils' letter to the American base made good use of a picture of George Washington as a visible 'watermark'. In publishing their poems, Year 4 pupils show developing competence and awareness of where to place print. One poem actually included the line: *'write on a PC writer – see?'*

133. The pupils learn quickly as they are interested, well motivated and often well supported not only by the teachers but also by other pupils. For instance, when one Year 6 boy got into difficulties trying to create a table of results from a science experiment, another boy offered to sit next to him and help. His step-by-step advice and use of the keyboard to enter key information while the first boy controlled the mouse and placement of key information, ensured that the process was made clear and a table was compiled. This is a facet of the good teaching that is ensuring the pupils learn how to use ICT programs and also apply them in relevant situations. The pupils turn to computers naturally. For example, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 found they were missing information about Pateley Bridge, they suggested finding a website. They competently searched for and found information on Nidderdale and then cut and pasted text and pictures into their work.
134. No one has direct responsibility for subject leadership and management although the headteacher satisfactorily oversees the curriculum. ICT is a school priority and agreed action is being carried out. As part of this, the teachers are taking advantage of nationally funded training to update their skills and knowledge, and applying this in their teaching. The school has prudently invested in the services of a technician who keeps the equipment fully operational. It also benefits from the support and expertise of a volunteer who spends one afternoon a week helping the infants. Her ideas, such as all the pupils having individual disks to save their work, and using the scanner to scan photographs lent by the parents to create 'Our Baby Book', are adding to the quality of the provision.

**THE FOUNDATION SUBJECTS : Art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education.**

135. Because of the small number of inspection days and the emphasis on inspecting English, mathematics, science and ICT, it was only possible to see a few lessons in other subjects. One art and design lesson, one geography, one history and one physical education lesson were seen. Pupils were also heard singing in assemblies and playing the recorder in an after school activity. Inspectors looked at work from the current school year and previous years and also talked to pupils about their work. While it is possible to comment on standards and the quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen, the very small number of lessons and small sample of work do not provide a secure evidence base on which to make judgements about overall standards.
136. It is clear that pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in most subjects and doing as well as expected for their age because of satisfactory teaching. The older juniors are achieving particularly well in geography and standards are higher than expected for their age. This is because of the strong emphasis on fieldwork and on pupils using and applying the information they collect. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of how to conduct a geographical enquiry and of the factors that explain geographical features.
137. In science and in geography, the school manages a good balance between teaching skills and subject knowledge. In geography this begins in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 where the pupils plot on a world map the journeys of Baatat the toy sheep and Heyshaw the toy hedgehog. The pupils also keep a diary of their travels. The junior pupils investigate the opportunities for employment in the locality. They learn about the local quarry and the range of rocks and chippings it produces and use scientific techniques to identify the qualities of the materials. The fieldwork is extended to the study of water in the locality and includes a study of the local stream, rivers and



the presence of reservoir sites in the district. This well organised project complements the equally good theme of deserts. For this, pupils rely on secondary sources including reference books, CD Rom and the Internet.

138. The teaching in the one lesson seen for junior pupils was very good - a shining example of good practice that incorporates local field work with the use of data handling programs to analyse the data collected by pupils about the resources, amenities and traffic problems in Pateley Bridge. The headteacher left the pupils to use their initiative to choose which form of graphic to display traffic census information. Other pupils searched a web site for more information. Older pupils adapted techniques used in mental mathematics sessions to measure the effect of tourism on the area. They registered a concern about the high numbers of private cars visiting the district and the impact of closing the main street to traffic. Some pupils were beginning to cut and paste text and illustrations as they began to record their work.
139. The history curriculum follows the national scheme that identifies levels of skill development and provides a good balance between the study of local history and the history of The United Kingdom. As in geography, the importance of investigative skills and the development of personal enquiry are much to the fore. The infant pupils develop a clear understanding of the passage of time through stories about events such as The Great Fire of London.
140. Pupils build on this knowledge and skills satisfactorily in the junior years. They learn about English heroes such as Sir Francis Drake. Their sense of history is enriched through the study of the hypothetical civilisation of Braithwaite, Tudor England and the local area. Older pupils involve themselves in self-study. For example during the inspection, one pupil assumed the role of Marco Polo to read out her research into his life as an explorer.
141. The quality of teaching and learning for the infant pupils in the one lesson seen was very good. The teacher and classroom assistant worked well together. The teacher had a very secure knowledge of the Great Fire of London and organised activities that ensured the younger pupils developed an understanding that history is about something that happened a long time ago. Older pupils were challenged to complete sentences about why the fire happened, where it began and how some citizens ran to churches to escape the flames. Pupils were enthralled by the activities and co-operated well to finish them. Very effective use of ICT enabled two pupils to construct London Bridge on the computer screen and create a Great Fire of London scene.
142. In art and design and in design and technology, this balance of skills and knowledge is less evident. The pupils make and produce items often of a very good quality. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work on display and in their design books indicates that their knowledge of the design-make-evaluate process is insecure. Similarly in art and design, pupils are not being encouraged to use sketchbooks to explore techniques and try out ideas. Some good work in drawing came from a visit to Harrogate Theatre but the systematic development of observational drawing techniques is not evident.
143. Much of the art curriculum focuses on the pupils creating particular products rather than on the development of their artistic skills and their creative use. A strong feature of the work in both subjects is the range of interesting projects for pupils. Infant pupils have made different soups and used different techniques such as tabs, flaps and cardboard strings to make illustrations come to life in reading books for others. The art coordinator uses her interest and expertise to help the pupils achieve a quality

result. A good example is the pupils' version of the portrait of Queen Elizabeth I but the planning does not make clear which artistic skills and techniques the pupils were to learn, refine or apply. Chances have been missed to show pupils a range of other artists' work to complement the current themes of Self-portraits for Key Stage 1 and Portraying Relationships at Key Stage 2.

144. No lessons in music were seen but the pupils who attended the recorder club enjoyed the musical routines and tried hard to improve. The good teaching of the volunteer, a local priest, is ensuring that the 18 pupils who regularly attend achieve well and reach a good standard. All pupils, including the beginners, played with good tone and tongued notes. They are learning to read music and several have gone on to be successful in tests. In assemblies and in class, the pupils' singing is unsatisfactory. Many find it hard to sustain a melody and although they sing with gusto, they struggle when unaccompanied. The infant pupils know a range of songs to sing with their teacher as she plays her guitar and she and the headteacher comment that the pupils' singing is starting to improve.
145. Displays in the middle room show that pupils are learning about different ways to play instruments and how to record their own tunes using simple symbols and notation. The headteacher also uses music very effectively at lunchtimes and during the inspection, pupils listened carefully to work by Monteverdi.
146. In physical education, only outdoor games and gymnastics were seen. However, school records and policies indicate that, over the year, a full range of physical education activities is taught with the exception of swimming. The school works hard to provide every opportunity for pupils to have a full range of physical education activities. Classes travel to the local sports hall for games lessons. Coaches of other games often visit the school. Pupils take part in area sports days and the school has been introduced to the game of baseball through contact with the local military base. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
147. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in the two lessons seen. The learning objectives for the playground lesson with the younger pupils included the development of co-operative games and the skills of following instructions. The lesson was supported well by the classroom assistants who helped the pupils to balance and control their movements as they played 'Follow me' and 'Grandmothers' footsteps'. The teacher encouraged the pupils to be creative in their movements and many pupils tried new repertoires of movements.
148. The school now benefits from the regular involvement of two qualified sports coaches. Their very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm are motivating the pupils and all work hard in cramped conditions with very limited equipment. In the lesson seen, pupils took part in a vigorous warm up session, which included stretching and aerobic exercises. They enjoyed the routines and worked hard to increase their heart rate and then responded well to instructions to incorporate a range of gymnastic movements such as rolling, jumping and leaping, as well as balance, changes of speed and high and low movements into their work.