

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MUNDELLA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107006

Headteacher: Mr A Birkby

Reporting inspector: Dr M Williams  
19388

Dates of inspection: 25 - 28 June 2001

Inspection number: 196217

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mundella Place Sheffield
Postcode:	S8 8SJ
Telephone number:	0114 2551348
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stephen Ellis
Date of previous inspection:	17-20 March 1997

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Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19388	Mike Williams	Registered inspector	Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The schools results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19439	Doreen Shotton	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15236	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	Science Music Foundation stage Equal opportunities	
21910	Gordon Longton	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18370	Kevin Johnson	Team inspector	English Art Religious education English as an additional language	How well are pupils taught?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Mundella Primary School is situated on the southern outskirts of Sheffield. There are 282 pupils on roll: 125 boys and 157 girls. The school draws most of its pupils from the immediate neighbourhood which is urban in character. It is an area of mixed housing, with pupils coming from a wide range of social backgrounds. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Assessments on entry to the school show that although children's personal and social skills are often good, their reading, writing and number skills are no better than average for their age. The proportion of pupils on the special needs register is lower than that found in most schools. There are only a very small number of children from minority ethnic groups and an equally small number who speak English as an additional language.

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

Although Mundella does well in some areas, it has shortcomings in others. It achieves considerable success in promoting high standards in pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and personal development. Educational standards for Year 6 pupils, on the basis of inspection evidence, are good in English and mathematics and sound in science. The quality of teaching is good overall, though a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching continues to hold back the progress of some pupils. For most pupils, the curriculum is satisfactorily planned; however, some groups and classes of pupils are not consistently provided with appropriate work for their age and abilities, including pupils with special educational needs. This failing is partly the result of the school's inadequate arrangements for checking pupils' progress and evaluating standards generally. The school has no sure means of knowing where improvements could be made. Although day-to-day management in the school is good, management overall is ineffective and hinders the school's progress. In spite of these weaknesses, the vast majority of teachers, through their individual dedication and skill, provide pupils with a sound, and sometimes better, quality of education. For these pupils, the school provides sound value for money. The same is not true for the minority of pupils for whom the current educational provision is unsatisfactory.

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

- A hard working and conscientious staff team provide a lot of good teaching, especially in developing pupils' basic skills.
- Attainment is good in art and design throughout the school, and good in design and technology and in music amongst the junior-aged pupils.
- Good progress is made by the children in the Reception class overall.
- The school provides a secure and caring ethos within which pupils behave very well, display good attitudes towards learning and enjoy very good relationships with each other and with the adults who help them.
- Day-to-day administration of the school is efficient and effective.
- Parents' involvement in the life and work of the school is considerable and productive.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is well planned and effective.

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

- Curriculum planning does not take sufficient account of pupils' differing abilities. In science, geography and in the curriculum for under-fives, the schemes of work are not good enough.
- The management of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is ineffective.
- There are few structures to enable the school to plan its longer-term development.
- The school's assessment, monitoring and evaluation arrangements are unsatisfactory.
- Delegation of responsibilities to senior staff is not effective in ensuring that key management functions are carried out properly.
- Aspects of the school's accommodation are unsatisfactory.

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

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

Overall, the school has not made sufficient progress since the last inspection in March 1997. Strong features of the school's performance at that time remain strong features now, notably the very good support provided for the vast majority of pupils, and the equally good response pupils make to the support they receive. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. The high levels of unsatisfactory teaching reported then have been greatly reduced.

Progress has been more limited in other areas. Academic standards, on the evidence of the school's National Curriculum test results since the last inspection, have not kept pace with the rates of improvement nationally, particularly in English. Evidence from the current inspection indicates that standards in English have improved this year (2001). Some progress has been made with improving the school's curriculum provision. Planning for English and mathematics is clearer, partly because of the good implementation of the national strategies for these subjects. In other subjects, it is still not consistently good enough. The school still does not ensure that all pupils are provided with work appropriate to their ages and abilities. Nor has the school responded effectively enough to the lack of adequate assessment and monitoring arrangements highlighted in the last inspection report.

The main source of the school's weaknesses at the time of the 1997 inspection was ineffective leadership and management. Although the school continues to be well managed on a day-to-day basis, it is still not effectively led and managed in terms of tackling the more substantial management issues identified by inspectors in 1997.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools ++	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A*	A	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A*	A	B	B	
Science	A*	A*	B	B	

++ The grades in this column have been adjusted to give a more accurate reflection of pupils' social circumstances. The original grades for the three subjects were E, C and C.

Inspection evidence indicates that standards amongst the current Year 6 pupils are mainly good in English and mathematics and satisfactory in science. It is also a largely positive picture in Year 2 where standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are mostly good. Since most pupils enter the school at age 4 with satisfactory basic skills for their age, they make sound progress overall by age 11. In the remaining subjects, standards are good in art and design throughout the school, and good in design and technology and in music in the junior section. They are sound in all other subjects, except in geography where they are unsatisfactory in the infant section. The children currently in the Reception class are making good progress. In contrast, Reception children in the Year 1 class do not do as well. Despite the school's failure to monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs properly, most make sound progress, due primarily to the good support they receive from teachers and classroom assistants.

The picture is less positive when viewed in terms of the school's recent National Curriculum test results. The table above shows that the school's test results for 11 year olds, compared to schools nationally, have fallen each year since 1998, especially in English. Even taking into account the fact that the school's 1998 results represented a high point in its performance, the overall trend since 1997 has been steadily downwards. When compared to schools of similar context, the school's results in English show an even sharper decline - to below average in 2000. The failure of the more able pupils to reach higher attainment levels, especially in writing, was the chief cause of this decline. In neither English nor mathematics were the school's proposed achievement targets for 2000 reached - by a considerable margin. Targets set for this year (2001) are also unlikely to be achieved.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
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Attitudes to the school	Most pupils have very positive attitudes to school and learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Pupils are respectful of each other, polite and considerate.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' relationships with each other and with adults are very good. They accept and carry out their responsibilities willingly and sensibly.
Attendance	Attendance, and pupils' punctuality, are good.

Most pupils are highly motivated, work hard and do their best.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Approximately two-thirds of the lessons seen were good or better. Of these, half were very good or excellent. This compares well with other schools, and very well with when the school was last inspected. Seven per cent of lessons seen were unsatisfactory, all in the infant section. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils respond well. They listen intently and concentrate well. Only when given work that is too easy does their concentration slip. Teaching and learning in basic skills are consistently strong in the junior section. Planning in the best lessons is good with teachers very clear about what is to be learned and the standards to be achieved. Teaching and learning in the Reception class are also enhanced by good planning. Where pupils' learning is not satisfactory, or could be improved, it is because planning is less effective and they fail to provide work that is appropriate for the full range of ages and abilities in the class.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall, the school's provision is unsatisfactory. It is sound for literacy and numeracy and some other subjects, but unsatisfactory for science and geography, and for the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory. The school does not ensure that all pupils needing specific help receive it, despite the best efforts of teachers to fulfil this commitment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is particularly well provided for through assemblies and in lessons. Being aware of their own actions on others is a well-developed feature of the school community, and of the social expectations of pupils. Provision for pupils' cultural development is more effectively promoted in terms of appreciating their own culture than in exploring the diversity of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The personal care for pupils is very strong. On the other hand, the school does not keep careful records of pupils' educational progress and achievements.

Parents give the school strong support educationally and financially. A small, but hard-working, group of parents help in the classroom - to good effect. All pupils are made to very feel safe and secure, and are well supported in this respect. Support for them in terms of their educational progress and achievement is less secure. Only in English and mathematics, and in some classes, is assessment used successfully to track the progress of individual pupils and to check that the work given is effective in meeting the needs of all pupils. As well as limiting the school's capacity to monitor pupils' progress from class to class, this shortcoming does not enable the school to identify the strengths and weaknesses in its provision.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Overall this is an area still needing a lot of attention. The school is well run on a day-to-day basis. In most other respects, the school lacks clear leadership. The roles and functions of senior staff are not well thought out.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are actively involved in the life and work of the school. However, they do not check the provision for pupils with special educational needs sufficiently.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Though some sound practice is beginning to emerge, the school does not have adequate arrangements for evaluating its performance.
The strategic use of resources	Principles of best value are practised.

Ineffective management continues to hamper the school's progress. There is no lack of commitment on the part of the headteacher, staff or pupils to succeed. What the school lacks is clear arrangements, consistently implemented and regularly monitored, to ensure that best practice, and performance, are rigorously pursued. The quality of the learning resources is sound. Staff are suitably qualified, but the extensive use of temporary teachers is disruptive to pupils' education. Some of the accommodation is unsatisfactory.

## 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>• Their children enjoy school and are well supported and cared for.</li> <li>• The conscientiousness of the headteacher and staff.</li> <li>• The good teaching most children receive.</li> <li>• The children's good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.</li> <li>• The value that the school places on parental support in pupils' learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many parents with children in Year 3 are concerned about the provision.</li> <li>• A lot of parents feel that they are not well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• Children are not given the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• The school does not work closely enough with parents.</li> <li>• The school's provision outside lessons is not satisfactory.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents about what the school does well. They also share parents' concerns about the Year 3 class this year. While the school has done its best to resolve a very difficult situation, inspectors are not convinced that the school was sufficiently aware of the full impact of the situation on pupils' educational progress. There are some grounds for parents' disquiet over homework. Inspectors feel that homework could be better planned and more consistently set. Inspectors feel that there is adequate provision for pupils outside lesson times, and that, overall, the school works closely with its parents, except in respect of the provision for the Year 3 class.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards of attainment at the last inspection were reported as being in line with national expectations overall, with evidence of a significant number of pupils achieving above this level. The performance of children under five was very similar. This does not reflect the high levels of fluctuation in pupils' progress. Depending on which class a pupil was in, or which subject was being taught, pupils' progress and achievement ranged from good to unsatisfactory. Large amounts of unsatisfactory teaching and weak planning were judged to be the causes of this inconsistency.
2. On the evidence of the present inspection, standards of attainment broadly match those found in English and science in 1997, but are slightly higher now in mathematics than they were at the last inspection. In the other subjects, they are now higher in art and design in both key stages, and in music and design and technology in Key Stage 2, but lower in geography in Key Stage 1. For the under-five children as a whole (i.e. in the Reception class and the mixed Year 1/R class), standards remain sound, with quite a number of children making good progress, mainly in the Reception class. The extreme fluctuations in pupils' performance noted at the last inspection have been reduced, largely as a result of much improved teaching. Planning, too, has improved, but remains variable in some classes and subjects. Currently, there are still a significant minority of pupils in the school who, as a result of either unsatisfactory teaching, inadequate whole-school planning and monitoring, or, in the case of one class, the impact of severe staffing difficulties, have made less progress than they should. About one in ten parents feel that their children make insufficient progress.
3. Taking the evidence of the school's performance in the National Curriculum tests since 1997, standards overall have been maintained at levels above the national average at both key stages. In 1998, the school's performance in the Key Stage 2 tests reached a high point. In the two years since then, the results have fallen away, particularly in English. By 2000, the school's performance, at the end of Key Stage 2 compared to schools nationally, was:
  - average for English;
  - above average for mathematics and science.
4. When compared to schools of similar background (adopting inspectors' adjustment to the school's official benchmarking), standards in English were below average, but in mathematics and science were above average. The relatively better performance achieved in mathematics and science was due to the higher proportions of pupils exceeding the national standard for their age. For mathematics and science, this was well above average, but for English was well below average. Indifferent standards in writing were a primary cause of the school's weaker performance in English.
5. Inspection evidence for the current Year 6 pupils shows slightly improved standards in English, improved standards in mathematics and broadly similar standards in science, when compared to those indicated by the school's 2000 test results. Improved teaching of basic skills, especially towards the end of Key Stage 2, has helped to raise standards of writing and number skills considerably, as has the impact of the national strategies and the additional time and focus devoted by the school to improving pupils' writing. The same cannot be said for pupils' handwriting. Lack of adherence to the school's handwriting policy results in inconsistencies in letter formation and style. Pupils read well for their age and have a genuine interest in books and literature. They are good at speaking and listening and in tackling number work. They handle mental arithmetic confidently and accurately, and apply this effectively to other areas of mathematics. In science, pupils' subject knowledge is stronger than their investigation skills. This is mainly because they are given too few opportunities to develop scientific skills appropriate to their ages.
6. In other subjects in Key Stage 2, standards are sound overall. They are good in art and design, design and technology and in music, which, significantly, are the subjects where most progress has been made with curriculum development and planning, and where the particular interests and expertise of individual teachers have made a marked impact on standards. Standards are sound

in information and communication technology. Considering the restrictions of the school's current computing facilities, pupils do well in this subject. They use their skills competently and confidently across the range of the curriculum. Pupils also use their mathematical skills well across the range of subjects taught. This is less true of their writing skills. The range and presentation of pupils' written work is frequently not as good as it should be.

7. Given the particular circumstances of the Year 3 class, and the scale of parental concern regarding the attainment and progress of pupils in this class, inspectors carried out a thorough monitoring of pupils' performance over the year. Most pupils in this class have not made the progress of which they are capable, though this does not show itself uniformly across the different subjects. In English, it is the average and less able pupils who have not made the progress normally expected in reading and writing. The more able pupils do better, but are not challenged enough. In mathematics, pupils' progress, and the amount of work covered, is markedly less for pupils in this class than that for the Year 3 pupils in the Year 3/4 class. In science, pupils' progress in the Year 3 class is poor. In most other subjects, there is a similar pattern of discontinuity in pupil's learning and progress. This raises significant questions about why the school did not carry out a careful check on pupils' progress, and the work being covered, once it was clear that the Year 3 class situation was not temporary.
8. In Key Stage 1, standards of attainment follow a similar pattern. Sound outcomes by the end of the key stage (Year 2) mask fluctuating standards of attainment and rates of progress up to that point. National Curriculum test results for the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 show standards to be broadly average in English and mathematics compared to schools nationally, but below average in science (an exception in relation to previous years). When compared to similar schools, the results overall are close to average. Given that this group of pupils entered the school (on the evidence of their baseline assessment scores in 1998) with slightly above average attainment, their progress is satisfactory, but only just. Inspectors found much the same picture with the present Year 2 pupils (who are close to the end of the year). They are confident and enthusiastic readers, have good basic number skills and have a sound knowledge of all aspects of science. In most other subjects, they achieve sound standards and make satisfactory progress – just as at the time of the last inspection. Exceptions are in art where standards by the end of the key stage are now good and in geography where standards are now unsatisfactory.
9. It seems likely that Year 2 pupils would reach higher standards if they were enabled to make more consistent progress in previous classes. Variability in standards of provision and teaching prevent this. In the Foundation Stage, children in the Reception class make good progress in the acquisition of basic skills as a result of good teaching and planning. The progress of the Reception children in the Year 1/R class, on the other hand, is not as good, albeit that the children make sound progress. This comes about as a result of lesson planning that frequently fails to take account of the differences in age, ability and prior attainment of pupils in this class. Similar failings, and their consequences, are evident in the planning for other subjects in this class, notably for geography. Reception children who transfer to the Year 1 class at the end of the first term experience a slowing down in their rates of learning and progress. As in Key Stage 2, good teaching towards the end of the key stage enables pupils to catch up much of the lost ground.
10. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are very few in number. They are well supported in lessons and make sound progress.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. Their rates of progress tend to be dependent on the class they are in, though for most of these pupils the good quality of personal support they receive from individual teachers and classroom assistants, ensures that most achieve soundly, and in some cases achieve well. However, inadequacies in the school's assessment and monitoring arrangements, for checking the progress of these pupils, does not guarantee that all pupils with special needs are properly classified and catered for. Inspectors noted that at least one pupil's extreme lack of progress was not being remedied by the provision being made for him.
12. Similar lack of precise information about individual pupils' attainment and progress helps to explain the gap between the overall targets that the school sets itself for English and mathematics and the actual results it achieves. Last year the school failed to reach its targets by a wide margin, and is unlikely to meet them again this year. Target setting for individual pupils is at an early stage of development. Assessment arrangements, apart from some progress in English and mathematics, are inadequate – thus denying the school regular and accurate evidence of what pupils are currently achieving, and what they might achieve in the future. At present, overall school targets are not sufficiently linked to informed knowledge about pupils' prior attainment, nor

to carefully considered whole-school strategies for securing realistic improvements. In specific instances where this has begun to happen, such as in writing, standards are now higher. The inevitable conclusion is that a significant minority of pupils could, and would, achieve higher standards if the school had a clearer view of what it wanted them to achieve, strategies for securing these goals, and the means for measuring, progressively, whether these goals are being achieved.

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

13. Pupils' positive attitudes towards school have been maintained since the last inspection. The vast majority of pupils are happy in school and are eager to learn. There are a small number, particularly in the Year 3 class, who according to their parents, are no longer so keen to come to school, finding lessons unchallenging and the constant changes of teacher unsettling. Pupils are enthusiastic to answer questions and try hard to complete tasks, although the younger pupils do some written work hurriedly and sometimes carelessly. The clear instructions from teachers are, in all but a tiny minority of instances, followed quickly and obediently. Pupils are able to work independently when the opportunity arises.
14. Behaviour in the classroom and around the school is very good. Pupils are respectful and polite and they know this is what is expected of them. They work and play well together and the very occasional incidents of bullying are soon resolved. In both the infant and junior playgrounds, pupils are sociable and they organise and join in games together. They co-operate well and understand each other's point view. Pupils behave well as a matter of principle not of sanction. There have been no exclusions in the school during the course of the last year. From the parents' questionnaire, 98 per cent of parents agree that the behaviour in school is good.
15. Pupils form constructive relationships with one another and with teachers and other adults. These very good relationships contribute considerably to the quality of learning and are a strength of the school. For example, the relationship between the pupils in the choir and their teachers is at a very high level and this produces excellent results. Pupils help each other. They are able to collaborate well and this has a favourable impact on their achievement. Most parents agree that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. The trust and strength of the relationships between pupils and teachers significantly aids this process.
16. Pupils' personal development is good. Throughout the school, pupils are willing to take on responsibilities when asked. Year 6 pupils help with such duties as the organisation of assemblies, the ringing of the school bell and reading to younger pupils during wet lunchtimes. Some of them successfully organise, plan and manage fun clubs for younger pupils after school. Although there is a teacher present, the Year 6 pupils take complete charge of these sessions, thereby highlighting the extent of the trust placed in them and the degree to which they respect and honour that trust.
17. Attendance is slightly higher than the national average, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. Unauthorised absence is slightly less than in most schools and relates to a few families only. Pupils generally arrive at school on time and lessons start and finish on time.

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

18. The overall quality of teaching has improved sharply since the last inspection. There is a higher proportion of satisfactory or better teaching. Two-thirds of the lessons seen during the current inspection were good, very good or excellent. This compares favourably with other schools. The best teaching seen was found in Years 5 and 6 where a number of the lessons observed were outstanding. In contrast, the unsatisfactory teaching was exclusively located in the lower key stage (Years 1 and 2).
19. On the basis of inspection evidence, the quality of teaching overall is:
  - good in the Reception class;
  - good in Years 3-6;
  - sound in Years 1-2;
  - in line with the teaching for the rest of the class in respect of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

20. In many of the subjects where shortcomings were identified at the last inspection, teaching is now satisfactory. Where unsatisfactory teaching remains it is due in the main to the fact that curriculum planning is not good enough to give teachers the support they need to teach necessary skills. This accounts in part for the lack of progress made by pupils in two geography lessons seen at Key Stage 1 where the learning objectives were poorly matched to the range of pupils' abilities, prior learning and attainment.
21. The quality of numeracy and literacy lessons has improved overall because most of the teachers have adapted their skills well to the requirements of the national strategies for English and mathematics. However, where too little account is taken of the age range and abilities of pupils within termly planning, lesson planning also tends to be weak. The pace of learning, particularly for more able pupils, is slowed. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 benefit from the pace and challenge of their literacy and numeracy lessons. Brisk introductions to the lessons capture pupils' interest. Teachers have clear expectations of what pupils will learn, and very good relationships are reflected in pupils' attitudes and response to work.
22. Pupils who are on the school's register for special educational needs learn satisfactorily in relation to the targets set for them. Their needs are recognised by teachers and by the classroom assistants who work well with individual and small groups of pupils. A weakness, however, is that pupils' progress is not properly recorded, making it difficult for teachers to be sure that what they plan for them is fully appropriate. Where pupils have more significant learning disabilities, the help of the local authority support service provides teachers with clear guidance about the learning needs and progress of these pupils and enables them to make better progress.
23. Although there is some outstanding teaching in the Foundation Stage which results in rapid progress, a significant number of Reception children, notably in the mixed Year 1/R class, have fewer opportunities to make appropriate progress because their teacher's planning does not properly address the recommended areas of learning for children in their reception year. In this class, Reception children are not introduced to the structure of the literacy hour in preparation for Key Stage 1, and opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world, through observation and investigation, are very limited.
24. Highly effective teaching, which results in very good learning, was seen in some art, religious education and science lessons. These were characterised by the teachers' good use of subject knowledge and use of their individual skills to engage pupils actively in learning, through drama, investigative and creative work. In the majority of lessons, teachers rely heavily on one teaching method. This involves an introduction by the teacher followed by pupils working on similar tasks. There is little time for pupils to work collaboratively to solve problems, or to become engaged in assessing and evaluating their own work. Even in design and technology, where pupils are required to evaluate the quality of their work, the focus is invariably on individual pupils designing and making their own products. Marking is inconsistent; the best marking is evaluative and helps pupils to see how they can improve, but too often it is cursory and unhelpful.
25. Assessment of pupils' progress during lessons is sound. Feedback to pupils as they work on tasks is often good – particularly in the strong teaching where teachers are eager to extend pupils' learning. Evidence of the good use of assessment to inform short-term planning was seen on a number of occasions when teachers changed the content of subsequent lessons to reflect the pupils' progress in the previous lesson.
26. Homework is set for pupils, and the school has a homework policy. However, this policy is too imprecise and the homework arrangements in most classes tend to reflect this policy. Many parents find this inappropriate, a view that they made very clear at the parents' pre-inspection meeting and on their questionnaire returns. The absence of regular homework in the Year 3 class was a focus for particular disquiet. Inspectors found the use of homework in most classes to be irregular. Examples of its benefits are evident; for example, in the Year 3/4 work on France. However, it is difficult for parents to be appropriately involved if they are not sure what, and when, homework is set.

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

27. The quality of the school's provision, on the evidence of the current inspection, is:
- unsatisfactory for the Foundation Stage overall, though sound for the Reception class;
  - sound in English and mathematics, but unsatisfactory in science;
  - sound in all other subjects, apart from geography which is unsatisfactory;
  - unsatisfactory for pupils with special educational needs;
  - sound for pupils for whom English is an additional language;
  - good for pupils' personal development;
  - sound for the provision of extra-curricular activities.
28. Although the school's provision, in terms of policies and schemes of work, meets statutory requirements, its implementation does not ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate curriculum in practice. There are well promoted aspects of the provision, notably the provision for pupils' personal development. Sound progress has been made with the production of schemes of work in most subjects, and some of these have successfully addressed the issues identified in the last inspection report, notably art and design, design and technology, music and information and communication technology. There are classes where the curriculum is well developed as a result of good termly planning, notably in Years 5 and 6. The provision for English and mathematics has been considerably improved by the good implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy.
29. In contrast, there are aspects of the provision where insufficient progress has been made in tackling the issues raised in the last inspection report. The schemes of work for science and geography still provide teachers with too little guidance to ensure that termly planning is effective. Planning for the Foundation Stage curriculum is unsatisfactory, as is the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Finally, the provision for the Year 3 class, for much of the year disrupted by long-term staff illness, has been unsatisfactory despite the best efforts of teachers to make good a very difficult situation. What this highlights is continuing weaknesses in the school's overall planning and monitoring procedures, with too much dependence placed on individual teachers to secure effective longer term-planning for the different subjects.
30. Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage staff meet regularly to plan the curriculum together, but there is a lack of leadership in their planning and insufficient differentiation between Key Stage 1 (Years 1-2) and the Foundation Stage, especially in the Year R/1 class. For Years 3-6, teachers plan individually in most subjects, resulting in repetition of work, discontinuity in pupils' learning and variable rates of progress across the different classes. Although excellent and very good teaching at the upper end of Key Stage 2 helps to raise standards in English and mathematics, the fact that this is necessary reflects the variable quality of learning opportunities in earlier classes. It is a similar story in Years 1-2 where the generally sound provision pupils experience in the top two classes is undermined by the unsatisfactory curriculum planning in the Year 1/R class. Lack of adequate assessment information, and inadequate whole-school monitoring arrangements, in most areas of the curriculum – the exceptions being English and mathematics - further undermines the school's capacity to ensure effective and consistent implementation of its provision.
31. As noted earlier, the improved quality of provision for English and mathematics reflects good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This is having a positive impact on standards. During the inspection, teachers' weekly and daily planning for literacy and numeracy contained good detail and made a strong contribution to the quality of the teaching of basic skills.
32. Similar improvements have not been achieved with the school's provision for its pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' individual education plans are much improved as a result of increased guidance. However, evidence shows that progress reviews for most of these pupils are not properly recorded by the special needs coordinator. Although the local authority support service performs its task well, its efforts are constrained by the inadequacies of the school's own monitoring and assessment systems to ensure that pupils' needs are accurately recorded and catered for. There was very occasional evidence to indicate that this was not always the case.
33. In other aspects of its provision, the school makes significant efforts to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils; for example, by including as many pupils as possible in the school concert, and in valuing people, whatever their race, colour or creed. However, there is

occasionally a gap between the school's declared intentions with regard to educational inclusion and its actual practice; for example, in the case of the Year 3 and the Year 1/R classes.

34. An interesting range of educational visits enriches and supports pupils' learning in the curriculum. These include visits to places of educational value such as Mappin Art Gallery and York Castle Museum. The school provides a sound range of out-of-lesson activities for pupils in both key stages, including basketball, recorder groups, choirs, the listening club, board games, fun clubs, the library club, a quiz club and an art club. The range of sporting activities for pupils is less well developed. Visitors to the school include the police and fire brigade, a local magistrate, the school nurse and dentist, artists and The Travelling Tuba. All of these activities add substantially to the quality of the school's provision. The school makes satisfactory use of the local community to support learning. Good links have been established with local nurseries and playgroups and with the local secondary school which ensure smooth transitions at entry and exit from the school.
35. The provision for pupils' personal development, including health education, is good. Governors have approved policies for sex education and awareness of drugs misuse. These are incorporated effectively into teaching and learning across the school. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good overall. In relation to their moral development, it is particularly strong, but less so for pupils' cultural development, although this is sound. Pupils' spiritual development is well developed through the daily assemblies and religious education, which provide pupils with knowledge and understanding of other major faiths as well as Christianity. During assemblies and in lessons, pupils are given commendations for their endeavours and good work, providing them with useful opportunities to gain insights into their own personal worth and to build up their self-esteem. Art and music lessons successfully enable pupils to express their own sentiments and feelings. Pupils are helped to understand the difference between right and wrong and to see the consequences of their actions on others and themselves. Teachers take time to explain to pupils the impact of their behaviour on others and pupils benefit from this reasoned approach, developing better understanding, and learning the need for tolerance. The school's programme of charitable giving helps pupils to appreciate their responsibilities toward others. Pupils readily become socially aware. To this end, the school continues to depend on high expectations, good adult role models and giving pupils opportunities to perform regular duties and tasks. The school's plans to develop a citizenship policy are in place. Provision for pupils' cultural development is effective in extending their appreciation of their own culture, but less effective in enabling pupils to discover and celebrate the richness and diversity of other cultures, though opportunities to compare different countries with their own in geography is helping to address this aspect of the provision.

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

36. This was a strong aspect of the school's performance in the 1997 inspection. The school continues to be very good at making pupils feel at ease and secure. The school's provision for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare is sound. The teacher responsible is fully trained and the headteacher substitutes for him when he is away. All staff, including the lunchtime supervisors, are aware of their responsibilities in this respect. Other strong aspects of the school's support and guidance arrangements identified in 1997 remain effective, notably, the monitoring of attendance, monitoring behaviour and having a good personal knowledge of pupils. The weaknesses last time (the lack of effective record-keeping systems based on whole-school assessment and monitoring arrangements) persist.
37. Where a very good personal knowledge of pupils is sufficient to provide appropriate support and guidance for them, the school does a good job. Pupils are constantly encouraged to do their best within an educational environment which rewards effort as well as achievement. Pupils are made to feel valued and worthwhile. Good behaviour is well promoted throughout the school by the high expectations of the teachers. They are good role models. Behaviour is monitored well by constant, but unobtrusive, supervision and a consistent approach to discipline. Any instances of bullying are investigated promptly and about two weeks afterwards a letter is sent to parents to see if the matter has been satisfactorily resolved. This is a helpful way of reassuring parents and monitoring the situation. A careful watch is kept for any signs of oppressive behaviour and this is effective.
38. Similar levels of effectiveness are evident in the school's monitoring of attendance. Attendance certificates are awarded each year for full attendance. Parents are discouraged from taking

holidays during term time and they are required to provide reasons for their child's absence. Within school, attendance registers are completed accurately and efficiently. Teachers report any concerns to the headteacher who takes appropriate action. First aid and medical matters are well provided for. Fire precautions, drills and equipment are well attended to. The buildings supervisor and the responsible governor conduct health and safety checks, and risk assessments, on a regular basis. On the whole, the school provides a safe environment for its children. However, the hall, dining room and some other rooms are used as storage space for old furniture, thereby restricting the exit routes. The support for personal care and hygiene of pupils, especially for the older girls, is hindered by the old-fashioned and poor state of provision in the school toilets. This inhibits some pupils from using the toilets.

39. Children receive good support when they enter the school at age 4 and when they leave at age 11. The school has forged very close links with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer. Visits are exchanged throughout the year. Following the Year 6 pupils' final visit, there is a parents' evening at the secondary school. This is helpful in giving confidence to pupils about their secondary education. Annual reports to parents, and the interim progress reports during the year, assist parents to support their children's learning, as does homework when set regularly. An exception to this judgement is the Year 3 class. The lack of progress meetings for parents with pupils in this class, the irregular setting of homework and the failure to keep a careful check on pupils' progress, highlight the shortcomings in the more formal aspects of pupil support and guidance.
40. Inadequacies in the school's monitoring and assessment arrangements were identified as key issues for action in the last inspection report. Sound assessment practice has been established in English and mathematics where the procedures recommended by the national strategies have provided clear structures for teachers to use. In other subjects, apart from information and communication technology, there is little or no assessment to identify the progress pupils make. Even where assessments do exist, the use of these for monitoring purposes remains under-developed. Monitoring of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is a particular weakness, the impact of which has been noted in earlier sections of this report. The fault lies in the school's management arrangements, not with individual teachers, who, as non-specialists in the field of special educational needs, do their best.
41. In summary, therefore, the effectiveness of the school's support and guidance procedures mirrors its performance elsewhere. The school supports, cares for and guides most of its pupils, at a personal level, with conspicuous success; however, formal assessment is insufficiently used to track, and target, pupils' academic progress.

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

42. At the last inspection, the school's partnership with parents was reported as being mutually supportive and positive. Parents, by and large, remain very supportive of the school. There are areas of disquiet, but these are largely caused by issues relating to the Year 3 class, and to a lesser extent, the Year 1/R class. Overall, it is a predominantly positive picture. The school certainly values, and works hard to secure, the good support it gets from parents.
43. Parents feel welcome in the school and like the school's open door policy, which enables them to approach the teachers at any time about their concerns. They appreciate the caring attitude of the headteacher and all the teachers and staff in the school. They believe their children are well cared for within a supportive environment. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, is regarded by parents as satisfactory. The school prospectus is detailed and attractively presented, acting as an effective source of information for parents. The governors' annual report to parents is neither as informative nor as attractively presented. Regular school newsletters keep parents informed of events. At the start of each year parents are informed of what pupils will be learning though not in sufficient detail to enable parents to become significantly involved.
44. Most parents are keen to support their children as much as they can. This contributes not only to the confidence of the children, but also to their attainment and progress. The school's homework policy is, as indicated earlier, imprecise and does not make the best use of parental support at home. This is a major concern for many parents throughout the school and needs attention. Meetings to discuss children's progress are, as a rule, held regularly and enable parents to find out how their children are getting on. The situation of the Year 3 class is currently an exception. The annual reports to parents are broadly satisfactory though those for children in the Foundation

Stage do not cover all the aspects of the curriculum that is taught. The majority of reports contain detailed information about what pupils can do and suggest what they need to concentrate on for the next year, but specific targets are not set. There is no place for parents, or pupils, to add their comments. The school is to introduce a section on personal development, which will be helpful.

45. The contribution of parents to children's learning in school and at home is good. Nearly all parents hear their children read at home and enter comments in the home school diary. Many parents come in to school to help. After lunch each day, parents join the dinner supervisors in one-to-one reading sessions with the younger pupils. All 18 parents involved have attended a training course, as have the parents who help with the food preparation component in the design and technology lessons. This contribution makes a real difference to the progress pupils' make. Parents regularly join the Reception class to help their own child with reading and this is an enjoyable and productive occasion.
46. The Parents Association is very active in running events to raise money for the school. Recently they have made a substantial contribution to the cost of resurfacing the playgrounds which are now well marked and well used for the benefit of pupils' physical development. Other contributions have been made in respect of books for the library and kit for sports teams. This effort considerably helps towards the resource and educational provision of the school.

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

47. Overall, the school's leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There continue to be too many areas in which the school is not as effectively led and managed as it needs to be. The headteacher displays a deep commitment to the school and its pupils. He is successful in promoting an ethos of respect and concern for individuals and provides unfailing encouragement to pupils to work hard and succeed. The high quality of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and values, and the staff's commitment and sense of collective purpose, highlight the continuing effectiveness of this aspect of the school's management.
48. On the other hand, the last inspection report indicated that the school lacked educational direction. It identified an extensive series of weaknesses:
  - lack of forward planning;
  - the absence of appropriate assessment and monitoring arrangements;
  - inconsistent implementation of school policies;
  - unsatisfactory functioning of the senior management team and subject coordinators;
  - shortcomings in the management of special educational needs;
  - the absence of a clear and rigorous focus on raising standards of teaching and learning;
  - unsatisfactory aspects of accommodation.
49. This list continues to provide the basis for the school's key shortcomings. Although some progress has been made, the school has achieved too little in the last four years to improve its management structures and arrangements.
50. Development planning is still not effective enough. Although the school identifies a series of priorities for achievement over the next three years, these are not formulated as a published plan to underpin the annual action plans. None of the longer-term goals currently identified are supported by specific strategies for achieving them. Although annual action plans are much better, particularly about what needs to be done, they are still too unfocused about the improvements they seek to achieve. It is often enough that the task is completed, without a rigorous evaluation of how effective it has been. This has led to monitoring and evaluation figuring in the last three action plans, without any thorough review of precisely what has been done and what still remains to be done. This is detrimental to the school's development.
51. In 1997, the governing body was described as loyally supporting the school. They continue to play an active part in the life and work of the school. They give good support to the headteacher and staff. Governors play an increasing role in monitoring standards and helping to formulate the school's annual development plans and associated budget. In this context, financial planning is effective. However, longer-term financial planning is constrained by the absence of a strategic development plan, as noted above. In the 1997 inspection report, it was recommended that governors develop a more active role in the strategic development of the school. This has not happened.

52. Shortcomings in the way that the senior management team and subject co-ordinators function also persist. Responsibilities and functions are not effectively delegated. For example, the deputy headteacher teaches virtually full time as a class teacher. She does not have any specific cross-school responsibility for curriculum development, assessment and evaluation policy, or for monitoring teaching and learning as part of the school's performance management arrangements. Her role is to give what support she can to the headteacher who takes responsibility for all the duties referred to above. This she does very ably. Subject co-ordinators are in much the same position. As managers, they are responsible for monitoring standards in their subjects, but apart from in English and mathematics, have little means or opportunities for doing so. They are left to discharge their responsibilities as best they can. Some do this more successfully than others, creating significant variations in the quality of provision and curriculum planning.
53. Co-ordination and management of special educational needs are also unsatisfactory. In 1997, the school's practices for reviewing the progress of pupils with special educational needs did not always comply with either the Code of Practice or the school's policy. This is still the case. The coordinator has failed to keep up-to-date records of pupils' progress reviews for at least 18 months, and possibly longer. The headteacher has taken over the role himself as a temporary measure. No mention of these failings is made in the governors' annual report to parents on special educational needs. Statutory responsibility for this area of provision lies with the governing body. This responsibility is not being met currently.
54. The school has an income and expenditure per pupil that is in line with most other schools. Principles of best value for money are effectively adopted. Specific grants are appropriately targeted; for example, the funds received for enhancing the school's information technology capacity and for supporting its special educational needs provision. Administration within the school is very thorough. The school office is very well run, with good use made of new technologies for administrative purposes. Financial administration and controls are efficient and effective.
55. Theoretically, the school has a sufficient number of teachers to match the number of pupils on roll and the needs of the curriculum. Pupil numbers are large in many of the classes, average class sizes being considerably above the national average. Teachers are appropriately qualified and provided with satisfactory opportunities for further training. Not all teachers take full advantage of these opportunities. Induction arrangements for new staff are sound. There are sufficient support staff, and as noted previously, they contribute positively to pupils' learning. They are well deployed by teachers.
56. That is the situation when the school is operating with its full complement of teachers. However, the school has not been in this position for some time. Long-term staff illness, maternity leave and other staff absence have considerably disrupted the school's capacity to staff all its classes adequately. Temporary appointments and supply teachers have been used to cover the gaps. This has not proved entirely satisfactory, partly because the teacher covering the maternity leave herself left to have a baby, and partly because of the uncertainties caused by not knowing when the Year 3 class teacher would be fit to return to school. The result was that the Year 3 class were taught by 11 different teachers during the year, sometimes experiencing four different teachers a week. This has not helped pupils' educational progress. In contrast, the effect on the Year 1/2 class, the other class operating entirely with supply teachers, is more positive. The arrangements here are more stable and much of the teaching is good. Aside from these two classes, there are two further classes taught by part-time teachers, both being mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2. During the inspection, staffing for the five Key Stage 2 classes involved a total of nine different teachers deployed at various times of the day and week. This adds substantially to the complexities of curriculum planning, perhaps helping to explain why Key Stage 2 teachers plan as individuals and not as a key stage team.
57. The school's accommodation is of variable quality. The school and parents have worked hard, and successfully since 1997 to improve the quality of the school environment; for example, through attractive wall displays and through the re-surfacing of the playgrounds. Equally, there is no lack of concern for keeping the school clean; it is clean and tidy. The unsatisfactory aspects are in the quality of the buildings, which, as was noted in 1997, are in a state of considerable disrepair. Roofs leak and paint is peeling off many of the walls. The toilets are unsightly and present a very negative image of modern-day hygiene. Most rooms have a shabby appearance and undermine the school's efforts to brighten up the environment. Many of the classrooms are cramped, particularly the demountable classrooms, providing inadequate space for group or practical work. In contrast, the library accommodation is appropriate and well used, as is the

specialist area for food preparation as part of the design and technology provision. The school is in the process of establishing a computer suite, which will add considerably to its educational facilities. At the moment, the need for pupils to work in corridors is not satisfactory. The school has no grassed areas for sport, but makes good use of the ample playground space available. The accommodation for the Reception children continues to be restricted by the absence of any access to an outside play area, thereby limiting children's learning opportunities. This matter was raised in the 1997 inspection report.

58. The school's learning resources are sound. Some are good, such as those for mathematics and physical education. In contrast, some are not satisfactory; for example, in the Foundation Stage where there is a lack of variety in the books for the home-school reading scheme, and insufficient resources to support children's work in the area of physical development. The stock of library books for pupils throughout the school is satisfactory, and has been well targeted by the school as an area for improvement since 1997.
59. On balance, the school gives satisfactory value for money. It receives an average income per pupil. On the basis of inspection evidence, academic standards are sound, and occasionally good. Pupils demonstrate high standards of personal development and most have positive attitudes to learning. There is a substantial amount of good teaching. On the other hand, significant aspects of the school's educational provision are unsatisfactory. There are continuing weaknesses in the school's management and in the overall quality of the accommodation. The school has made unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. While the great majority of pupils and parents receive value for money, there is currently a minority who do not.

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

60. In order for the school to offer a consistent, and appropriate, standard of education for all its pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
1. Improve the school's curriculum planning and provision so that it consistently reflects the sound standards beginning to emerge in some subjects, by:
    - reviewing the schemes of work in science, geography and for the Foundation Stage, to ensure that they provide clear guidance for teachers about the knowledge, understanding and skills to be taught from the Reception class through to Year 6.
    - establishing whole-school policy and procedures to ensure that teachers' medium term plans take proper account of the schemes of work and the range of prior attainment, age and abilities in each class, especially the mixed-age classes.

(see paras. 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 21, 23, 29, 30, 62, 69, 72, 75, 79, 88, 89, 92, 96, 103, 104, 108, 110, 111, 113, 127 and 148)
  2. Establish assessment and record-keeping arrangements for the purpose of:
    - helping to guide individual teacher's planning in terms of the considerations listed above;
    - setting achievement targets for individual pupils, groups of pupils and the school as a whole;
    - enabling the school to evaluate its overall strengths and weaknesses against precise targets and evidence of progress over time.

(see paras. 12, 40, 67, 68, 77 and 123)
  3. Ensure that the school's provision for special educational needs complies with the school's policy and meets the statutory requirements of the national Code of Practice.

(see paras. 11, 22, 32, 40 and 41)
  4. Improve the school's development planning, and its capacity to monitor, evaluate and review its performance, by:
    - publishing a strategic plan to serve as the basis for governors and the school to provide a clear annual analysis and review of the school's achievement in pursuing its longer and shorter-term goals;

- implementing whole-school monitoring arrangements capable of providing the school with the information it needs to review the success of its development planning strategies.

(see paras. 49, 50 and 66)

5. Improve the functioning of the senior management team, and subject coordinators, by:

- ensuring that responsibilities and duties for whole-school planning, curriculum development, assessment, monitoring and review, and performance management, are suitably clarified and delegated, where appropriate, amongst the school's senior management team;
- creating a clear set of expectations regarding the responsibilities of subject and other coordinators, and the ways in which these responsibilities will be discharged and monitored;
- extending the range of senior management team discussions to include consideration of longer-term strategies for raising standards in the school – to be used as the basis for consultation with governors and the school staff;
- clarifying the part played by the senior management team in translating the findings from monitoring reports, and other data-analysis sources, into whole-school policy and action.

(see paras. 52, 64, 113, 155 and 128)

6. Improve the quality of the school's accommodation, by:

- developing longer-term plans and strategies, based on a clear audit of the school's needs and goals, for bringing the accommodation up to standard.

(see paras. 57 and 65)

In addition to the key issues listed above, the following minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan:

- eliminating the remaining core of unsatisfactory teaching;
- ensuring that the school's handwriting policy is effectively implemented throughout the school;
- rectifying the shortcomings in the learning resources for Reception children;
- improving the arrangements for setting homework.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

57
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Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

68
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### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	21	33	30	7	0	0

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

## Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	282
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	43

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

## Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	95.0
National comparative data	94.4

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.3
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	25	17	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	24
	Girls	13	14	16
	Total	34	37	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (88)	88 (98)	95 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	21
	Girls	13	14	12
	Total	35	37	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (93)	88 (93)	79 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	17	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	14	13	16
	Total	30	29	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (92)	78 (92)	89 (98)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	19
	Girls	12	13	15
	Total	29	30	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (83)	81 (79)	92 (90)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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	2
Black – other	8
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	271
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.2
Average class size	31.3

#### **Education support staff: Y R – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	124

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	493,692
Total expenditure	489,860
Expenditure per pupil	1,738
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,540
Balance carried forward to next year	10,372

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	282
Number of questionnaires returned	198

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	41	8	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	43	45	8	3	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	50	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	45	26	8	1
The teaching is good.	44	44	8	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	20	51	22	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	38	10	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	53	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	24	47	23	5	2
The school is well led and managed.	36	48	12	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	55	4	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	41	28	12	7

### Other issues raised by parents

At both the parents' evening, and in their questionnaire responses, a significant minority of parents raised the issue of the Year 3 class. These parents were unhappy with the fact that their children had been taught by 11 different teachers over the year, had made insufficient progress because topics had been repeated, often at un-challenging levels, and had received little homework. The fact that no parents' meeting had been held to discuss their children's progress was a matter of particular concern to them.

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

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

61. There are two periods of entry for children into the Reception class. Children who will be five during the autumn term begin full-time education at the beginning of the academic year and, after two terms in this class, transfer to a mixed class of Reception and Year 1 children. Those with later birthdays are admitted at the beginning of the spring term to the Reception class. Overall, children have average levels of attainment on entry, though this varies from year to year. In general, children's attitudes and personal development are better developed than either their language or number skills. Virtually all the children have benefited from pre-school education.
62. Most children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. However, there are noticeable differences between the two classes in the progress Reception children make. Reception class children benefit from very high quality teaching, a stimulating classroom and a high quality curriculum which is exceedingly well matched to the ability levels and interests of all children. In contrast, Reception children in the Year 1 class experience a number of disadvantages. Firstly, they have to change classes during their first year in school which is unsettling for some. Secondly, the planning for the Year 1/R class frequently does not take into account the different abilities of the Reception children, especially in literacy and numeracy. Thirdly, the stimulating classroom, opportunities for problem-solving and independent research, and the encouragement to volunteer information and initiate conversation enjoyed by the children in the Reception class are not shared to the same extent by children in the Year 1 class.
63. The inspection team endorses the parents' views about the good teaching and learning in the Reception class. It also shares their concerns about the contrasts in achievement between the two classes and the unsettling effect of the early transfer of some of the children into the Year 1 class.
64. The Foundation Stage is not satisfactorily managed and coordinated. There is no teacher with specific responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. There is no written reference to this in job descriptions, although two teachers work particularly hard in this area. One teacher has received no training for teaching children at the Foundation Stage.
65. While the accommodation for the Foundation Stage children is generally satisfactory, there are some features that are not satisfactory. These are:
- an absence of an external secure area adjoining the classrooms to provide children with opportunities to extend their learning outside the classroom;
  - a lack of an outside safety surface, fixed apparatus and wheeled toys to provide children with the full range of physical education activities;
  - a lack of sufficient space in the classrooms to accommodate a role-play area, and space where books can be attractively displayed;
  - a lack of variety in the reading books for home/school reading. The majority of books available in the Year 1/R class are especially worn and creased and do not encourage children to be selective readers.
66. Although the school has acknowledged the need for a secure area, and this is identified in the Foundation Stage Action Plan, it is not identified in the school's development plan or in any financial plans currently in force.
67. There are good procedures for assessment and recording children's progress. But these are not consistently used to support teachers' planning for individual children. For example, a child with high level reading skills in the Year 1/R class is classified as an average reader. Reports to parents on children's skills in communication, language and literacy, and mathematics are detailed and indicate what pupils understand and can do. However, these reports do not refer to the "Early Learning Goals" or to the aspects of learning which children need to achieve in order to reach higher levels of attainment. There is no space allocated on the reports for parental comments. Partnership with parents is generally effective; for example, through the use of workshops, notably in reading and other aspects of English. Children take reading books home. The quality of teachers' comments in the children's reading records is variable, being much better

in the Reception class than the Year 1/R class. Comments for children in the latter class lack an evaluative focus.

68. Teachers' planning and provision, for children for whom they have 'early concerns' in terms of special educational needs, is good, as it is for the occasional child who does not speak English as their first language. However, this provision is heavily reliant on the professional qualities of individual teachers. The whole-school monitoring and review arrangements for supporting these children are inadequately implemented.

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

69. Attainment is in line with nationally expected standards. Most children enter the classrooms happily and confidently at the beginning of the school day. They understand the importance of classroom routines such as lining-up, listening quietly to the teacher and responding to questions. They play well alongside each other, take part in small games and persevere with activities until they are completed. Children develop a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and take turns sharing equipment. In assembly, they learn to be part of the school community. Their behaviour is very good – in both classes. There is, however, inconsistency in the levels of independence and personal responsibility shown by children. In the Reception class, children have opportunities for making choices and initiating conversation, and readily do so. In the other class, such opportunities are less common and pupils' confidence in these respects is more limited. In both classes, teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour and response when working on set tasks for certain parts of the day.
70. Teaching is good and as a result children learn quickly. Teachers successfully encourage children to handle books and equipment carefully and to develop their social skills. Where the provision is very good, children are provided with a wide range of activities which encourage them to take responsibility, both in the class and for their own learning. However, this is not a consistent aspect for children in the Year 1/R class.
71. Children work co-operatively when building structures and sharing equipment. They change for physical education independently and their personal hygiene skills are well developed. They listen to directions from adults before attempting some activities and they have a good understanding of what is fair. In both classes, they enjoy participating in songs and rhymes, and many children discuss their favourite types of books.

### **Communications, language and literacy**

72. Attainment matches nationally expected standards. Considering that their attainment on entry to the school was fairly average (on the evidence of their baseline assessment results), they make good progress. In both classes, a high level of emphasis is placed on good communication through answering questions, listening to stories and joining in rhymes and songs. In the majority of cases children's speaking and listening skills are good and they respond well to questions. However, the opportunities for children to extend their speaking skills by talking about matters of interest and relevance to them are much better in the Reception class than in the Year 1/R class. In the latter class, there are insufficient opportunities for children to use language in imaginative work and recount their experiences.
73. Children handle books well. They recognise the title page, the author and they understand the role of the illustrator. As a result of good teaching, nearly all children recognise letter shapes, hear and say initial sounds, recognise many words and blend sounds to form words. They have progressed from tracing over shapes of objects and letter shapes to forming letters which are legible. They write their names and the higher attaining children write simple sentences using well-chosen vocabulary. There are writing areas in each room and children are encouraged to think of themselves as writers from an early age. However, some children in the Year 1/R class are copy writing when they have the ability, with appropriate encouragement, to write independently. This weakness, which was identified at the previous inspection, has not been adequately addressed.
74. In both classes, good emphasis is given to the teaching of literacy skills. Lessons are planned following the National Literacy Strategy guidelines; there is good emphasis on key words, phonics and word recognition. Children are encouraged to read and to enjoy stories, both during the class book session which is shared by all at the beginning of the lesson, and in group reading in the Reception class. There is no group reading in the Year 1/R class.

75. Overall, teaching is good, but this masks a very wide range of performance – from very good to unsatisfactory. Consistent strengths are the management of children’s behaviour and organisation of resources. The unsatisfactory aspects include planning which does not always build effectively on children’s current levels of understanding and the grouping of children by age rather than by ability. In the Year 1/R class, information about individual children’s prior attainment is not used sufficiently to ensure full extension of their learning. Where the teaching is very good – in the Reception class - all aspects of literacy are very well taught and children are challenged throughout the lesson. Children learn at a very good pace in this class.

### **Mathematical development**

76. Attainment matches nationally expected standards for children of this age. The more able children exceed these standards. Children make good progress given that very few of them achieved the higher levels in number skills when they entered the school. Staff place strong emphasis on teaching children to count and understand the value of numbers to ten. Many children are confident in counting forwards and backwards. By the time they reach the end of the Reception year, most of them count reliably to 20 and some beyond this. The majority know and use addition facts to 10. While many need to use apparatus to help them in problem solving, the higher attaining children are able to find answers using mental calculations. Children also understand the process of subtraction especially when using equipment. They transfer their number skills to money, length and weight. They have an appropriate understanding of capacity and, when playing with sand or water, show very good understanding of ‘full’, ‘empty’ and ‘half-full’. Children are able to make repeating patterns and are beginning to understand number patterns. They recognise many two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes, recognise symmetrical shapes and the differences between similar shapes.
77. Overall, teaching is good. There is very good teaching in the Reception class, but unsatisfactory teaching in the Year 1/R class. Where teaching is very good, planning is a strength. Work is well matched to children’s abilities, giving them many opportunities for investigations. Conversely, where the teaching is unsatisfactory, planning is a weakness. Information about children’s prior attainment is not used sufficiently well to ensure that children acquire new learning at a good pace. In both classes children are well managed and consequently behave well. The childcare assistant supports children effectively.

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

78. Attainment matches nationally expected standards and children make good progress. By the end of the Reception year, children have a wide range of scientific knowledge. They identify many categories of living things; for example, plants and animals. They also understand the lifestyle of nocturnal animals. They handle natural materials such as wet and dry sand and also contrasting materials such as wood and metal, observing similarities and differences between them. A particular strength is their knowledge of the five senses and the sense organs. During a ‘listening walk’ they realised that many more sounds could be heard if they listened carefully. They build and construct with a wide range of materials and at times select their own resources. They use construction materials creatively and have a good sense of how pieces join together. They experiment with percussion instruments in music and explain the differences between the sounds. Weather observations result in children understanding the seasons of the year and associated types of weather. They have a sound understanding of changes over time and apply this knowledge to people in their families. They have a good understanding of the environment of the school, know the materials used in the school building and the helpful roles of some of the staff. Children are beginning to understand the uses of information and communications technology. They know that switches control machines such as televisions and video recorders. They are beginning to develop simple computer skills. During the inspection, children used the mouse well when working with an art program. They know the difference between countryside and town, and are beginning to understand the different work that farmers do. In one class, children were challenged to identify what they see on their way to school. They identified the Post Office, the pedestrian crossing, the park and the local shops.
79. The quality of teaching is good, but is again inconsistent between the two classes. Children in the Reception class have opportunities to investigate, the Year 1/R reception children do not. They are provided with a lot of interesting and practical experiences that they enjoy and which contribute positively to their learning.

## **Physical development**

80. Attainment exceeds nationally expected standards and children make good progress. Particular strengths are in their gymnastic, movement and games skills. They move their bodies with increasing control. In one lesson observed, children made excellent progress in their ability to balance on different parts of the body, using the floor and the apparatus. They learn about healthy eating and the importance of warm-up activities before exercise.
81. They use a range of small and large equipment well to travel under, over and through. They have good skills in throwing and catching, and good control when following a specific route. When designing and making objects, children are able to handle the component parts with good control. Their skills in using pencils and paintbrushes are well developed. There are many useful opportunities for children to work at jigsaws and use construction equipment. In school they do not have the experiences of riding bicycles or using other wheeled equipment because there are no facilities for this.
82. Teaching is consistently good. Staff challenge children well, have very good relations with them and ensure that the children are provided with frequent opportunities to practise their hand and eye co-ordination skills and their gymnastics skills.

## **Creative development**

83. Attainment exceeds nationally expected standards and children make good progress. Children's musical skills are a particular strength. They learn a wide range of songs, nursery rhymes and counting rhymes, and move their bodies imaginatively in time to the music. In one class, children developed confidence in using their voices individually and also when singing with others. The singing game 'Hello Echo' encouraged their skills of aural discrimination, accuracy of pitch and improved vocal control. By the end of the lesson, children changed their pitch from very low to very high and reversed the sound, emulating a rocket effect. Children listen for the signal to begin a song and respond well to the teacher counting them in. In the other Reception class, children successfully created a co-operative sound picture based on the sounds heard from a walk in the park. They handled instruments carefully and responded impeccably to the clues given. They create many sound effects; for example, the sound of thunder, climbing steps and coming down a slide. Children clap and play instruments, keeping a steady beat and accurate rhythm.
84. In art, children choose the appropriate resources for specific activities and effects. They use thick paintbrushes for strong, bold lines and covering large areas of paper, and use finer brushes or pencils for more detailed work.
85. The teaching is good. The Year 1/R teacher is a particularly good musician and her skills are reflected in the range of musical activities and challenges given to children. Teaching is less consistent in art. In the best teaching children are encouraged to develop their observational and imaginative skills. Lack of role-play activities is evident in the Year1/R class.

## **ENGLISH**

86. Standards seen in reading and writing in Years 1-2 are above average. Speaking and listening skills are in line with expectations of pupils aged seven. For Year 6 pupils, standards seen by inspectors in English are above average for schools nationally. Standards in reading are better than those expected of pupils aged eleven and speaking and listening skills are satisfactory.
87. The standards found in this inspection compare favourably with those found in 1997. For Year 2 pupils, standards in reading and writing are better than previously reported, and are consistent with the school's National Curriculum test results for seven year olds in 2000. Standards in English, by Year 6, reflect the above average attainment seen during the last inspection and show a slight improvement over the 2000 tests, when attainment dipped to average when compared with schools nationally. Compared to schools of similar background, the school's results were below average. Over the five-year period 1996 to 2000, the school's results have improved only slightly. They reached a peak in 1998 and have fallen away since then. Nonetheless, the impact of the National Literacy Strategy, and the stronger focus, along with additional curriculum time, given to improving writing, has had a positive impact on standards throughout the school.

88. Basic literacy skills are taught well throughout the school. There is a good emphasis in Years 1-2 on the teaching of letter sounds. This provides a good basis for the development of reading and spelling, and gives younger pupils the confidence to tackle writing independently. These skills are developed well in the junior classes so that pupils use an increasing vocabulary. Grammar and punctuation are generally correct. However, planned opportunities to apply these skills to a wider range of writing across all subjects are too infrequent.
89. Speaking and listening skills are satisfactory overall. In Years 1-2, most pupils are attentive and contribute well to discussion by expressing their ideas clearly. They talk confidently about things which interest them, such as the books they are reading, or what they do at home. By Year 6, pupils are articulate and polite when talking informally. Opportunities to improve speaking skills through music, science discussion and drama within religious education lessons are used effectively in some classes, but are generally not a strong feature of curriculum planning across the school.
90. By the age of seven, most pupils are enthusiastic readers. They have a confident approach to reading and use their knowledge of letter sounds well to tackle unfamiliar words. Pupils speak eagerly about favourite authors. For example, a Year 2 pupil currently reading 'Charlotte's Web', has also read 'Harry Potter' stories and several by Roald Dahl. They distinguish between fiction and non-fiction and know they can find information by using contents and index. At Key Stage 2 pupils extend the range of their reading. Most borrow books from the public library as well as from school, and show a keen interest in books. A Year 4 pupil, for example, having read Tolkien's 'The Hobbit' is currently reading 'Lord of the Rings'. A pupil in Year 5 explained the context of 'Ann Frank's Diary' and read with fluency and expression. By the end of the key stage, pupils discuss the characters, plot and setting of the books they read and usually understand the underlying meaning in the text. Pupils use the library reference system competently to find information.
91. Given pupils' levels of attainment in writing when they start school, pupils achieve appropriately for their age by the end of Year 2. At the beginning of Year 1 they communicate meaning through simple sentences such as 'I want my ted'. By the end of the year, sentences are more expressive; for example, 'On Saturday and Sunday it was sunny and warm'. Pupils begin to show an awareness of full stops. By the end of Year 2 pupils develop ideas logically in their writing. They use capital letters and full stops more consistently and begin to include speech marks and question marks. They attempt to select words for effect; for example, when describing their feelings about 'being lost', average writers chose 'frightened', 'unhappy' or 'upset'. Spelling is generally accurate because spelling patterns are taught well. Pupils learn to identify words with similar sounds so they approach writing confidently. Although writing skills progress well this is not the case with handwriting because the school's policy is not effectively implemented. Consequently, many pupils do not develop a clear and consistent style of writing quickly enough.
92. Pupils' overall achievement in English in Years 3-6 is satisfactory. Although they are given a good start by the time they are seven, there are weaknesses in curriculum planning which result in pupils not being appropriately challenged at all levels of ability, particularly where age groups are mixed. Strong teaching at the end of the key stage helps to maintain standards, but the pace of learning is not consistent throughout all junior classes. Slower progress is evident for pupils in the Year 3 class. Average and less able pupils have not made the progress normally expected in both reading and writing, while more able pupils are insufficiently challenged. Progress is better where teaching is more settled and there is a wider range to pupils' writing. Year 4 pupils, for example, write play scripts and character portraits as well as different styles of poetry. Extended narrative and descriptive work show good development of writing skills; for example, when a pupil describes a dog as 'cat chaser.....stick racer.....tail bender'. In a poem about 'The Loft', a pupil shows sensitive use of language when writing 'floor boards creak like mice and breathing shadows come in the night'. By the end of Year 6 most pupils express ideas fluently in correctly punctuated sentences. Much of pupils' writing is made more lively and interesting with sentences such as 'Carefully Claire peered round the creaky door'....heightening the suspense of the narrative.
93. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection and the overall quality is good. However, there is a significant proportion of satisfactory teaching where there is room for further improvement. The strongest teaching is in Years 5 and 6. Although the teaching of reading and writing skills is now more structured, the teaching of handwriting remains an issue.
94. In the best lessons pupils are given challenging tasks and there is a good pace to their learning. Lessons are well structured so that pupils gain new knowledge systematically. In a Year 6 lesson,

for example, the teacher spent time on the spelling and definitions of words such as 'spectre' and 'sombre', because pupils would find them in the text prepared for later in the lesson. This meant that they understood the meaning of the extract more clearly and could quickly apply themselves to the main task of analysing its structure. Good learning resulted from the good teaching seen in the Year 3/4 class, where the objectives for the lesson were made clear so pupils knew what was expected of them. Work was well matched to their different abilities, and less able writers were given a good level of support from the teacher and classroom assistant. As a result, pupils had a good understanding of the importance of persuasive language when writing headlines. A strength of the teaching is the relationships which are established in the classrooms. Teachers have a very good rapport with pupils and there is mutual respect which promotes very good behaviour. This contributes significantly to pupils' learning.

95. Management of the subject is satisfactory in that the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy effectively. This has resulted in a stronger focus on the teaching of grammar as a tool for writing. It has also brought about improved teaching because of the way in which lessons are structured. However, the quality of learning is not monitored rigorously enough. Planning at Key Stage 2 is not corporate and does not address fully the needs of different ages and abilities of pupils. This causes uncertainty about what pupils are expected to achieve at each stage. Procedures for tracking pupils' attainment and setting appropriate targets are not sufficiently established, nor is there thorough analysis of pupils' work to identify strengths or weaknesses which might inform curriculum planning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

96. The National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 showed attainment in 2000 to be in line with the average for all schools nationally and above that of schools with similar backgrounds. During the inspection, the standard of work seen in Year 2 was good. Most pupils are expected to reach the nationally expected standard (level 2), and several should exceed this.
97. The school's National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 showed attainment in 2000 to be above average compared to all schools, and also above average when compared to similar schools. During the inspection, the standard of work seen at the end of the key stage was above national expectations. More pupils than in 2000 are set to achieve the level expected of eleven-year-olds and the proportion of pupils that might attain the higher level is also likely to improve. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
98. By age seven, pupils have an appropriate mathematical vocabulary. They carry out simple calculations accurately and have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of number facts. They have a very secure knowledge of shape and space and can name and discuss the properties of a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They collect data about where pupils spend their holidays and show their results in graph form. Pupils can estimate length and weight and check their answers by accurate measurements. They sequence the times of activities they experience during the day and have knowledge of digital clocks.
99. By age 11, the majority of pupils of all abilities have a good grasp of their multiplication tables. The emphasis placed on mental work has resulted in many pupils handling mental arithmetic confidently and accurately. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of place value and can add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers competently. They have very good knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes and can describe them using the correct mathematical terms. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson observed, pupils used this knowledge to calculate the surface area of three-dimensional shapes using a variety of methods supported by very good resources, provided by the teacher. Another excellent lesson in the Year 5/6 class allowed pupils to relate fractions to decimals. The teacher's use of a number stick helped all pupils' understanding, and most pupils made very good gains in their knowledge.
100. The quality of teaching and learning in all the lessons observed was at least satisfactory and often good. In Years 5 and 6 it was very good to excellent. Teachers throughout the school ensure that pupils are well motivated and that the pace of lessons is good, with a wide variety of activities to ensure pupils' attention and a high level of motivation. Pupils behave very well, listen attentively and show interest in the tasks they are given. This helps to promote the good progress made by pupils in most lessons. For example, the teacher in Year 2 introduced the lesson by reading a story called *The Doorbell Rang*. During the story pupils had to mentally calculate division sums to answer questions in the story. This immediately captured the pupils' attention and they were all

keen to answer the questions. In the Year 6 lesson observed the excellent resources provided by the teacher had similar effect.

101. Teachers follow the recommended National Numeracy Strategy when planning lessons – to good effect. In their teaching, they ensure that all the pupils pay appropriate attention and use correct mathematical vocabulary and terminology. They provide good opportunities for pupils to explain their methods and to practise what they know. Teachers have implemented the mental work element of the Numeracy Strategy very well. Pupils are provided with small white boards or number fans so that all can be involved in presenting instant answers to the mental questions. Before group activities begin, teachers always give careful instructions to pupils, enabling them to make a prompt start and ensuring that they know exactly what they have to do.
102. Most teachers provide appropriate activities and support for the range of ages and differing levels of ability in their classes, challenging higher attaining pupils appropriately and supporting pupils needing additional support well. This is not as well achieved in the Year 1/R class where there is insufficient differentiation of the work prepared for these two groups of pupils. For different reasons, there is occasional evidence of discontinuity in the work planned for the Year 3 class. In the lessons observed, teachers visit groups frequently during the activity sessions to give advice and encouragement. Teachers make very good use of the plenary session at the end of the lesson using searching questions to assess whether pupils have understood what they have been learning. Teachers use mathematics at every opportunity in other subjects across the curriculum. Graphs in science, time lines in history and religious education, weighing in cookery as part of the pupils' design and technology lessons, all help pupils to understand the relevance of mathematics in every day life.
103. Although the Year 1-2 staff plan work together, there is a lack of overall leadership to ensure that the provision meets the needs of all pupils and that their performance and progress is rigorously monitored. Planning is not as well organised in Years 3-6. Teachers do not plan together. However, they consult each other, usually with success, to ensure that that the programmes of study of the National Curriculum are appropriately covered. There are effective systems of assessment for mathematics and staff are beginning to use these to inform future planning. Indeed, in several lessons observed during the inspection, teachers made overnight alterations to lesson plans in the light of assessment made at the end of the previous day's lesson and this had a beneficial effect on the pupils' learning. Resources were improved at the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and these are now good. They are well stored and used carefully by staff and pupils.

## **SCIENCE**

104. Standards of attainment are sound by age seven and eleven. The proportion of pupils achieving higher attainment levels in Years 3-6 is good. These standards reflect the findings reported at the time of the previous inspection. They are also broadly in line with the school's results in the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 2000. These were slightly above average when compared to schools nationally, and also when compared to schools with similar backgrounds. Taking the interim period as a whole – 1996 to 2000 – good standards have been fairly consistently maintained. However, when compared to national averages, they decline slightly as the national average improves year-on-year.
105. The trend in the school's Year 2 results over the same period is broadly similar, apart from a sharp decline in standards last year (2000). Provisional indications from teachers' assessments for the current Year 2 pupils (2001) shows this situation to have been rectified, with results back to their previous levels – slightly above the national average and above average for similar schools.
106. By age seven, particular strengths are in pupils' knowledge and understanding of living things and in their knowledge of materials. They know the main external parts of the human body, the physical features of a wide range of animals, and they identify the main parts of flowering plants. They identify a variety of materials and describe and classify them accurately in terms of texture and colour. They know whether materials are manufactured or natural. However, they do insufficient investigations, especially concerning reversible and irreversible changes. Many pupils are not being sufficiently challenged by the tasks presented, a failing caused by weak curriculum and lesson planning. Lesson plans do not include more challenging work, or sufficient investigations, for the higher attaining pupils.

107. By the end of Year 6, nearly all pupils are already working at nationally expected levels at age 11. Their strengths lie in their well-developed skills in understanding the functions of different parts of the human body, especially the workings of the heart. They understand the value of healthy eating and exercise and the dangers of alcohol, smoking and many drugs. Pupils have well-developed skills in understanding food chains and use accurate vocabulary when describing carnivores, herbivores, omnivores, predators and prey. They understand the process of evaporation and condensation and apply this knowledge to the water cycle and to how mixtures of soluble and insoluble substances can be separated. At the end of the key stage, pupils know the planets of the solar system. Throughout Years 3-6, investigations associated with plants and animals are good, especially in observing and making comparisons. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to identify the essential features of fair tests and investigate independently. Although during the inspection some pupils were carrying out investigative work, scrutiny of their completed work across the year, and across the different classes, shows that they have insufficient opportunities for predicting and planning their own investigations.
108. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress, including pupils with special educational needs and the few for whom English is an additional language. On the evidence of the work seen, pupils achieve soundly in the subject, apart from investigation work, in Years 1, 2 and 4. Progress is good in Years 5 and 6, with the same proviso about investigation skills. In contrast, progress is poor in the Year 3 class. Pupils are interested in science: they enjoy the lessons and answer questions enthusiastically. Most pupils concentrate well and their behaviour is very good. However, there are inconsistencies in the standards and range of written work and in their skills as independent learners.
109. Overall, teaching is satisfactory; of the few lessons seen, most were good. In the good lessons, pupils are challenged throughout, the level of work planned matches their abilities, and teachers have high expectations of pupils' attainment and presentation of work. Teachers maintain pupils' interests by lively discussion and through the range of information given. In contrast, the less effective teaching, albeit that it is satisfactory, lacks challenge for the more able pupils and gives insufficient focus to developing pupils' scientific skills. Although pupils work in groups in most lessons, they are involved either in the same activities, or activities of the same scientific level, most of the time. There are insufficient opportunities to use information and control technology in either research or recording. When it is used, as in ongoing monitoring of the weather, it is effective in contributing to pupils' learning. Although the marking of most work is up-to date, there are insufficient comments which encourage pupils to achieve higher standards of presentation or to increase their rate of working.
110. The curriculum is planned from the nationally published scheme of work. However, in some classes teachers do not match the activities they plan to pupils' abilities, nor do they cross-reference these activities to the National Curriculum attainment levels in order to check that they are appropriate. Where investigations are planned, no reference is made to attainment levels. In most classes, pupils' literacy skills are well developed by their knowledge, understanding and use of scientific vocabulary and in their written records of scientific work, especially observation. Their numeracy skills are well developed when they record using charts and when they measure and make comparisons. During the inspection, Year 4 and 5 pupils compared the different parts of a flowering plant, and Year 6 compared different features of bubbles using both scientific and mathematical methods.
111. The resources are satisfactory, although unsatisfactory use is made of them for group work for pupils of different abilities, or for investigational work. Some of the classrooms are too cramped for practical work. Although there is an appropriate range of day visits to support pupils' learning in different aspects of the subject, pupils do not benefit from any residential visits.
112. The co-ordinator, new to the post last year, is well qualified to manage the subject. She has a firm grasp of the requirements for raising standards and is aware of the need for teachers to plan for more independent investigations. She is also aware that some work is planned which is not sufficiently challenging for pupils and that this relates in part to the arrangements currently used for curriculum planning. At present, however, she has had insufficient opportunities to monitor pupils' attainment and progress, and her management and monitoring role is under-developed. These weaknesses have not helped the school, or the coordinator, to keep a watchful eye on the possible effects of the Year 3 teacher's prolonged absence, on the performance and progress of these pupils.

## ART AND DESIGN

113. Standards are above those generally expected of pupils at age seven and eleven. Observational drawings and painting skills are taught well in the infant years, and successfully developed in Years 3-6. Pupils work with sensitivity and skill, using a wide range of techniques and materials. They handle tools competently and plan, organise and develop their own work. In the junior classes, sketchbooks are used very well by pupils to explore ideas and to practise drawing skills and techniques. This represents an overall improvement at both key stages since the last inspection, especially in Years 1-2, where standards for a significant number of pupils were below nationally expected levels.
114. This improvement has primarily come about as a result of better planning. The school now has a well-planned curriculum which supports the teaching of knowledge and understanding of art, as well as skills. Pupils explore the ideas of artists such as Mondrian and the impressionist painters using computer skills as well as brushes and paints. The provision also benefits from the enthusiasm and skills of many of the staff, as well as visits to the Mappin Gallery and Yorkshire Sculpture Park which raise awareness and add interest for many pupils.
115. The quality of the work displayed is very good. Notable examples are the exploration of 'Flight', displayed in the hall, and the detailed and sensitively coloured flowers by pupils in Years 5 and 6. The 'Flight' theme is linked well to literacy through captions such as 'ascend', 'on the wing' and 'soar'. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate skills in their use of watercolour and in the lively collage depicting their farm visit. The three-dimensional collage of Mundella School by Reception children, containing some detailed drawings, indicates that they are already developing good observational skills.
116. The quality of teaching overall is good. Some outstanding teaching was seen in the Year 6 class, which resulted in pupils designing and printing 'wallpaper' patterns to a very high standard. The organisation and preparation for that lesson were such that the teacher's presence in the classroom was barely noticeable, while the impact of her teaching resulted in every pupil achieving as well as possible. In the Year 3/4 class, art is successfully linked to the current history topic. Learning was good because of the teacher's preparation for the lesson and high expectations. Pupils practised a good range of skills, including clay work collage and painting, when making Tudor roses, or creating characters in Tudor dress. Pupils worked with great enthusiasm on their three-dimensional cardboard sculptures. The results were of a high standard and pupils were justifiably proud of their achievements.
117. The subject is effectively led and managed. The new co-ordinator has already formulated a development plan following an audit of curriculum planning and resources. The plan includes the establishment of a system for assessing attainment in art, but does not extend to the monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. This was identified as an area for development in the last inspection report.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

118. Only one lesson was observed during the week of the inspection. Evidence from teachers' planning, pupils' completed work, photographic records and displays around the school, indicate that standards of attainment by age seven are in line with nationally expected levels, and by age 11 they are above those found in the majority of schools nationally. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.
119. By age seven, pupils cover a sound range of design and making tasks, including puppets, bridges and kites. In Year 1 they successfully make simple models from construction kits. By the end of Year 2 they have progressed to tasks that clearly define the stages of designing, making and evaluating. Pupils are able to make simple observations about their products, often expressing the pleasure of accomplishment. The last inspection report noted the lack of attention to design skills in Years 1-2. This is no longer the case. Pupils draw sketches or diagrams of their intended product, taking care to be as precise as they can about its main features. Pupils make sound progress, learning to be accurate as well as feeling free to explore different ways of achieving a construction challenge.
120. By age 11, a lot of good teaching and stimulating provision enables most pupils to achieve above average standards in each aspect of the subject. This was evident in all classes except Year 3. The highest standards of work seen were in the Year 4/5 class, not only in terms of the quality of pupils' finished products, but also in the care and precision taken with their product designs and the genuinely reflective quality of their evaluations when identifying what they had learned from the task. For example, pupils successfully design, make and evaluate the construction of a model of a fairground "merry-go-round", operated and controlled by means of a computer. The basis for this progress is well laid in the Year 3/4 class where pupils' wide range of work includes the construction of model Tudor houses to support their work in history. It is equally well followed up in Years 5 and 6 where pupils construct single span bridges using technically appropriate designs for the purpose.
121. Although it is not possible to comment on the quality of teachers' performances in lessons, it is possible to conclude from their planning and the quality of pupils' work, that most teachers have a good knowledge of the requirements of the subject. They plan effectively. Pupils are suitably challenged and clearly respond very positively to the demands made by teachers. Many of the finished products reflect rigorous expectations on the part of teachers in terms of high standards of execution and presentation. Such rigour is not always as evident in the written aspects of the task, namely the descriptions relating to the product design and the follow-up evaluations. Bearing in mind that unsatisfactory teaching was reported in both key stages at the time of the last inspection, standards have improved markedly since then.
122. A major reason for the improved consistency in standards of teaching and learning is the quality of leadership in the subject. The coordinator has worked hard to address the areas for development identified in the 1997 inspection report. All but assessment have been successfully tackled. Support for individual teachers is very effective. Teachers' longer-term planning is now based on a scheme of work providing clear guidance about the progression of skills to be taught. However, recording the progress pupils make in acquiring these skills remains a matter for individual teachers. Whole-school arrangements for assessing pupils' progress, and for monitoring standards of provision as the basis for future planning, remain unsatisfactory.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

123. Standards of attainment by age seven are below those found in most schools. This represents a decline in the school's overall performance at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. Standards by age 11 are in line with national expectations, as they were at the time of the last inspection.
124. By age seven, pupils do not experience a consistent and coherent development of their geographical knowledge and skills. They cover mapping and plans, but without any systematic development of the concepts of scale and place. Their knowledge of the United Kingdom is very patchy. Pupils are not readily familiar with atlases and have scant knowledge of the location of the major countries in the world. They have little experience of simple fieldwork such as gathering and recording data on the weather. As a result, most pupils, especially the average and more able pupils, are not given the chance to achieve in line with their abilities.

125. By age 11, all but the more able pupils achieve appropriately. Pupils have a sound knowledge of a range of topics; for example, settlement, rivers, deserts, different climates around the world, map work generally and environmental issues. They also find and record average temperatures and populations using line graphs and are good at researching information about different countries; for instance, about France in Year 3/4. However, their geographical knowledge and skills are still insecure for their age by Years 5 and 6. Quite a number of Year 5 pupils are still not sure what "climate" means, and in Year 6 a few pupils confuse "country" and "continent". This is a consequence of indifferent planning and provision across the key stage rather than a consequence of indifferent teaching. Indeed, it is only the good teaching at the end of the stage that enables most pupils to make adequate progress. The exceptions are the more able pupils who do not reach the point where they can apply their skills and knowledge at levels appropriate to their abilities. This was apparent in both of the lessons seen in Years 5 and 6. More teacher support was required than one might reasonably expect for pupils of this age and ability.
126. Overall, the teaching is sound, but this does not reflect the extremes of teaching performance witnessed. Of the six lessons seen, two were very good, but two were unsatisfactory. Both of the latter were in Years 1-2. In contrast, and as noted above, the teaching in Years 5 and 6 was of high quality. The teaching in the Year 1/2 was also good. As in 1997, the root cause of the ineffective, and less effective, teaching is weak planning. The last inspection report commented on the unclear learning objectives generally displayed in teachers' planning. This remains a significant deficiency in the lessons where pupils make unsatisfactory progress. Where individual teachers have been successful in remedying this weakness, the quality and rate of pupils' progress has accelerated significantly, an acceleration assisted by the very positive reaction of pupils to the greater challenge of the teaching they receive. They are eager to find things out for themselves, but the opportunities to make the most of this enthusiasm are too often limited by the discontinuity and fragmentation in the school's longer-term planning for the subject. Nonetheless, even where the teaching and provision is at its weakest, in Year 3, there is evidence that pupils still apply themselves diligently and purposefully.
127. The subject has not been satisfactorily led and managed in the period since the last inspection. The previous inspection report drew the school's attention to the need for some form of pupil assessment to be used as a basis for ensuring that pupils' learning is progressively planned for from the Reception class through to Year 6. The school has taken no action to introduce assessment for this purpose.

## **HISTORY**

128. No lessons were seen in Years 1-2 during the inspection. Evidence from pupils' completed work, teachers' planning and classroom display, indicates that standards in Year 2 are at the same level as those found in the majority of schools nationally. Attainment By Year 6 is also in line with national expectations. This matches the standards found at the time of the last inspection at the end of both key stages.
129. By age 7, pupils have covered an appropriate range of historical topics. These include work on Mundella school, with pupils exploring the changes that have taken place in the school over the last 100 years. They also study well-known historical figures such as Louis Braille and such significant developments as the evolution of flight. They understand simple concepts of time; now, then and a long time ago. They successfully draw out the differences that characterise events, artefacts and historical figures from the past, when compared with the present. Pupils show an increasing confidence in understanding how we know about the past.
130. By age 11, many pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the periods they study. By the end of Year 4, for example, the more able pupils discuss with great enthusiasm, and some insight, the consequences of Henry VIII's quarrel with the Pope. Year 5 and 6 pupils show a good knowledge of the significant events and figures in their studies of the Ancient Greeks. They enjoy imaginative reconstruction, as evidenced in their reports, as contemporary journalists, of the aftermath of the collapse of a local dam in the Victorian period, or when imagining what it was like during the blitz in the Second World War. Less strong, but nonetheless sound, are pupils' application of enquiry skills. They are good at researching information from books and from information technology sources, but less confident when using first hand evidence; for example, census materials.

131. Overall, the quality of teaching observed was sound. Although no lessons were observed in Years 1-2, teachers' plans, as well as pupils' completed work, show that teachers' short-term planning is appropriate and that, in the main, they have satisfactory expectations of pupils. However, pupils' learning would be improved by greater consistency and continuity in the sequencing of the skills to be taught; for example, in the work done on Mundella school, by ensuring that the expectations for Year 2 pupils are carefully distinguished from those expected of Year 1 pupils and the older group of Reception children.
132. There is evidence of a similar need in Years 3-6 where the range of teaching approaches is quite wide. A lot of highly stimulating teaching exists which fires pupils' interests and enthusiasm. Teachers successfully exploit the imaginative richness of the subject to bring it alive for pupils. Pupils are made to think historically and do so with conspicuous success, especially in Years 5 and 6, and in the Year 3/4 class. As a result, these pupils achieve well, but as not as well as they might if this quality of teaching was consistently evident throughout the key stage. In some classes, there is a tendency to focus too much on factual information through worksheets and in colouring in illustrations, notably in the Year 3 class. Here the teaching lacks intellectual rigour and challenge.
133. The subject coordinator and teachers have worked hard to respond to the weaknesses found at the time of the last inspection, namely the need to provide better guidance for teachers when planning for the different ages and levels of attainment in their classes. It was stressed on that occasion that the use of assessment would assist this process. No action has been taken in this respect.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

134. Information and communication technology is not taught as an independent subject. It is planned and taught alongside other subjects to support pupils' learning as and when required. Evidence of the standards achieved by pupils is correspondingly drawn from all areas of their work, from displays, teachers' files, discussions with subject coordinator and pupils and teachers generally.
135. At ages 7 and 11, pupils' attainment is in line with standards expected nationally. This is a similar outcome to that found at the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils can use information and communication technology to help communicate ideas; for example, through the use of word-processing in English lessons. In their mathematics lessons, pupils work in pairs using the computer to learn about odd and even numbers. Other pupils make a block graph using information they have collected from their peers about favourite farm animals. A Year 2 geography lesson was supported by two Year 6 pupils who were able to explain to pairs of Year 2 pupils how to produce a large-scale map of their own neighbourhood, including all the road names, by inserting their own postcode into the computer.
136. By age 11, pupils achieve sound standards of understanding and skills in information technology right across the curriculum. Some are familiar with the Internet and can use e-mail successfully. Year 3 pupils use computers to improve their vocabulary and test their knowledge of fractions. Pupils in the Year 3/4 class use computers to draw and paint Tudor kings and queens in connection with their history topic. Evidence from a homework project on France shows some pupils making good use of the Internet to find out information for the topic. Year 4/5 have been very busy using the computer to support their work in lessons. Year 5/6 draw graphs on the computer, carefully following detailed instructions provided by the teacher, in booklet form. Year 6 use pictures taken from the Internet and find information to prepare for their work on bees. Their finished work, all carefully presented with the help of the computer, is of a high standard. Pupils of all ages can access the school's electronic library provided by the parents. Pupils have their own pin numbers and scan their books in and out on the database. Pupils also write book reviews, which are accessible on all computers, because they are networked. A feature of the school's work in information and communication technology is the continuous record of weather information, on public display, stretching back almost ten years.
137. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. The collaboration of pupils within groups, sharing listening centres and the computers, is good. Pupils always behave well and enjoy the independence of working at their own speed in a socially harmonious way. They discuss options, and, even when they disagree about an answer, come to a shared decision in the end. All this enhances pupils' social development. Good use of their computing skills in art, religious education, geography, and history adds to pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils can be trusted to carry on working when not

under direct supervision; for example, when they work on the computers in the corridors. Pupils are keen to demonstrate their skills to anyone who pauses near to the computers. The school does not have a computer suite at the moment, but expects one to be installed before the beginning of the autumn term. This will make a big difference to the provision, enabling teachers to teach the whole class at once when appropriate.

138. The quality of teaching of information and communication technology is at least satisfactory. Most teachers and classroom assistants have completed the national programme of training. Although no direct, whole class teaching, was observed, there was clear evidence teachers themselves have a sound knowledge of the subject, and use their skills and knowledge effectively across the curriculum.
139. The subject is well led and managed by the headteacher. There is a policy and a scheme of work. He shares his knowledge and understanding with colleagues and encourages a commitment to use information and communication technology to promote learning across the curriculum. There has been good support for other teachers to improve their teaching by developing their skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence. A checklist of skills has recently been devised which will help teachers to keep track of pupils' progress. The present priority is to develop the new computer suite funded by the National Grid for Learning. The scheme of work and the ethos for the subject are very good and reflect totally the school's commitment to high achievement. Parents come into school to help pupils with computer work. Software resources are adequate, as will be the range and quantity of computer hardware with the arrival of the computer suite.

## **MUSIC**

140. Standards of attainment are good by age seven and by age eleven. Standards are generally very good in singing and instrumental performance.
141. By age 7, pupils sing with accurate pitch, a very good dynamic range and feel for style, while maintaining a steady beat. This was impressively illustrated by infant choir, pupils singing in two and four parts while maintaining their own melody impressively. They knew the lyrics well, responded accurately to the very supportive piano accompaniment and achieved high standards, without the aid of a conductor. Pupils know the names of most instruments they play, listen to music from an appropriate range of styles and know the names of some orchestral instruments. Pupils explain how sound is produced and are making satisfactory progress in composition.
142. By age 11, pupils build exceedingly well on their earlier skills. They improve their singing in terms of good rhythmic awareness, dynamic range, articulation and power. They develop a high level of understanding of how musical styles and instruments are used to communicate moods and effects, and compare and contrast different styles of music. They have an extremely mature understanding of the fact that changing the dynamics and pace of music also changes the impact and suitability for different occasions. Their knowledge of this was highlighted in the rehearsals for the end-of-year performance when, in a relatively short space of time, the pupils quickly adapted their singing, posture, expressions and movements to represent songs as varied as 'The Jumbo Jet' and the 'Home' so that the singing reflected the changes in mood. The fact that pupils seem to possess the performer's "instinct" is testimony to the strengths of the teaching.
143. Learning throughout the school is good and this is reflected in the progress pupils make, progressing from playing untuned percussion instruments to recorders, and for those who have the ability and inclination to develop their skills further, playing a range of string, brass and wind instruments. In the Year 4/5 lesson observed, pupils listened intently, identified pockets of melodies and listened for them with keen anticipation. They also identified the families of musical instruments and many instruments within these families. Pupils concentrate very well, think creatively and discuss the music they listen to with high levels of knowledge and understanding. In this school, the instrumental work also has a high profile. This was abundantly clear during singing times and performance rehearsals, where the percussion groups accompanied the singing, demonstrating standards of which many older pupils would be proud. A further strength is the fact that the percussion group is not a small core of pupils, but a large number who interchange between songs without jeopardising the high quality of accompaniment.
144. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the high level of support and opportunities for them to participate. Higher attaining pupils make very good progress and achieve higher standards because of the very well-planned opportunities for them to extend

their skills. Instrumental music tuition is available for pupils provided that they can demonstrate that they have the ability, interest and commitment to benefit from it.

145. Pupils' attitudes to music are very positive and this contributes to good progress they make. Their behaviour is impeccable. They are committed and keen to succeed. They are confident in discussing a wide range of music and many showed particular interest in the Irish music played before and after assembly. This standard of work reflects very good teaching, especially in the level of knowledge and understanding of the co-ordinator and a significant number of other teachers. Music lessons have a well-considered creative element built into the planning.
146. On the evidence of the two lessons seen, as well as through the other opportunities to hear pupils perform, standards of teaching are good. In the case of one of the lessons seen, the teaching was very good. The strengths in teaching are considerably helped by lead of the subject coordinator. His personal enthusiasm for the subject, coupled with his high level of musical skills, have provided the basis for some effective curriculum development and good guidance for teachers. Music has a high profile in Mundella School because of the many occasions where large numbers of pupils are involved in concerts, especially at Christmas, end-of-term concerts and in the community.
147. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the strengths and next stages in the development of the subject. The existing curriculum is well planned, especially in terms of skills progression. This represents a sharp improvement from the last inspection when the progressive development of musical skills was identified as a significant weakness in the provision. There is a satisfactory range of tuned and untuned instruments, and sufficient resources, for pupils to listen, appreciate and perform music from an appropriate range of musical periods and styles. The school, on the basis of its current leadership, has the capacity to make even further progress. Such progress would be better assured were the school to establish monitoring arrangements to aid the subject coordinator in this task.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

148. Evidence from the observation of lessons, discussion with pupils and teachers and a scrutiny of teachers' planning, indicates that pupils attain standards in line with those expected nationally by ages seven and eleven. The focus for lessons during the inspection week was on the development of skills in athletics and games in Years 1-2, and in Years 3-6, on developing the ability to move in different ways, sometimes linked to music. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in their learning and performance overall, in both key stages. Attainment in swimming is satisfactory with most pupils swimming at least 25 metres by the time that they leave the school. The sound standards found at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
149. In all classes pupils carry out appropriate warm up and cool down exercises at the beginning and end of each lesson, and know the reason for doing so. Attention is given to all safety issues; for example, jewellery is removed before physical education lessons and pupils are very careful when moving apparatus.
150. Pupils from the Year 1/R class successfully sequence events in a movement and drama lesson on the theme of coming to school. They decide which movements match each activity and perform to a variety of musical instruments. This gives them the opportunity to think for themselves about what they do from waking up to going to school. The Year 1/2 class develop a range of skills to move in different ways to get from one point to another using different parts of their body, and in Year 2 pupils improve their movements and response to music by using their imagination to perform to the music of Octopus Garden. The pupils move with reasonable control and there are examples of imaginative use of arms and legs when moving to the music. They have a good awareness of space and for the safety of others around them. .
151. Pupils in Years 3-6 successfully develop their skills in athletics and games. Year 3 practise putting the shot, throwing the javelin, long jump, hurdles, and throwing and catching balls, in readiness for the introduction of rounders. In the two lessons observed in the Year 3/4 class, pupils developed sound skills in kwick cricket and short tennis. Year 5/6 pupils carry out a series of experiments to investigate the effect of exercise on the human body as well as giving pupils practice in several very strenuous activities. Pupils work in pairs, timing each other and setting targets for improvement. Year 6 learn to work together as a team. On being given instructions about the tasks to be accomplished, the teams effectively discuss the best way to achieve them; for

example, to move a dozen balls from one location to another in the shortest possible time without any balls touching the floor. An element of competition added to the pupils' enjoyment of the activities. The lesson finished with a team game, which emphasised skills, learned during the group activities.

152. Pupils have good attitudes to physical education throughout the school. These attitudes have a positive impact on their learning and progress, and reflect the school's efforts to promote very good behaviour. Pupils work well together in groups and teams, and show a mature awareness of the need for safety. Physical education lessons make a valuable contribution to the pupils' social development particularly when they work in pairs and small groups.
153. Teaching is sound throughout the school. In half of all the lessons observed, it was good or better. Lessons are carefully planned, often as part of a sequence, to build up pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding systematically and to provide sufficient time for pupils to consolidate and refine their skills. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are good and their teaching methods are effective. During lessons, teachers interact well with pupils and maintain very good order. Their questioning skills are used well to encourage pupils to evaluate, and thereby improve, their own and each other's performance. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers to ensure they are well integrated and develop the confidence to participate in activities. Very good attention is given to safety. Lessons begin and end in an orderly manner.
154. The school has a policy and a scheme of work. However, the management of the subject is unsatisfactory. There is a need to develop the role of the coordinator so that she is aware of what is happening in physical education throughout the school. Assessment is underdeveloped as it relies too much on individual teacher's observations during lessons which are not recorded. Other than through informal discussion it is not possible for the coordinator to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning in the subject. The considerable financial contribution from the parents to pay for the resurfacing of the playground is very much appreciated as it has made a great difference to the pupils' opportunities in physical education, especially during the summer months. It is of significant importance in off-setting the school's lack of a grassed playing field. Resources are good, well stored and readily available. Pupils treat them sensibly and are always most willing to help collect and return them to the store.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

155. The previous inspection report indicated that pupils reached the expected standards in religious education by ages seven and eleven. This is still the case. Standards meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
156. By age 7, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of some of the celebrations of Christianity, and other major faiths. For example, pupils know about the celebration of baptism and marriage as well as Ramadan. By age eleven, pupils have a wider understanding of the importance of religious beliefs. For example, they know that Muslims are guided by the Five Pillars of Islam and of the important traditions of prayer in Judaism and Buddhism. There is a strong focus on the stories from the Old and New Testaments and how Christian commitment affects the way many people live their lives.
157. The quality of teaching is good overall. Some very good teaching was seen. Years 5 and 6 pupils were enabled to explore the issue of racial tension by entering into role-play which reflected the experiences and subsequent actions of Ghandi and his call for peaceful protest. Pupils showed good insight by linking those problems with bullying, when they were left to improvise their own drama. An equally successful lesson was seen in the Year 3 class in which the teacher gave a dramatic account of the fall of Jericho, and pupils had the opportunity to relate this to the "hazardous" episodes which they had overcome in their own lives and act it out in role play. The pupils were left in no doubt of the importance of commitment.
158. All lessons are thoughtfully prepared and teachers use their good subject knowledge well to initiate discussion and pose challenging questions. Relationships established in classes are very good and this promotes good learning because pupils' ideas and views are valued by teachers.
159. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The curriculum is well planned and incorporates local authority and national guidelines. This ensures that requirements for religious education are met. Teaching quality in Years 3-6 has improved since the last inspection, but the issue of establishing

an effective assessment system has not been tackled. The consequent lack of assessment information for the purpose of monitoring standards of teaching and learning in the subject is a major constraint in raising standards further.