

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WIGGINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

York

LEA area: City of York

Unique reference number: 121366

Headteacher: Mr Karl Jarvis

Reporting inspector: Lesley Clark  
25431

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2002

Inspection number: 195715

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Westfield Lane Wigginton York
Postcode:	YO32 2FZ
Telephone number:	01904 761647
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Phillip Cunningham
Date of previous inspection:	9 <sup>th</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25431	Lesley Clark	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13786	S Walsh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
22291	K Saltfleet	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Science Geography Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
19041	R Linstead	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Special educational needs History Physical education	How well are the pupils taught?
19916	D Kerr	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology (ICT) Art and design Design and technology	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Wigginton Primary School is situated some four miles from the centre of York on the edge of a large residential area. The school serves the local village community as well as adjoining housing estates. It is of average size with 281 pupils currently on roll. Numbers are expected to increase following the closure of a nearby school. The expected decline in numbers is therefore not as great as anticipated at the time of the last inspection. There are, however, twice as many junior as infant classes. Three per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average. Most houses are privately owned and in many families both parents work. A minority of pupils come from professional backgrounds. The school provides both before and after school care for pupils. The local population is predominantly white with a few pupils in school from the local Chinese community. Three pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is lower than in most primary schools. Twenty-two pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs because they have learning, physical or emotional difficulties. Of these, two pupils have statements of special needs. Children's attainment when they start school is broadly average in most areas of learning apart from their personal, social and emotional development, which is above average.

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

This is a good school with some very good features. Pupils achieve highly largely because of the very good leadership, very effective management and the very good quality of teaching, especially in junior classes. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve above average standards in several subjects by the time they leave. Pupils with special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language also make good progress. Standards are particularly high in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics, history and French. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics, history and French, and they are above average in art, information and communication technology (ICT), swimming, dance and drama by the age of eleven.
- Good teaching takes place in every class and many lessons are of very good or excellent quality, particularly for older pupils.
- The leadership and the management of the school are very effective.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well, showing much interest in their work.
- The school fosters pupils' moral, social and cultural development very well through a rich curriculum.
- The school gives pupils very good opportunities to develop their command of spoken language.

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

- Standards in science should be higher.
- The procedures in the Early Years Unit to assess children's learning and use of the information to plan imaginative play activities, both inside and outside.

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

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

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since then, the school has made good improvement in all key areas, both major and minor, from the last report and has improved in other aspects of its work. Short-term planning is consistent throughout the school and the management's decision to give time to plan within the school day has contributed greatly to the sense of teamwork and the smooth

running of the school. The implementation of a new mathematics scheme alongside the National Strategy for Numeracy has contributed to improved standards. Standards are much higher than they were in religious education. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development has improved considerably and the daily act of worship forms a vital part of school life. Curricular advice to parents is of good quality. Remedial work has been carried out on the school field and the collection and distribution of packed lunch boxes is unobtrusive. The school now has very good systems in place in most areas of its work.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

Standards are higher in English and mathematics in the present Year 6 than last year's results indicates. In science, standards are similar to those attained in the past two years. Inspection judgements are that pupils attain well above average standards by the age of eleven in English and mathematics and close to average standards in science. Standards are lower in science because pupils are only just beginning to explore scientific concepts through practical and investigative activities. Standards are well above average in English and mathematics because of teachers' high expectations of what pupils can achieve, the imaginative teaching and the encouragement of pupils to think for themselves. By the age of seven, standards are well above average in speaking and listening and in writing, above average in reading and mathematics, and in line with the expected level in science. Standards for seven year olds reflect the school's results in the national tests in English and mathematics in 2001. Teacher assessments of what pupils know and understand in science in the infants are over-generous. The successful implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy has contributed very well to higher standards throughout the school. Although comparison with similar schools shows that results in science are slightly below those achieved elsewhere, overall the trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend. The school sets itself challenging targets which it is likely to meet.

Standards are well above average at age eleven in history and French, and above average in art and ICT. They are in line with standards expected of eleven year olds in all other subjects, including religious education. By the age of seven, standards are above average in art, design and technology, ICT and history, and in line with the level expected of their age in other subjects. Pupils attain high standards in swimming, dance and drama. Pupils achieve well for they enter school with broadly average attainment in most areas of learning. They leave the reception class having made good progress, with many children attaining slightly above the standard expected, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Pupils with special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language make good progress throughout their time in school. Pupils have a good grasp of many different subjects because of the richness of the curriculum they follow.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils have very good attitudes to school. They work hard for their teachers. They are interested, enthusiastic and keen to be



	involved in a wide range of activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; the majority of pupils behave very well both within lessons and around the school. The staff set very high expectations with regard to behaviour and pupils try hard to fulfil them. As a result, the school is an orderly and well-disciplined community.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils respond very well to responsibilities they are given and show a great deal of initiative and maturity in the way they respond to adults and different situations. There are very good relationships throughout the school and these help pupils to gain self-confidence.
Attendance	Very good; the level of attendance is well above the national average but an increasing number of pupils miss school through family holidays.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory, mostly good and with a large proportion of very good and some excellent lessons. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subjects of the primary curriculum and use the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy very effectively to enhance the quality of their teaching. Teaching is better overall in the junior classes because of the high expectations teachers have of what pupils can learn and the very imaginative ways they devise to bring subjects alive such as exploring history through art, dance and drama.

Strengths in the teaching of reception children lie in the teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and children have ample opportunity to learn through selecting their own activities. However, these activities do not always offer a great deal of challenge and some could be more imaginatively resourced. The quality of teaching in infant classes is good with particular strengths in teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Classrooms are welcoming with very good displays of pupils' work as well as information to help them to learn for themselves in different subjects. However, infant classrooms are very cramped and this can cause problems for less experienced teachers when young pupils need to work in groups. The quality of teaching in junior classes is very good with some excellent teaching of older juniors. Teachers' enthusiasm and expertise make learning fun as well as effective. Particular strengths lie in the teaching of mathematics, ICT, history and drama. Teaching is excellent in Year 6 in French and pupils begin to learn to write as well as to speak the language. The teaching of English, including literacy, is very good throughout the school. Teachers make imaginative use of other subjects such as ICT, art, science, dance and drama to help develop pupils' skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; the curriculum is rich and varied and offers pupils good opportunities to learn. Very good, planned links between subjects are very effective in making pupils' learning relevant and so immersing them in their work. The curriculum is further strengthened by visits and visitors to school. The school makes no formal provision for gifted and talented pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the school spots their difficulties early and gives them the help

	they need.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress because staff give them effective, individual support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good; provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Provision for their moral, social and cultural development is very good. By the time they leave the school, pupils are mature and responsible and well prepared for the next stage of their education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good; the pastoral care and attention given to pupils' welfare is of a good standard. This is a caring community in which the needs of pupils are given a high priority. The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils' progress and this ensures that they do not fall behind and so achieve well.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Good; parents are supportive of the school and keen for their children to do well. There is a good range of information for parents, which is cheerful and easy to read. There are some significant omissions in the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good; the school is very well led and managed and all members of staff make significant contributions to the school's very clear sense of direction and purpose. There is a very strong sense of teamwork and teachers plan and teach together to very good effect.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good; the governing body plays an active and supportive role and have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good; the leadership and management carries out very effective monitoring of teaching and learning and has introduced innovative practice as a result. Both staff and governors play a positive part in planning for further improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Very good; the headteacher and governors spend money wisely in ways which benefit pupils' learning and are careful to ensure that they obtain as good a quality as possible. Good use is made of the cramped accommodation.

The accommodation is exceptionally well maintained. While all the rooms are bright and conducive to learning, some are very cramped. There is a good match of teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Resources are good for most subjects. They are particularly good for literacy, numeracy, ICT and history.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The high standard of education.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• They find the school approachable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few parents feel that their children had too much homework and others that they had too little.</li> <li>• Some parents feel that they do not receive</li> </ul>

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children are expected to work hard.</li></ul> | enough information about their children's progress. |
|---|---|

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. An appropriate amount of homework is set and it is used well to help pupils to learn. Reports on pupils' progress are generally of good quality. The timing of the parents' evenings could be improved in order to accommodate the large number of parents who work and so do not have such ready access to the school at other times.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards are well above the national average in English and mathematics for eleven year olds. Seven year olds achieve well above the standards expected of their age in writing and speaking and listening, and above average standards in reading and mathematics. Pupils achieve very well in relation to the level at which they begin school. Pupils make good progress in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and very good progress in Years 3 to 6 where their learning is both accelerated and broadened because of the very good and often excellent teaching they receive.
2. The school's results over time in the national tests at ages seven and eleven broadly confirm inspection findings. Standards in English are either well above or above average and standards in mathematics are usually well above average, apart from last year when they were above. The slight discrepancy in the results is because of the variations in the attainment levels of different groups of pupils throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets. They benefit from extra support in and out of lessons and nearly all achieve as well as they can. Pupils who start the school part way through their education also get effective extra support to help them settle. They too make good progress towards achieving their own personal best. Pupils for whom English is a second language also achieve well because the school carefully monitors and supports their acquisition, understanding and use of English.
3. The trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend. Results in national tests in 2001 show that in English and mathematics pupils attained comparable standards with those in similar schools. Standards in science are close to average. Inspection judgements confirm the results in national tests in the past two years. They are also in line with the nationally expected level in science for seven year olds. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science by the end of Year 2 are over-generous and indicate a higher level of achievement at this stage. Compared to similar schools, the results in science are slightly below the expected level. However, inspection judgement confirms an improving trend in the pupils' performance as the measures the school has put into place are beginning to take effect.
4. There are several reasons for pupils' well above average attainment in English and mathematics and their comparatively lower attainment in science. Standards are well above average in English and mathematics because pupils are very well taught. Teachers expect their pupils to attain highly and use the National Strategies of Literacy and Numeracy creatively to enable them to do so. Additional time given to reading and to developing pupils' writing has helped to raise standards as has the imaginative teaching of speaking and listening and literacy through other subjects such as drama and history. In mathematics, as in English, teachers place great emphasis on encouraging pupils to think for themselves. Extra time given to mathematics lessons in junior classes is used very well to develop pupils' ability to solve problems, to work independently, and to explain the methods they have used, for teachers to create opportunities for pupils to take part in every stage of the lesson. Standards in science are not as high as those in English and mathematics because pupils are only just beginning to follow a full programme of practical and investigative science. Although most pupils attain the standards expected of their ages fewer than would be expected attain the higher levels compared with English

and mathematics. Teachers now plan opportunities to develop pupils' thinking skills and to enable them to draw their own conclusions from investigative work which they have planned. The school has started to use assessment as rigorously as it does in English and mathematics to identify which pupils are capable of achieving more highly. While the school recognises that some pupils have special gifts and talents, it does not as yet plan specific provision for them at different stages of their schooling and tends to cater for them as and when the need arises.

5. In ICT, standards are above the level expected of both seven and eleven year olds. This is because the school has improved substantially both the planning and the resources for the subject. Pupils now learn ICT skills systematically, building on previous learning. They are well taught. Teachers use ICT equipment very confidently themselves, making very good use, for example, of computer equipment linked to a large projection screen in order to give clear demonstrations of what they want pupils to learn. Pupils are offered ample opportunity to discuss their work and to present what they have learnt to others which also contributes very well to developing their skills in speaking and listening.
6. Standards at age eleven are well above average in history and French, above average in art and close to expected levels in all other subjects. They attain high standards in swimming, dance and in drama. At age seven, standards are above average in art, design and technology, and history and in line with the level expected of their age in other subjects. Standards overall are high in history because of the high level of interest teachers have in this subject. There is a real enthusiasm for history in the school and its influence permeates many aspects of the curriculum. Links with art and English are particularly strong and pupils learn to appreciate the past through dance, drama and art as well as through reading and listening. Standards in swimming are higher than other aspects of physical education because of specialist teaching.
7. Pupils achieve well for they enter school in the reception class with broadly average attainment in language, communication, literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Their personal, social and emotional development is slightly higher than the level expected of children when they start school. The children achieve well and make good progress in all their areas of learning. A significant proportion of children attain higher than expected levels in literacy and numeracy by the time they leave the reception class. This good rate of progress is sustained as pupils move through the school and, by the time they leave, pupils have achieved very well in relation to the level at which they started. A real strength in pupils' achievement is the breadth and depth of much of their work because of the rich curriculum the school provides for its pupils.

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

8. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They arrive each morning keen and eager. Younger pupils often come into school with their parents; the atmosphere is warm and welcoming. Older pupils are keen to chat with their friends, and conversations often centre on exciting school work such as a forthcoming debate. It is rare for pupils to be late. Pupils with special educational needs are confident and nearly all have positive attitudes to work. This is because of the extra support they get and the success they enjoy from their achievement in activities planned to match their needs. Teachers make sure that they are included in discussions and they join in fully because teachers choose questions carefully to match their understanding. Many pupils are involved in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Many younger girls

had stayed behind so that they could be involved in the gym club. Older boys and girls were happily dancing away to music from 'Greasé'.

9. Pupils have very good attitudes to their schoolwork. They work hard. Levels of concentration are high and the majority of pupils listen very well when the teacher is speaking. Attitudes are very good in all year groups including reception children but they are often excellent in Year 6. For example, Year 6 pupils showed real enthusiasm for mathematics and when the lesson came to an end they were desperate to carry on and finish their work. In English lessons these pupils also show great enthusiasm and commitment; many pupils ask questions and boys are especially well involved.
10. Behaviour is very good both in lessons and around school. The majority of pupils behave very well. The staff set very high expectations in regard to behaviour and pupils try very hard to fulfil them. As a result the school is an orderly and well-disciplined community. There are one or two difficult boys but teachers usually handle them extremely well and their attention-seeking behaviour is not allowed to disrupt lessons. Less experienced teachers do very well with difficult pupils but there are times when they would find life less stressful if they had a clear set of strategies which they could employ to ensure that the very small number of naughty boys knew that their behaviour was not approved of.
11. Behaviour around the school is very good. Behaviour is excellent during assemblies and there is a nice social atmosphere in the hall at lunchtimes. Behaviour in the playground is also very good; Younger pupils play very well together and often get involved in imaginative games where they act out a role. Behaviour is livelier in the junior playground. Older boys like to run around and let off steam but there are lots of corners where quieter pupils can sit and chat. Pupils have good manners and are welcoming to visitors. Property is respected and pupils appreciate the high quality school environment. Bullying is rare and incidents are dealt with well. There have been two recent exclusions for a fixed number of days; they were both in fairly unusual circumstances and the matters have now been resolved.
12. Personal development is very good. Pupils respond very well to the responsibilities they are given with a great deal of maturity. Pupils show good initiative and often ask for other jobs. Pupils are encouraged to study independently. From the lower juniors onwards they use books, the Internet and other resources to carry out research. This was very evident in history in Years 3 and 4 where pupils used textbooks, guidebooks, photographs, postcards, inventories and the Internet as sources of evidence to investigate the contents of Tudor houses. Pupils take a great deal of responsibility for their own learning; teachers make it clear what they expect pupils to gain from a lesson. Pupils are also aware of their own targets and work hard towards achieving their personal goals. They work well with the minimum of help from teachers and strive to do their best. Pupils are developing self-discipline; they do not always need direct supervision and this is very evident in older pupils. This contributes very well to the high standards pupils achieve.
13. Relationships are very good between teachers and pupils. This allows pupils to gain self-confidence. They are not afraid to speak out; they know that their opinions will be respected. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils debated the motion, 'Should the Spanish invade England?' Half the class had to argue from the Spanish point of view, while the other half represented the English perspective. They did this so well that a substantial number of pupils were persuaded to change their viewpoint and the motion was carried. Pupils can co-operate well; for example, Year 5 pupils were able

to work closely together when working on an inventory relating to the contents of a Tudor house.

14. Attendance is very good. Rates of attendance far exceed national averages and most pupils rarely take time off. The main reason why pupils miss school are family holidays in term time. Very good attendance promotes very good progress as pupils are almost always present and able to take advantage of the very good teaching and the rich curriculum offered by the school.

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

15. The quality of teaching is very good overall. It is good for reception children and good for pupils in Years 1 and 2. It is very good for pupils in the junior classes. Teaching is mostly at least good and a large proportion of lessons are very well taught, with some excellent teaching in several classes for older pupils. Teaching is good in nearly half of the lessons and very good or excellent in over a third. There is no unsatisfactory teaching though elements within the small proportion of satisfactory teaching could be improved. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection with a higher level of very good and excellent teaching and no unsatisfactory lessons.
16. The teaching of children in the reception year is good. The children are well supervised and they are given a great deal of independence to choose their own activities. Strengths lie in the management of children and in fostering their personal, social and emotional development. This is reflected in children's quickness to settle into school and their willingness to learn. Teachers and adults in the classroom understand the needs of children very well and have an instinctive understanding of how to help them to achieve. Some of the activities planned lack specific challenge. An area for improvement is to use the informal notes teachers keep on children's progress in different areas of learning to plan what to teach next. Some of the activities are a little unimaginatively resourced and so do not excite children's curiosity or encourage them to explore quite as much as they might. Planning, although satisfactory, does not take into account that activities could develop more than one area of learning at a time.
17. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language is good. This is most noticeable in teachers' provision of work for these pupils, which aptly matches what they know with what they need to learn. It also shows clearly in the effectiveness of extra help and support for them in many lessons. Teachers also arrange effective individual support outside lessons. The school's records show that nearly all pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their programmes of work.
18. The quality of teaching of infant pupils is good overall. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is particularly good at this stage. The work is well planned to match pupils' different levels of attainment and is enlivened by imaginative use of resources to stimulate pupils to learn. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and the small class sizes enable them to give individual attention to those who need it most. Strengths in teaching lie in the teaching of basic skills and in teaching practical subjects such as art, design and technology, ICT and music. This gives pupils a very good basis for future learning. Teaching is good in most other subjects. Teachers make it very clear to pupils what they are going to learn and as a result pupils have a very good awareness of their own learning. Some of the classrooms are too small to allow pupils to work in groups easily. An area to improve is the organisation of

equipment and pupils to take account of this to enable pupils to work independently yet with adequate supervision and support when they need it.

19. There is a high proportion of excellent and very good teaching in the junior classes. One lesson in five is excellent. The very good overall quality of teaching enables pupils to learn at a very good rate and to attain well above average standards in key subjects such as English and mathematics and also in history and French. Time is used very well and often lessons move at a fast pace. While planning in infant classes also makes very good use of linking subjects together, this is a particular feature of the very good teaching in junior classes where a subject such as drama, for instance, is linked very successfully with science and history to bring both past times and the present concerns about food hygiene vividly to life. The success of this integration of subjects is seen very clearly in some of pupils' startlingly vivid writing and in the clarity and immediacy of their oral presentations and mimed dance in physical education lessons. Where the teaching is excellent, it is often quite inspired as in a mathematics lesson where teaching the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes mesmerised the pupils as they were led to discover ever more complex terms such as 'triangular-based pyramid' through applying logic.
20. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is a strong feature throughout the school and, through planning together, teachers have devised imaginative and challenging lessons. The school has adapted the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy to suit the needs of its pupils and to allow teachers to bring their own individuality to the teaching. Slightly longer mathematics lessons in the juniors give pupils extended time to work independently or to explore mathematical concepts through sharing ideas in class. The 'guided reading' element of literacy lessons takes place within additional time set aside for pupils to read to themselves and further time is given to pupils to allow them to write at length. Both subjects benefit from additional incidental teaching through other subjects. The quality of teaching in most subjects is good apart from indoor physical education lessons where it is satisfactory overall.
21. There is a strong sense of teamwork between teaching and non-teaching staff. Pupils' learning benefits from their teachers' enthusiasm and the time they spend devising interesting ways to teach. The management's decision to give teachers time to plan in school time clearly benefits pupils' attainment, and the introduction of 'team teaching' in Year 5 to cope with a very large class is particularly successful. In addition, pupils benefit from the employment of skilled physical education specialists who teach outdoor games and swimming during teachers' preparation time, as well as weekly singing with the music co-ordinator. This organisation has contributed well to raising standards. Although parents expressed concerns, an appropriate amount of homework is set and is used well to help pupils to learn.

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

22. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is based on national guidance and meets the recommendations in each area of learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is rich and varied and gives pupils good opportunities to learn so as to foster their academic and personal development. It fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Independence and a responsibility for their own learning are part of this approach. It is further strengthened by visits out of school and visitors. The school recognises the importance of the subjects such as history, geography and art and their contribution to the wider curriculum. Very good links are made between subjects to enable pupils to use the skills they learn in one to further their knowledge of another. It is also



forward looking by supplementing this with French, currently taught to the oldest pupils.

23. There are very good arrangements for teaching literacy through the appropriate framework and the strong and imaginative links with other subjects, most notably history, geography and religious education. Strategies for teaching numeracy are also very good. Teachers plan a structured daily mathematics lesson, which includes a high proportion of whole class time. Oral and mental work feature strongly. Policies are in place for all subjects and are reviewed regularly. This helps to keep standards high as policies include the latest guidance. The school's long-term planning incorporates a planned development of skills in different subjects. Co-ordinators use this framework to help them to plan what should be taught each half term in their subjects and this is then shared with teachers. This system makes good use of the staff's expertise in particular subjects. Six themes per year across the school help teachers to stamp their individuality on the curriculum. Learning objectives are sacrosanct but teachers are free to meet these through their own ideas and so plan with a creative edge.
24. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum and good opportunities to learn. The curriculum is fully inclusive and pupils' individuality is taken into account in all its activities. It is clear that in ICT girls and boys show equal enthusiasm for working with computers and readily share. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and in line with the new code of practice. Individual education plans of good quality are in place. These are used by teachers in their everyday planning, ensuring that work is focused and relevant to pupils' individual needs. Pupils with identified problems in literacy and numeracy receive extra help, for example, through additional literacy support.
25. There is a range of very good extra-curricular activities, for example, the lunchtime computer club, and after-school gymnastics, dance, netball and football clubs. There are sporting contacts with other schools in the city and locally. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is based on 'circle time' in the infant classes and 'key skills' booklets and diaries in the juniors. There is no formal scheme of work as yet. The awareness of drugs is covered in the school's science curriculum. In sex education, issues are dealt with sensitively and appropriately as they arise although there is a more formal programme for pupils in Year 6. The school council makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal and social development and is currently considering how to improve arrangements for wet playtimes. This means that pupils have an influence on how their school is run in areas which particularly concern them.
26. There are good links with the local community, which make a useful contribution to pupils' learning. For example, a local hotel helped the school develop the playground and the parish supports children's visits through a charitable trust. The parent and teachers' association makes a substantial contribution to the school in terms of financial support through fund-raising and social events. Links with other schools and educational establishments are good. The local education authority's arts' programme is very useful in helping the school to develop its multicultural education. The school is a member of the Comenius project providing links with schools in Europe. Students from the local higher education college, nurses and health visitors have placements in school. The school is popular with ex-pupils for work experience. There are good links with the local playgroup ensuring that pupils transfer to the reception class as smoothly as possible. There have been good improvements in the curriculum since the last inspection.

27. At the last inspection provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was described as variable. Opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development were not systematically planned within the curriculum and the provision for collective worship was not secure. There has been a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Daily acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and assemblies give pupils time for quiet reflection with good opportunities to look into the values and beliefs of others. Pupils develop an understanding and tolerance of others, fair mindedness and recognition of their own strengths and weaknesses and those of others. Their classmates and their teachers value the youngest children's ideas; for example, in 'show and tell' sessions they talk about special moments in their lives. Older pupils discuss different ideas they encounter in stories, for example, or in other subjects.
28. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school is keen on promoting the values of honesty and truth so that pupils know right from wrong and as they get older pupils recognise that they are responsible for their own actions. They learn how to learn from their mistakes, and to be responsible for their own behaviour with a clear understanding between right and wrong. Parents agree that the school is helping its pupils to become mature and responsible. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are very good and these play an important part in pupils' social development. Pupils themselves get on very well with each other, for example, in class discussions or in the playground. Teachers provide many opportunities for collaborative and individual work during lessons. These very good levels of co-operation and willingness to join in all aspects of school life are important contributors to the improvement in standards. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to appreciate their own cultural traditions and those of others. Visits to the Barley Hall in York or the Minster bring these alive. Subjects such as art develop the creative aspect; drama and role-play are used as effective ways of developing an empathy with the past. By the time they leave the school pupils have an understanding of what it means to live in a multicultural society and of the faiths of other people.

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

29. The school provides a bright cheerful, environment where pupils learn well. This is a caring community in which the needs of pupils are given a high priority. There are very supportive relationships between pupils and staff. Children are encouraged to be happy at school. There are good arrangements in place to ensure that pupils are taught within a safe environment.
30. The school's arrangements for child protection require some improvement for, although there is a named person and duties are taken seriously, the school does not have a child protection policy that would provide staff with advice and support concerning child protection issues. Despite criticism in the previous inspection report, no member of the school staff including the named person has had any recent training.
31. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. The school has recently introduced a computerised system of registration. There have been a few teething problems but clerical staff are working very hard to ensure that they are resolved and that record keeping meets statutory requirements. The school identifies the very few pupils with severe attendance problems and receives appropriate support from the educational welfare service. Most parents are very diligent and send notes or telephone the school whenever their children are absent. However, some absences remain

unexplained. There is a need to develop a more formal system of following up unexplained absences in order to ensure that rates of unauthorised absence do not rise significantly.

32. There are satisfactory procedures to promote good behaviour. Many teachers are very experienced and have developed very good strategies to ensure that pupils remain well behaved and actively engaged in their work. This often relies on providing interesting lessons, and promoting very good relationships where there is mutual respect. Many teachers provide positive rewards such as 'smiley faces' which are appreciated by the pupils. The behaviour policy is very brief and does not contain a clear hierarchy of rewards and sanctions to support less experienced teachers who sometimes find it difficult to deal with very naughty pupils. Bullying is rare but pupils do fall out with each other periodically. Teachers take incidents seriously but the school does not have a formal anti-bullying policy.
33. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are good overall. There are very good procedures for assessing work in English and mathematics. Assessments of pupils' investigative skills in science are less developed. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage could be used more effectively to make subtle changes to activities in order to take children forward in their learning. Assessment of other subjects is satisfactory and the results of end of topic assessments are used to write detailed reports on pupils' achievements. The results of assessments are used well and lessons are altered to address pupils' weaknesses. For example statutory assessment tests in English were carefully analysed and writing was found to be a relative weakness. The school then ensured that there was a drive to improve writing and this has led to improved standards. Target setting is also used well. Older pupils have three targets written in their planners. These targets are very specific, for example, 'learn your 7 and 8 times tables', and are designed to help pupils make good progress.
34. Regular schools assessment tasks and optional tests are used to carefully monitor pupils' progress in English and mathematics through the Years 3 to 6. Underachieving pupils are identified at regular intervals and form target groups who receive extra support. There are also booster classes in Year 6 to help pupils to do better in national tests. Although the school has very good provision to support underachieving pupils and many pupils attain at higher levels, it has not yet identified or given extra support to gifted and talented pupils apart from a small group of Year 6 pupils in mathematics.
35. The school has very good arrangements to assess pupils' special educational needs. Staff observe carefully what children can do when they start in the nursery. Teachers then use this information to find out which children have difficulties in learning or behaviour. Teachers have started to make good use of these tests to plan the right sort of support. The school's good assessment system also alerts teachers to pupils who will need extra help. For example, teachers regularly test and measure pupils' reading standards against both their age and their previous attainment.
36. Procedures to monitor pupils' personal development are good. Although procedures are informal, teachers know their pupils very well. A good summary of pupils' personal development is written into pupils' end of year reports and passed on to the next teacher.

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

37. Parents support the school and want their children to do well. There is a very good quality home/school agreement that is quite sophisticated and promotes a successful partnership between parents and the school. However, it does not mention attendance. The parent teachers' association is very active and has raised substantial sums of money by organising social events. This has allowed the school to improve outdoor play facilities and arrange theatre visits, which all help to broaden the curricular provision. The school keeps parents well informed about the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers inform parents immediately there is any cause for concern. However, the prospectus and governors' annual report do not give parents enough information on how the school provides for pupils with special educational needs.
38. Parents are pleased with the high standard of education offered by the school. They appreciate that their children like school. Parents find it easy to approach the school if they have questions or problems involving their children. They are aware that teachers have high expectations for their children. A small but significant number of parents were concerned about homework: some felt that there is not enough homework and others felt there is too much homework, The inspection found that an appropriate amount of homework is set and this helps to reinforce learning.
39. The school provides good information for parents. There are regular high quality newsletters. For example, the Christmas newsletter celebrated children's work as well as telling parents about Christmas events. In addition there are regular newsletters associated with individual year groups that tell parents about what is being taught. The recent guidance for parents concerning handwriting was of particularly high quality. Parents can communicate with teachers via reading diaries and planners but some parents prefer a more personal approach and many pop in to have a quick word with teachers. The school brochure is bright and cheerful and strongly reflects the positive atmosphere in the school. However, some information that is required by law is missing, for example, percentages of authorised and unauthorised absence and the admissions policy. The brochure is supplemented by a Yearbook, which has an up-to-date list of staff, holidays and the results of statutory assessment tests.
40. The governors' report to parents is a warm and friendly document containing a significant amount of interesting information about the life of the school. Unfortunately, much of the information required by law has been omitted. For example, there is insufficient information about provision for pupils with special educational needs and the admission of pupils with physical disabilities. Percentages of authorised and unauthorised absence have not been published and little has been written about staff training.
41. A significant number of parents felt that they were not well informed about progress. The inspection found that pupil reports are generally of good quality. There is some variation in quality but reports were never less than satisfactory quality and they were often very good. Reports usually clearly state what pupils know understand and can do. Targets are often of good quality, stating clearly what pupils need to do in order to improve. There are two parents' evenings, one in October and one in May. Some parents feel that this is too long a gap. Many parents can call in before or after school to discuss problems but a significant number of parents are working and do not have such easy access to school. Some parents were concerned about how closely the

school works with parents; however, it was difficult to establish any difficulties relating to the partnership between the school and parents.

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

42. The leadership and the management of the school are both very good and reflect the good improvements the school has made in many areas of its work since the last inspection. The key issues of the last inspection report chiefly related to systems which were not as effective as they could have been in some major and some minor aspects of the school's work. Over a period of five years, the management has put into place some innovative systems which contribute most successfully to the smooth running of the school and to the strong sense of teamwork between staff, headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors.
43. In response to earlier criticisms centred on planning, particularly short-term, the management took the radical decision to build planning time into the weekly teaching timetable. The school's careful management of its finances enables it to fund additional teachers to come into school each Thursday to teach classes throughout the school. This frees teachers to plan in upper junior, lower junior, infant and Early Years' teams for part of one day each week. As a result of this measure, the quality of pupils' education is enriched by thoughtfully planned links between subjects. Projects, such as the Tudor topic, can be planned to take place throughout the school and contribute positively to the sense of cohesion and purpose, which characterise the management. This system has also contributed well to developing teachers' skills in management as they lead each team, take decisions and put them into effect. This has strengthened teaching and lies behind much of the interest and enthusiasm for learning which are tangible in both teachers and pupils. Because the leadership has taken care to programme these planning meetings very carefully, they contribute very well to the school's improvement plan and help to disseminate the good ideas as well as practice. Parents spoke very warmly of the way the school is run and commented on its efficiency. The partnership between staff, headteacher and deputy is such that in the headteacher's recent absence, when seconded to another school, the school ran in the same orderly and unobtrusive way, according to both parents and governors.
44. The governors contribute very well to managing the school and have a very good understanding of its strengths and comparatively few weaknesses. They have a valuable partnership with the school and while they are partisan about its strengths, recognise, for example, that standards in science should be higher. Governors confirmed that the school is currently reviewing science and that this is an agreed area for training for staff in charge. The school development plan is very clear and easy to follow with appropriate criteria and a commentary to indicate evidence of success. The plan contains estimates of costs as well as actual costs incurred and allocates responsibility for each area following the structure of the governing body's committees. This illustrates the extent to which the governors are involved and they clearly use the school development plan as their tool of management. The school's system of performance management has led to successful staff training and development. Linked in with this are curricular plans for each subject and governors explained which subjects were the current focus for the school. The governing body is given examples of pupils' work from which they can judge standards as well as analyses of results in national tests. Resources spent on additional staff have been successful in raising the standards attained by higher and lower attaining pupils.
45. The governing body takes initiative and finds creative ways of financing educational ventures. Together with the head and deputy headteacher, the governors have won

funding for schemes such as the creation of the Early Years Unit which, with its links with privately funded nurseries and playgroups, is unique in the local area. The former adjoining classrooms have been successfully turned into an Early Years Unit and operate well to provide children with ample opportunity to select their own activities. While this is working well, procedures for assessment need to be developed to track children's progress in each of their areas of learning and to use this information as the starting point for planning activities. The unit could be more imaginatively resourced than it is at present to provide more stimulatingly creative activities or activities which encompass more than one area of learning simultaneously.

46. The leadership by the headteacher and key staff is very good. From the moment visitors enter school, they are aware of the quiet presence of the headteacher. Parents and pupils respect him and values exemplified in the leadership's practice, such as kindness, concern and gentleness, permeate the school and give a very good atmosphere for learning. In assemblies, the leadership's high expectations of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and achievement are exemplified. A quiet word to 'sit up' instantly caused a ripple of alertness and the school sat up to listen to pupils, under the headteacher's guidance, present the background to Ash Wednesday and the lessons to be learnt about how to live unselfishly. The leadership teaches by example. The school's semi-open building, with classrooms leading off central shared areas, facilitates working partnerships and sharing teaching, thus involving the headteacher informally in lessons throughout the day.
47. The school monitors its work very effectively. Through a planned programme of monitoring lessons, the headteacher and key staff have over a period of years carefully observed the quality of teaching and its impact on learning. Governors too are closely involved in monitoring the targets the school set itself and its pupils. The quality of written monitoring reports are very good and each has a precise focus, looking at plans for lessons, the quality of teaching, pupils' response and then a section of 'suggestions' for improvement. These are expressed in a supportive way which nonetheless make very pertinent observations which, if followed, would clearly improve teaching. External reports indicate that the school's monitoring and evaluation process is of a very good standard. Its effectiveness can be seen in the improved standards. The leadership therefore gives very clear and purposeful direction to the school.
48. The school makes very good use of its strategic resources and good educational value is obtained from spending. Specific grants are appropriately allocated and the school seeks to provide best value for all expenditure. Data analysis and liaison with local schools is used very well to compare the school's performance with that of other schools and is used to help the management make decisions. The office procedures are good and very efficiently managed by the administrative assistant.
49. The school's accommodation is exceptionally well maintained and offers a warm, bright environment with pupils' work extremely well displayed throughout the school. This tells parents that their children are valued and pupils take justifiable pride in showing visitors their school or talking about their work. The management takes parents' and pupils' views into account. This was the case, for example, in the decision to provide a drinking water supply, acknowledging pupils' right to drink when they are thirsty during the day. The resources for learning are good for most subjects; they are particularly good for literacy, numeracy, ICT and history. As a result of the strengths in both the leadership and the management, good teaching takes place in every class, and many lessons, particularly those for older pupils, are of very good or excellent quality. Pupils, including those with special educational

needs or who are learning English as an additional language, make good progress. The school gives good value for the relatively large income it receives per pupil.

50. The leadership and management of the school's arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are very good. For example, the co-ordinator has already revised the school's systems to include the latest national guidance. The school uses all its funding for pupils with special educational needs effectively, almost entirely to provide additional support for these pupils both in and out of the classrooms.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

51. In order to improve further, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) raise standards in science to match those achieved in English and mathematics;
- (2) develop the procedures in the Early Years Unit to assess children's learning in imaginative play and use this to plan activities both inside and outside.

In addition, the following minor issues should be considered:

1. identify, so as to make clearer provision for, pupils with special gifts and talents;
2. ensure that the school brochure and governing body's annual report to parents meets statutory requirements.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	16	28	9	0	0	0
Percentage	12	27	46	15	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 one percentage point

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	281
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	22

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

#### Pupil mobility in the last school Year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.8
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final Year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	22	16	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	22	22
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	35	38	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (94)	100 (97)	100 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	22	22
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	38	38	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	100 (97)	100 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	22	14	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	20
	Girls	12	10	12
	Total	29	28	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (87)	78 (95)	89 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	18
	Girls	12	eleven	12
	Total	30	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (92)	81 (87)	83 (95)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	278
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	28

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

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	134.25

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-01
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	£
Total income	570939
Total expenditure	545707
Expenditure per pupil	1922
Balance brought forward from previous year	9838
Balance carried forward to next year	35070

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	284
Number of questionnaires returned	145

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	40	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	52	5	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	54	3	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	58	11	1	2
The teaching is good.	42	50	3	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	46	23	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	44	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	48	2	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	46	20	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	43	45	6	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	54	5	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	41	10	0	8

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

52. Children enter the reception class with skills in speaking and listening and mathematics that are broadly typical for their age. Their levels of personal independence are often good and their personal, social and emotional development is slightly higher than the level expected of children when they start school. The quality of teaching in the reception class is good in all areas of learning except knowledge and understanding of the world, where it is satisfactory. Basic skills of reading, writing and number are taught very well. Teachers plan a practical curriculum that enables children to learn through play and practical activities. They establish a calm and orderly environment in which children feel very secure. Some of the activities, however, do not offer a great deal of challenge and could be resourced in a more imaginative and creative way. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, children achieve well and make good progress in all their areas of learning. They achieve particularly well in aspects of language and number because teachers keep detailed records of progress in these areas and use them to plan what to teach next. Teachers keep informal notes on progress in other areas but do not yet use the information to plan systematically the next step in learning for groups and individuals. Teachers recognise that this is an area for development, particularly within the provision for outdoor play, which is not yet used effectively as a resource for learning.

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

53. There is very good provision for this area of learning and by the time they leave the reception class, children have attained the levels expected of them and many attain higher levels. Effective links with home are established and children and parents are made welcome at the start of the session. The class is well organised to develop children's independence and routines are very well established. Children register themselves when they enter, for example, selecting their names from a chart and filing them in the correct pocket for their registration group. Children very quickly learn to select activities, play sensibly with each other, work at a task until they have finished it and tidy things away when asked. They take turns in the role-play activities and show consideration to others who want to join them at play, for example, in the nursery corner where children share the dolls' prams and take turns to put their babies to bed. All the adults and parent helpers have high expectations of behaviour and are good role models, encouraging children to consider the impact of their actions on others. Children receive clear guidance about how they should behave towards one another and learn to sit quietly and concentrate in lessons. As a result, they are very well prepared for their next stage of learning. They understand what is right and wrong, and are ready for the more formal routines of the next class.
54. Teachers make good provision for children with special educational needs and ensure that any behavioural problems are sensitively managed. Problems are identified early on and action is taken quickly to solve them.

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

55. Children are given plenty of informal opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through the many play opportunities that the teachers and nursery nurse provide. The adults support children in their tasks and take time to talk to them about what they are doing, encouraging them to explain and describe their work. By the time they leave the reception class they are confident to ask and answer

questions in front of the whole class. Children enjoy listening to stories and develop an appreciation of books that stays with them as they move up the school. They can discuss the story by using clues in the illustrations and read simple sentences as a class. Writing is taught systematically. There are regular opportunities for children to begin to communicate through drawing, painting and mark making; for example, play areas have notepads and pencils so that children can write down telephone numbers or messages. Teachers use stories to teach children what a sentence is and use familiar words to help them construct sentences of their own so that children begin to write independently and with increasing confidence. Higher attaining children were quite dismissive when the teacher chose the word 'cat' because they already knew it but by skilfully adding a layer of challenge for children to find the missing word in the sentence 'I like cat' this turned to laughter as children held up words and sorted themselves out into a proper sentence. By the time they leave reception most children can write complete sentences independently, often with capital letters and full stops used correctly. Children of different levels of attainment achieve well because teachers plan work which is well suited to their stage of development.

### **Mathematical development**

56. Children make good progress with their mathematical development, and their attainment by the time they leave reception is slightly above the level expected for their age in numeracy. Teachers take frequent opportunities in teaching sessions to practise counting and develop mathematical vocabulary within a range of practical activities, and they teach the basic skills of number very well. Children regularly count around the circle to practise their numbers and learn to work out numbers that are 'more than' or 'less than' a given number. Higher attaining children count forwards from zero to 20 and back again whilst the lower attaining children enjoy learning their numbers to five through action games and songs such as the 'Currant Bun' song. Teachers use play activities such as the toyshop and the sand tray to reinforce children's learning in mathematics. Some of the planned activities, however, were a little unimaginative. The sand tray, for example, had regular shapes in it for children to identify and then print with after a lesson on shapes and their properties. While this reinforced learning for lower and average attaining children it did not provide much challenge for higher attainers. On the model-making table, children were provided with a variety of shapes such as cardboard cylinders and pasta shapes to stick on to paper to make a model but there was little to suggest to children that this could be taken one stage further, by co-operating, for instance, to make a large construction based on shapes. Teachers keep records of what children have learnt but do not always use the information to plan related play activities that take groups of children a step forward in their learning. Children enjoy mathematics and higher attaining children were quick to point out that that a cylinder "looks like a half sausage" and to ask with curiosity "How many faces?" when the teacher held up a cube. The range of attainment is quite wide, with average attainers unable to count the number of faces accurately. The teaching makes good use of children's suggestions and a really interesting discussion emerged when children pointed out that ice came in cubes as did sugar.

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

57. Children develop an increasing awareness of the world in which they live through an appropriate range of first hand experiences, and adults support children in investigating their surroundings. As a result, children achieve satisfactorily. This was evident in the topic on babies. In their class discussion, children examined a variety of toys on display and recognised that toys for babies had certain qualities that made them particularly attractive and safe for the very young. They knew that children

changed as they grew and that little babies had to be cared for in a special way. The nursery play corner and the water play areas were used well as children played at changing, washing and feeding their babies, reinforcing their understanding of babies' dependency and need for care. Children learn to use technological equipment and have regular use of the computer suite. They can use the computer as a tool for writing, drawing and playing games, and know the functions of some of the keys. The time allocated to direct teaching in this area of learning is small and much of the time is given to free choice play. Some of the play activities on offer are resourced unimaginatively and do not do enough to stimulate real curiosity about the world, or encourage exploration, problem solving or discussion to take children a step further in their learning.

### **Physical development**

58. Children's physical skills and confidence increase steadily as they participate in a range of practical activities that help them develop fine movements. For example, children working with play dough can manipulate, roll and shape the dough and cut it to form the regular shapes they have learnt about in mathematics. They are given plenty of opportunities to develop cutting, colouring and pasting skills through a wide range of art and craft activities. There are regular opportunities for outdoor play in the attractive and well-resourced fenced area. The teacher supervises these well and children play freely and confidently, enjoying balancing on wooden stepping stones and climbing on the low level frames, but the teaching does not guide or structure the activities in any systematic way to develop their skills. Children use the hall for lessons on movement and learn to climb and move confidently on the apparatus. They work together safely; they move around in a controlled manner and higher attaining children use space well. Average and lower attaining children find it hard to skip and hop in a controlled way. They respond well to a game involving 'traffic lights' and can stop and start when instructed. Children with special educational needs are given equal opportunities to participate as learning support assistants encourage joining in with the group.

### **Creative development**

59. Children enter the reception class with the skills expected for their age and some children are particularly good at drawing. Their art and craft skills are developed well through regular opportunities for painting, drawing, collage and model making, usually carefully supervised by the nursery nurse who guides and supports them where appropriate. Work is attractively displayed on the walls. Children making models using wooden cylinders can select carefully from a wide range of different materials and decide where to stick them for best effect. Children have regular opportunities to sing from memory and join in with action songs. Children volunteer to sing on their own and the others clap appreciatively without prompting. Children also enjoy many opportunities for role-play. They immerse themselves in the activities and use props and resources they have imaginatively. Adults often join in the play with them and move into role to encourage their creativity. Although the quality of teaching is good overall, some of the activities are a little inhibited by the resources. The toys in the 'toy shop', for example, were very small scale and an opportunity was missed to include role-play clothes to bring the toyshop to life and to develop more imaginative play, and to incorporate mathematical learning by including toys in a range of different sizes. .

## ENGLISH

60. Standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are well above average at the end of the juniors. At the end of the infants they are well above average in speaking, listening and writing and above average in reading. Pupils achieve very well during their time in this school in response to the very good teaching they receive. Standards are higher than they were at the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress in reading and writing during their time at the school.
61. There are several reasons for these high standards. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has effectively monitored the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that all teachers follow the most effective guidance. Teachers use the National Strategy for Literacy very well, and this and high quality resources have helped to raise standards. The quality of teaching is very good. In most lessons teachers link speech, listening, reading and writing very effectively. They also make the most of the natural links in language between many subjects, particularly between English and ICT, geography and history. Pupils know that teachers expect a lot of them and rise enthusiastically to this challenge. For example in a Year 6 literacy lesson on text editing in the computer suite, pupils worked very busily on a history text, finding very good solutions by talking them through in pairs and with the teacher. The teacher had set a very brisk pace at the start of the lesson and pupils kept this going in their practical work. They were working independently most of the time. Teachers have very good knowledge of language and children's books. They assess achievement carefully so as to support pupils' individual progress. For example, reading diaries give parents detailed guidance on pupils' reading development. They can therefore help their children more effectively at home. Teachers also track pupils' reading progress closely. Basic reading and writing skills are well taught and developed. Very clear planning, sharing of aims, careful preparation and stimulating resources engage pupils' interest and help them to sustain high levels of concentration as in one lesson where there was very good use of projected computer images of text to develop pupils' skills in editing and interpretation.
62. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 speak clearly and have a well-developed vocabulary. They confidently say what they think and ask questions to help them to understand, for teachers carefully develop pupils' speech from the time pupils first come to the school. Pupils also copy teachers' good examples of speech and expression when they try out new learning. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson pupils quickly understood how to turn statements into questions. Once the teacher had shown them how to do it, she gave them plenty of opportunities to practise and test this new skill by speaking in pairs. The quality of speaking and listening continues to improve in the junior classes. Standards stay well above expectation for pupils' ages in Year 6. Pupils carefully follow teachers' detailed instructions and explanations of new work. They often discuss tasks and work out solutions together, for example in drama groups and when editing text in pairs on computers. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, also take part enthusiastically in lively discussions because teachers know how to use pupils' speech as the means of enriching learning. In a Year 6 history lesson, pupils ran a lively debate on the motion that the Spanish Armada was justified. They listened intently to the cases put by each side and really enjoyed the cut and thrust of the arguments. This was because the teacher had ensured that they had very good knowledge of the facts, and had carefully weighed up key arguments first. Pupils talk easily and confidently to visitors.



63. Reading standards are above those expected for pupils' ages at the end of the infants. Basic reading skills are well taught, and parents support reading well at home. Higher attaining pupils read simple stories with enjoyment and understanding by themselves. They also read speech aloud with realistic expression to reflect characters and events in stories. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in language also read independently, though they continue to need help with expression. Other pupils read aloud both accurately and expressively. Nearly all pupils know how to use contents pages and indexes to find facts in books and to skim text for words or information. All pupils begin to read back their own writing to check it. As they know alphabetical order, they can also use simple dictionaries to improve spelling. Reading standards by the end of Year 6 are well above those expected for eleven year olds. Nearly all pupils read by themselves for enjoyment both at school and at home. They are very good at working out both stated and suggested meanings in text because teachers use the National Literacy Strategy very well to develop close reading skills. They also give all pupils time to enjoy reading by themselves at school, as well as exploring stories and novels with small groups of pupils. Higher attaining pupils read quickly and often widely. They show good levels of understanding when they compare and discuss books, characters and authors. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in language now read children's novels accurately but slowly. Other pupils' very good reading skills contribute to their good progress in English. Their skills in using libraries and finding information are higher than those found in most schools. Pupils know how to use catalogues and book numbers and to search the Internet for information.
64. Writing standards, including those in handwriting and spelling, are much higher than in most schools by the end of Year 2. Higher attaining pupils use complex sentences effectively and make clear statements in joined writing. For example, a Year 2 pupil wrote a detailed description of the behaviour of snakes in an information book she had made: 'You really can't tell when they are asleep because their eyes are open all the time.' Lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs in language, form readable joined up sentences, but sometimes forget capital letters. Writing rates and fluency are above average. This is because the school moves pupils into joined writing early and expects them to work quickly. Pupils write in the expected range of forms: stories, letters, descriptions of animals, holidays and a local walk, and notes using bullet points. Pupils make good progress in writing in the juniors, not least because of the high quality of teaching. As a result, standards are well above those in most schools by the time pupils leave. Pupils with special educational needs in language and those for whom English is a second language benefit from high quality individual support and make good progress, often reaching the standards expected for their ages. Pupils learn many new techniques, such as persuasion, because teachers match writing skills to their attainment and understanding. As a result, abler pupils write quickly, using well-chosen words, often with a personal voice. They punctuate accurately within well-controlled complex sentences. Pupils of all abilities match the tone of their writing to its purpose. For example, pupils wrote as journalists do in an article entitled: 'Rainforest Update'. Pupils maintain good standards of handwriting and presentation in their ordinary work. For example, Year 6 pupils set out their work carefully and wrote neatly when making notes. The standard of imaginative writing remains high. For example, in a short story one pupil used the phrases: 'the birds' frightened call', 'through a corner of her eyes she spotted a face' and 'instinctively ran without a second glance'. However, weaknesses in spelling remain. This is because pupils do not always apply spelling skills learnt and tested each week to their daily writing activities. However, the planning, drafting, paragraphing and descriptive power of writing improve well. This is because teachers use guided writing time very effectively in

literacy lessons, and the school gives a lot of emphasis to widening pupils' vocabulary. For example, a Year 4 teacher provided her class with a glossary so that they could easily read a history text closely.

65. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. There was very good or excellent teaching in half the lessons. The marked improvement in teaching quality since the last inspection has raised standards by the end of both the infants and the juniors. In the good lessons, teachers expect and enable pupils to do their best all the time. They also skilfully make good use of work and drama to widen pupils' understanding and to improve the quality of learning. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 improved their understanding of life at sea in a series of drama lessons on a Tudor voyage of rediscovery. Teaching is less effective when learning lacks such interest and challenge. This is sometimes because teachers do not involve pupils enough at the beginning of lessons or there is too much time when pupils have just to listen with little to do. In the very high quality lessons teachers closely engage the interest of all pupils in activities and give helpful tips. For example, in a Year 4 literacy lesson the teacher advised the class: "Think your sentence through before you write it down then you can twiddle it around". They also encourage pupils to give spoken examples of grammatical points. For instance, a Year 4 pupil gave a good example of the use of an adverb in the sentence: "She tossed her head defiantly". This helped the class to focus on the way the position of words affected the meaning of a sentence.

## **MATHEMATICS**

66. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6 and above average at the end of Year 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection and reflects the very good impact of the National Strategy for Numeracy has had on teaching and on pupils' learning throughout the school, and the successful implementation of a scheme of work as recommended in the last report. Standards over time are well above average. Pupils achieve very well in relation to the level at which they start.
67. There are several reasons for pupils' very good overall achievement. The quality of teaching and of pupils' learning is very good. Every classroom has a mathematics display board which both teachers and pupils refer to. The quality of resources is good and they are used very well to enable pupils to learn through practical activities. The subject is extremely well managed and through monitoring by teachers as well as the co-ordinator, there is a very consistent approach to teaching throughout the school. Pupils who have special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language are very well supported. Analysis of pupils' performance in optional and national tests revealed a slight dip in performance in Years 3 and 4. In the junior section of the school, therefore, pupils who need additional help are taught in ability groups in Years 3, 4 and 5. This enables higher attaining pupils in these year groups to work at a faster rate, and so, for example, higher attaining Year 5 pupils are following a Year 6 curriculum. Virtually all pupils, including those with special educational needs or who are lower attaining, are likely to achieve the level expected for their age with just over a third likely to exceed expected levels. A small group of gifted and talented pupils work with pupils at the local secondary school for an hour each week to develop further their mathematical skills.
68. Teachers have adapted the National Strategy for Numeracy very well to suit the needs of pupils. While infant pupils are taught for the recommended 45 minutes in the daily mathematics lesson, older pupils receive one hour's teaching. This enables teachers to ensure that they involve pupils fully at all stages of the lesson and still give pupils sufficient time to practise their skills in the independent activities. The

closing part of the lesson is often used to look at what has been learnt in a different way so as to develop pupils' curiosity and to prompt them to question. Teachers work hard at developing pupils' thinking skills, and the quality of mathematical language used by both teachers and pupils is high. The way the classes are organised means that teachers plan together and share ideas: this too gives consistency to the quality of teaching and learning.

69. Teachers' very good subject knowledge enables them to teach basic mathematical skills effectively to pupils in Years 1 and 2. Lessons are well planned and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can learn. Teachers use visual aids such as puppets successfully to tell the class what they are going to learn and so engage their instant attention. Pupils work hard and enthusiastically and they settle well to work in groups. Some of the classrooms are small and so a group of pupils often works outside the classroom in the shared area. While this undoubtedly develops pupils' independence, it can cause organisational difficulties for less experienced teachers. Lessons at this key stage move at a good pace and teachers have additional work prepared and ready for pupils who finish their tasks quickly. By the end of Year 2, pupils calculate mentally at speed. They begin to work out strategies for adding and subtracting numbers such as 19 and 21 by using their knowledge of adding and subtracting 10. They cover a wide range of work and the overall standard is above average, with lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs attaining the level expected for their age. Pupils enjoy setting their own problems and there is a sense of fun in their learning as in this problem: "I saw 10 bananas, a monkey ate two of them, how many are left?" Much of the work is practical and teachers adapt this well to suit the different levels of attainment in the class; for example, while higher attaining pupils measure doors and the length of the classroom, lower attainers work with smaller numbers, measuring fingers and the width of chairs. The marking of pupils' work is good and teachers make helpful comments as in the injunction to "Make sure you guess before you measure" to encourage pupils to use their knowledge to estimate and to check. This results in pupils' learning becoming much more confident.
70. In junior classes, the quality of teaching is also very good and there is some inspired teaching of mathematics in Years 4 and 6. Work is carefully matched to suit pupils' needs. In the Year 3 class, for example, pupils learn through interesting, challenging activities which involve them applying what they learn. The teaching expects pupils to work independently but occasionally instructions are not clear enough so pupils with special educational needs, in particular, fuss a little before settling to their tasks. Teachers have a very clear idea of what they want their pupils to learn and the planned sequence of activities is often highly challenging. Pupils really enjoy mathematics and begin to formulate their own theories. For example, a higher attaining Year 4 pupil began to work out the sequence of repeated patterns in negative numbers and to relate this to the positive number pattern. Teachers are very good at explaining because they know the subject well. Everyday examples bring mathematics to life as in an excellent Year 4 lesson when pupils learnt to distinguish between a pyramid and a triangular prism and instantly saw the advantages of sharing the latter if it were chocolate rather than the former. A great deal is often learnt in a very short time. Delightful relationships with the teacher often bring lessons alive as in the shared appreciation when a rectangular piece of paper fell off the wall, and someone quipped, "Thank goodness it wasn't 3-D!". By the end of Year 6, pupils have covered a wide range of work. They sequence decimals and can solve word problems which they confidently convert to numbers. They have a very good understanding of fractions and can compare and order decimal and percentage equivalents. When calculating areas and perimeters, higher attaining and average attaining pupils examine complex shapes.

71. As a result of the very good and excellent teaching, pupils achieve very well and gain a real 'feel' for mathematics. Older pupils use special mathematics notebooks in which they answer as many questions as they can when they arrive in the morning or after they have completed their tasks. In the Year 6 classrooms, for example, on the mathematics board, there are questions relating to problem solving, reading graphs, measuring shapes and calculating amounts of money in a shopping list. These are pitched at a wide level so that pupils of different levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, have ample opportunity to practise their skills. Pupils really use this very good environment for learning and so work very well and with independence.

## SCIENCE

72. At the ages of seven and eleven, most pupils attain the standards expected of their ages and make satisfactory progress. For a number of pupils, attainment is better and they reach a higher level. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Comparisons with similar schools at the age of eleven reflect the fact that standards are not as high as they could be. The school recognises that the potential to improve is there, and it is working hard to raise this profile, particularly the number of pupils attaining the higher levels. Teachers now incorporate planned investigative work into their lessons so that pupils learn from devising and carrying out experiments. This is already having a beneficial effect on standards. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, social and health education.
73. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are learning about the importance of healthy eating. The youngest pupils experiment with the tastes and textures of fruit and vegetables and record their favourites. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to understand the need to eat a range of foods to keep healthy. The higher attaining pupils recognise the nutritional value of different foods and that these should be eaten in proportion. Pupils know about the characteristics and properties of everyday materials and how these can be changed, for example, when heating and cooling chocolate to make crispies, that the changes can sometimes be reversible. By the age of seven, pupils are developing a basic knowledge of forces by pushing and pulling toy cars, and through finding out how sounds are made.
74. As they move through the junior classes, pupils build on their existing knowledge and skills. In their investigative work they predict what will happen, make sure that their test is fair and control variables. Results are presented in a variety of ways such as tables and graphs. Pupils build on their knowledge of life cycles of plants and use terms such as *germination*, *dispersal* and *pollination* accurately. They understand more fully about healthy eating and the difference between vitamins, fibre and carbohydrates, and look at the nutritional composition of different biscuits. The oldest pupils know that forces are measured in Newtons and they begin to understand the effects of friction and gravity.
75. The quality of teaching overall is good with a significant proportion of very good teaching, particularly in investigative science. Features of this very good teaching in the infant classes include planning a wide range of activities to meet the diverse needs in a mixed age class and the use of teaching assistants to target specific groups. In the junior classes, teachers are very skilful in using pupils' existing knowledge, not always that gained in science, to make them think and work hard and so increase their learning, for example, discussing hygiene in Tudor times and how often Queen Elizabeth I washed, as a basis for planning an experiment to find whether using water or soap is the most effective way to clean your hands. Pupils

respond well to this approach and it is clear that they rise to the challenge of this discovery method.

76. The co-ordinator has taken effective steps to ensure standards are raised, hence pupils have more regularly planned opportunities to develop their scientific thinking skills and understanding. Assessment is now being used more rigorously as part of the process to monitor pupils' progress and to identify those pupils capable of more challenging work.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

77. The high standards in art and design noted in the previous inspection have been maintained and attractive displays of pupils' artwork in classrooms and corridors contribute significantly to the pleasant and visually stimulating environment for learning. Teachers have designed a curriculum for art that ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered systematically, and skills and techniques are carefully taught using a range of media so that pupils achieve well and experience success when they apply them to their own work. This is particularly evident in the work on portraits being undertaken throughout the school. Pupils in Year 2 have already learnt how to plan their work carefully and use the space well when they sketch their initial outlines onto paper. They study features closely and use their colour mixing skills well to match skin tone and colours in clothing fabrics. Higher attaining pupils take note of very fine detail in their subjects' clothes and jewellery and represent them well in their drawing and shading. Year 6 portraits are of an equally high standard. These pupils can combine their drawing, painting and collage skills to produce a palette of shades and fabrics of their choice for a Tudor portrait. They produce thoughtful and imaginative designs based on an in-depth study of the period and reflecting a range of skills they have already mastered.
78. The quality of teaching is good with some very good features. Teachers are confident to work with a range of media in both two and three dimensions. They demonstrate skills and techniques well so that pupils know what is required and the standards for which they are aiming. In a lesson in a Year 3/4 class on using light and dark shades to add depth to a picture, the teacher gave clear demonstrations to show pupils how to draw three-dimensional objects and how to build up shades and tones by using the pencil appropriately. This ensured pupils achieved success and took pleasure and satisfaction from their own efforts. Teachers place importance on evaluation and time is spent reviewing work critically at the end of lessons. This enables pupils to have a good understanding of how they are doing and how they can improve their work.
79. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that starting points for work in art and design relate to other work pupils are doing, for example in history, and pupils experience a good variety of materials and processes. This planning is sometimes so tight that it does not allow room in the timetable for pupils to work creatively or have freedom to experiment for their own pleasure. Pupils plan and evaluate their work routinely but few teachers make use of sketchbooks as a record of progress.
80. The subject makes a strong contribution towards pupils' personal development. Teachers often use the natural world and the work of famous artists as stimuli for pupils' work and there is ample evidence of art and design work based on ideas and artefacts from other cultures.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

81. Standards in design and technology remain similar to those at the previous inspection and are at least in line with those expected nationally in both the designing and making elements of the subject. They are high at the end of Year 2 and remain high in the lower juniors. These high standards are not sustained in the upper juniors because the school does not have enough high quality tools and resources to enable pupils to work with the skill and precision required for the higher levels of attainment. Throughout the school, pupils take time and care with the designs for their products. Year 2 pupils produce detailed and thoughtful designs for their musical instruments. Their finished instruments made out of household packaging and recycled materials are carefully covered with papier-mâché and painted to a good standard. Pupils' evaluations are equally thoughtful. They identify what they are pleased with and how they might improve their instruments next time – for example, one pupil would “use a clean palette and put more colours on next time”.
82. In Years 5 and 6 the designs for musical instruments are equally thoughtful and imaginative and drawings are of a satisfactory standard. The quality of some of the finished products is disappointing, however, particularly where pupils have chosen to work with cardboard and junk materials rather than wood. These instruments are of a similar standard to those made by the younger pupils and do not demonstrate any progression from previous years. Where pupils have worked with wood, in some cases with help from home, the products are of a much higher standard.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good features and pupils achieve well in many aspects of the curriculum. Teaching is particularly good in the infants and lower juniors. Teachers are well prepared for their lessons so pupils are able to start promptly and make good use of the time available. In all lessons, pupils are well prepared beforehand. They study manufactured products to help them with their own designs, and prepare labelled sketches and templates before they attempt their own products. In all classes pupils had studied a wide range of musical instruments, both familiar and exotic, before attempting to design their own. Teachers give equal weight to all aspects of the design, make and evaluate process and this encourages pupils to work thoughtfully and look for ways in which their products could be improved. As a result, pupils are self-critical and recognise the strengths and weaknesses of their work. Where work is of a lower standard in Year 6, this is because pupils are given too much choice about the tools and materials they can work with so they do not have the opportunity to learn the skills and techniques required to work with precision on resistant materials such as wood. Some of the tools are not robust enough for the tasks set and this limits the quality of the finished product.
84. Pupils enjoy the subject, work sensibly together and are patient with each other when sharing tools and equipment. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and fully included in lessons. The co-ordination of the subject is good. Staff training has been provided for some areas of the curriculum and there are appropriate plans in place to develop the subject further that include improving current assessment procedures.

## GEOGRAPHY

85. Geography was not a focus in this part of the term and therefore insufficient evidence was seen for an informed judgement of teaching and learning to be made. However, evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work makes it possible to draw positive conclusions that attainment for all pupils is appropriate to their age and they make

satisfactory progress. Since the last inspection, although standards of attainment have stayed the same, the curriculum is much more organised so that pupils' knowledge, skills, and understanding are built on progressively.

86. In the infants, pupils' first hand experiences are used effectively as an important resource to develop their early geographical skills. Pupils investigate problems such as litter and pollution and ways in which they can improve their own environment. They look at the differences between the local shops in Haxby and those in the shopping complex at Clifton Moor. In their wider studies they look at the lives of people in Africa and compare them with their own; for example, they realise that their peers in Baricho are responsible for keeping the school clean.
87. Junior pupils build on these foundations. To broaden their experiences they look at the different landscapes in South America, for example, mountains, rain forests and deserts. In their mapwork they use atlases to locate features such as the Equator, the Tropics, the continents and major oceans and seas. Pupils use this knowledge when studying weather and climate and compare the temperature and rainfall of Manaus in the Amazon basin to London. As part of their residential visit to the Yorkshire Dales, they plan routes from Wigginton to Hawes, based on their understanding of the geography of Northern England. Pupils are familiar with Ordnance Survey maps and use their contour lines to plot a cross-section of Semer Water.
88. There are good links with literacy. For example, older pupils review books set in South America such as the legend of 'How Walya taught Gurigo to make fire'. Teachers use passages such as the 'Raynforest' for pupils to identify and correct spelling mistakes such as 'endaynngerd,' 'cammouflagge' and 'beatiful'. The co-ordinator plans to develop a more formal assessment system using the existing framework for assessing skills and to increase the opportunities to use ICT. Geography makes a useful contribution to pupils' cultural development through visits out of school, and visitors such as an African dancer and an Indian drummer.

## HISTORY

89. By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of history and their skills in finding out about the past are much higher than in most primary schools. This is mainly because of the enthusiasm for history in the school, and very thoughtful planning that forges strong links with high quality English work. This link is sometimes so good that it is not clear whether the lesson is in English, history or ICT, because of the high quality of pupils' learning in all three subjects. Another reason for the high standards is the school's policy of teaching a small number of topics in depth, rather than many on the surface. However, there is a disadvantage in this approach. Since all pupils study the same history periods at the same time, they revisit some topics as they move through the school. As a result, despite very careful planning to match work to their ages, pupils occasionally find that: "Teachers ask you the same questions." Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve a very good understanding of history because teachers have very good knowledge of the topics, and enable pupils to learn through direct experience, speech and drama as well as through reading and listening.
90. Pupils in their final year, therefore, often show considerable maturity in their understanding of the past. For example, at the end of a Year 6 debate on the Armada, rather than go merely with a patriotic view, pupils decided that the Spanish had been justified in attempting this invasion of England. Pupils also recall key facts about Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, 'Romeo and Juliet', Queen Elizabeth I, King

Henry VIII, Tudor fashion, crime and punishment, armies and boys' education. They understand how Romans and Vikings invaded and settled in England. Pupils also describe how life for children and families was different in Victorian times. They use historical documents such as letters, drama scripts and photographs to find information about life in the past. Pupils have a good understanding of chronology.

91. By the end of the infants, standards are higher than in most primary schools. Pupils have above average skills in finding answers to questions about historical periods. For example, Year 2 pupils wanted to find out: "What were Tudor toys?" and "How many people were in England?" They learn effectively about aspects of the whole school topics appropriate to their ages. For example, they discovered the significance of items in Tudor houses and differences between Tudor children's clothes and modern ones. They also understand the importance of famous people in the past such as Florence Nightingale. Pupils of all abilities also understand how we learn about the past from eyewitnesses who wrote down or depicted what they saw. They also learn about the more recent past by talking to older members of their families, and comparing old and new objects such as kitchen utensils and toys.
92. The school makes very good use of visits to locations of historical interest and of visitors to deepen pupils' understanding of the past. Teachers plan these into the work on each topic. For example, pupils visit Barley Hall in York and the Royal Armouries in Leeds as part of their study of the Tudor period. History topics also develop map-reading skills by including location maps and routes, for example of voyages of exploration. Pupils also learn very effectively through handling and examining artefacts from the periods studied so as to make detailed observational drawings, for example of Elizabethan pomanders and horn cups.
93. As a result the overall quality of teaching and learning and pupils' response in lessons is good. Discussions with Year 6 pupils showed a thoughtful and well-informed interest in the past and very good knowledge of some of the historical periods they had studied. They had clear memories of what they had learned, particularly through visits, visitors and drama. They recalled and compared different ways of finding out about the past and understood the difference between primary and secondary sources. Pupils felt that two important reasons for studying history were to increase our knowledge and perhaps to learn from the past.
94. A further strength of the teaching is the use and development of pupils' speaking and literacy skills. For example, in each topic, pupils play out roles of children in the given period. Teachers also often get them to talk about new learning in small groups or pairs, before they go on to reading and writing. In a very good Year 4 lesson on furniture and fittings in Tudor times, the teacher developed pupils' reading skills well. As well as discussing a description of the inside of a house, pupils found keywords, highlighted them and used glossaries to gain a full understanding of the text. Teaching and learning make significant contributions to pupils' understanding of their own heritage, insights into moral and social issues, and their cultural awareness.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

95. There have been substantial improvements in the provision for ICT since the previous inspection when standards of work were broadly satisfactory but inconsistent across the different strands of the subject. Since then the school has considerably improved the planning and resources for the subject and standards are now better than those expected nationally at both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have regular access to the well-equipped computer suite and up-to-date software. They learn skills systematically and practise them regularly, achieving very well and



making rapid progress in lessons. Pupils in Year 2 can find work previously saved in their personal files and retrieve it so that they can add to it and improve it. They can type directly to the screen and use simple word banks to help them with vocabulary and spelling. They know how to change the size and style of the font to improve the presentation of their work and take pride in the finished document. Pupils in Year 6 can use the computer to collect information from many different sources and combine it to produce impressive presentations of their work. They work confidently with slide presentation software, using word processing and desktop publishing skills imaginatively to produce attractive documents, which can be shared by other classes and other local schools.

96. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers plan lessons carefully to ensure that pupils build successfully on what they already know. They make very good use of a computer linked to a large projection screen to demonstrate new skills clearly so that pupils are sure of success. Teachers use the subject very effectively to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, Year 3 pupils made very good use of the computer to research information on their work on Tudor life and times in history, and produce an attractive document containing pictures and text, of their chosen area of interest. Teachers encourage pupils to examine their work critically and consider how they might improve it, and take time at the end of the lesson to discuss progress and share success. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the equipment and receive appropriate support with their tasks. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They work together sensibly, sharing their ideas and taking turns with the equipment. At the end of lessons most are confident to present their work to the class and willingly accept suggestions for changes when these are offered. They have a good understanding of how modern technology can be used to enhance their learning and what some of the pitfalls are.
97. The high quality of learning and pupils' positive attitudes to the subject reflect and justify the recent investment that the school has put into time, resources and staff training. A computer technician maintains the equipment and provides invaluable support in lessons. The curriculum has been well planned to ensure that time is allocated to all strands of the subject and these are taught effectively within other subjects such as art, science and mathematics. A lunchtime computer club gives the oldest pupils the opportunity to improve their skills through the design and production of a school newspaper, and to share their expertise with one another. The school recognises what it has achieved in the subject and what it needs to do to raise standards further. This includes introducing a system for recording pupils' attainment and identifying what they need to learn next.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

98. Standards in French are well above average. Pupils in Year 6 learn both to speak and write French.
99. The quality of their work is of a high standard. This subject was not reported on in the last inspection as it was then provided as an extra-curricular activity as an out-of-school option for pupils in Year 6. Now all pupils in Year 6 take the subject and really enjoy learning a modern foreign language.
100. Pupils achieve well above average standards because they are very well taught by an enthusiastic and skilled teacher. Lessons are fun and the quality of teaching is excellent. Pupils are taught to speak French with a good accent and correct intonation. Imaginative techniques such as repeating phrases after the teacher in a high, low, loud, quiet voice either rapidly or slowly, keeps pupils on their toes as they

strive to imitate what they hear as well as giving them practice in speaking correctly. In one lesson, the teacher introduced M. le Visage, a picture of a man's face with removable features and a selection of alternatives to put in their place. Through a simple game involving everyone, the pupils learnt the names of features and to answer different questions such as "Qu'est-ce qu'il manque?" (What's he missing?) as well as whether his expression was *content* or *triste*. The pupils readily understand the teacher when she gives instructions in French and delight in playing 'hide and seek' when some of M. le Visage's features are hidden on their chairs and they have to guess, using French of course, who is hiding them. Songs in French round off very enjoyable lessons where pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are pleased to find they are at a similar level to high attainers and sometimes learn more readily. Lessons proceed at a fast pace and time is used very well to help pupils to learn.

101. What makes pupils' attainment well above average is the quality of their written French. They have covered a wide range of work and the teaching has clearly introduced pupils to the different agreements required for masculine and feminine words. Simple work sheets illustrate and invite pupils to write in French whether they like or dislike the depicted foods, which are labelled in French. Simple crosswords and mazes give pupils additional and enjoyable practice at writing and reading French. Pupils' skills are such that they are able to colour in numbered parts of pictures listening to instructions in French in a simple form of the traditional *dictée*. Activities are extremely well thought out to help pupils learn and all worksheets are headed in French so pupils have much more practice in both reading and writing the language.

## MUSIC

102. Standards are broadly in line with those expected of seven and eleven year olds by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Although this is similar to standards reported in the last inspection, this masks the fact that standards have stood still in the interim because of changes in teaching staff. The recent appointment of a new co-ordinator for music has seen significant improvement in the quality of provision across the school with all classes receiving specialist teaching in singing. The newly devised scheme of work is also helping to raise standards in other aspects of music such as listening, appraising and composition. The subject is very well led and managed.
103. The quality of teaching is good and some very good lessons take place. Pupils clearly enjoy music and quite a number have music lessons from visiting teachers in woodwind, violin, brass and keyboard instruments. There is a high level of consistency of learning throughout the school, partly because of the way that the curriculum is organised to encompass a 'whole school approach' to a particular aspect of music. For example, last term, infant pupils looked at music from Africa, lower juniors concentrated on Indian music and upper juniors on South American music. This was used to teach different rhythms and patterns to develop pupils' understanding of music from different countries. The school borrowed additional resources to supplement the school's more ordinary ones and, by incorporating ICT into the teaching, enabled pupils to begin to understand how to layer sounds.
104. In response to very good teaching, younger pupils invent their own simple music sequences, trying to change the tempo and dynamics. In one lesson, they organised themselves well and worked together with great enthusiasm. The teacher encouraged pupils to record their sequences and most managed to play together, varying the speed. Average and lower attaining pupils were a little confused between loudness and speed, combining rather than separating the two. Older pupils begin to

read simple music notation and learn how to develop a rhythm by combining a simple *ostinato* with a four-beat rhythm on a tuned instrument. In response to very good teaching, older pupils' attainment is above average. The attainment of pupils in Years 3 and 4 is slightly better than that of pupils in Years 5 and 6, reflecting the strategy of the current co-ordinator to concentrate on raising pupils' skills systematically as they progress through the school. The average attainment of older pupils reflects the gap in their acquisition of skills. Other subjects such as science and design and technology are used well to support pupils' development in music. For example, juniors find, "it really depends on the density and thickness of the object" to determine what factors "cause sounds to slow down". Evaluations of how they made instruments in design and technology draw on their musical knowledge, as in "I can change the pitch of the note by shortening the strings". Boys and girls respond equally well in music lessons and show a high level of concentration. The subject is supported well by extra-curricular activities such as choir and recorder groups.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. Standards are as expected for pupils' ages at the end of both the infants and the juniors. They have been maintained since the last inspection. Standards in swimming and dance are higher than in most junior schools. There are no differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning.
106. The quality of teaching is good. In infant classes, teachers ensure that pupils develop sound gymnastic skills by encouraging them to use a full range of apparatus. This works well because pupils learn the importance of balance and are then well placed to improve their own performance. In a very good Year 1 gymnastics lesson, the teacher also encouraged pupils to evaluate the performance of others. This helped pupils think about their own movement sequences at the same time as it helped them gain confidence in performing for others. In the very good lessons, pupils also work very well together in groups and set each other high standards. For example, in a Year 6 movement lesson on the theme of discovery, pupils were keen for the class to see their group's performances. The class then assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the work in terms of realism, ambiguity, consistency and interpretation. As a result pupils' drama skills improved. For example, several pupils used very accurate facial expressions and muscular tension to register the weight of a treasure chest.
107. In the best lessons, teachers ensure that pupils warm up fully, move nearly all the time and keep meeting new challenges in which they apply and add to the skills they are learning. This was evident in a very good gymnastic lesson for an infant class. The pupils ran on tiptoe as they came into the hall, marched on the spot as the teacher gave them directions and moved quickly from one activity to the next. As a result, they had plenty of exercise and were both bright and calm by the end of lesson.
108. A good feature of teaching throughout the school is the effective use teachers make of music to encourage pupils to engage their imaginations to develop the expressiveness of their movement. For example, a Year 5 teacher used the contrasting moods in Walton's 'Spitfire Prelude' to develop pupils' group role-plays on the dangerous and adventurous life of Tudor sailors. Pupils enjoy these lessons tremendously and work intelligently and sensitively. Another good feature of the teaching is teachers' firm control of pupils' attention. For example, because all pupils

obediently followed a teacher's direction, "All eyes on C!" they immediately learned from a very good pupil demonstration and were able to improve their own movements and balance. This was also evident in the care that they showed in clearing away at the end of a lesson, when the teacher asked: "Is it safe to continue putting things away with that noise level?" Teachers make sure that pupils are properly dressed for physical education lessons so that they may move and work freely. They are also vigilant to ensure pupils' safety. Teaching is less effective when pupils do not get enough exercise as they warm up. Occasionally learning lacks precision, when teachers do not demonstrate all the steps of basic skills in enough detail, or do not use individual pupils' achievements enough to show the rest of the class how to improve their performances.

109. The school gives junior pupils good opportunities to learn to swim. There is also good parental support for swimming. As a result, nearly all pupils are confident swimmers by the time they leave school. For example of the 59 pupils in the present Year 6 classes, 55 can swim 50 metres, 41 can swim 100 metres and 25 have gained a water safety award. Fifty-three can swim with more than one stroke.
110. The school provides a well-balanced curriculum, which is enriched by a good range of after-school games and sports. For example, teachers run teams for football, netball, athletics and rounders. The school team came second in the York primary school rounders competition. Pupils also take part in the local swimming gala. Good provision is available for junior pupils to experience outdoor and adventurous activities on the school's orienteering course. Boys and girls have equal opportunities within the range of work in lessons and these extra activities.
111. Leadership of the subject is good, and is making up for a three-term gap in the co-ordination of the subject. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for future development of physical education in the school. However, there are few opportunities either to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school or to observe the standards pupils achieve. This is the main reason for variations in the quality of teaching and learning between one class and another.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

112. Standards of attainment in religious education, throughout the school, are in line with the locally agreed syllabus and pupils make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards of attainment and progress were reported to be unsatisfactory. Long-term planning has been rewritten, taking into account the requirements of the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus. This allows teachers to plan their lessons more effectively.
113. In addition to gaining knowledge from within the school's main focus on Christianity, pupils in infant classes are beginning to understand some basic aspects of customs and beliefs of Hinduism. They know about their special books such as the Veda, the most holy of the Hindu scriptures, and the Upanishad, which tell the stories of their gods and goddesses such as Rama and Krishna. By the age of seven, pupils know that Jesus was a healer and storyteller and are familiar with some of his stories, for example, the Prodigal Son. Most are familiar with the local church of St Mary and St Nicholas and can talk with confidence about the things they have seen on their visits, such as the font, pulpit and altar.
114. The youngest junior pupils can talk about the creation and compare Christian teaching with other faiths. They talk about Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter, and the Hindu festival of Diwali. By the age of eleven, pupils have acquired

knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the basic principles of Hinduism and Islam, for example, the Five Pillars of Islam and how Muhammad was given the Qur'an.

115. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and as a result standards have improved. Lessons are planned to be interesting and teachers' questioning makes pupils think. Consequently, they have good attitudes to the subject and are eager to join in with discussions. A good example was seen in Year 6 when pupils discussed the meaning of the Hadith, 'Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt'. By the end of the lesson they had the confidence to write and explain their own: 'A fish is a fish, not a bicycle' with the moral 'be yourself'. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has identified that further improvement in assessing pupils' progress is needed and that the use of ICT could help bring the subject to life. There is a good collection of books covering a range of moral issues and a variety of artefacts relating to the major faiths studied. Planned links with other subjects such as making clay Diwali lamps and pencil sketches of the interior of the church also benefit pupils' learning. Writing poems such as 'No more' about events on 11<sup>th</sup> September gives older pupils opportunities to reflect, develop spiritually, and show their deeper feelings: 'There is..... nothing left but ruins.'