

INSPECTION REPORT

ROSSINGTON TORNEDALE INFANT SCHOOL

Rossington, near Doncaster

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106698

Headteacher: Mrs M Dobson

Reporting inspector: Mr R Cheetham
2592

Dates of inspection: 24th – 26th September 2001

Inspection number: 198913

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 –7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Burns
Date of previous inspection:	December 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school serves the mining village of Rossington, near Doncaster, and the area has a degree of social deprivation. There are 163 pupils on roll and a further 60 attend the nursery on a part-time basis. This is slightly less than at the last inspection and reflects the local trend. Children start the nursery at the beginning of the September after their third birthday and transfer to the reception classes at the start of the year in which they become five. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is very wide. A significant minority start with standards that are below those generally found, especially in speaking and listening. All pupils are of white UK heritage. Twenty-six per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal and this is above the national average. Twenty-three per cent are on the school's register of special educational needs; this matches the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. The range of special educational needs include those related to emotional and behavioural difficulties, autism, and speech and language difficulties. Since the school was last inspected it has brought together the accommodation for the nursery and reception classes and has won a national award for excellence in pupil achievement.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Tornedale Infant School is an effective school that gives good value for money. It has maintained and improved its high standards of pupils' attainment in the core subjects (English, mathematics and science) over a number of years. It ensures that pupils make very good progress from their starting points. Pupils are keen to learn and the school teaches them well and is well led.

What the school does well

- Promotes pupils' high standards of attainment and progress in the core subjects, mainly through good quality teaching
- Has good quality, sustained leadership
- Provides an enriched and well-balanced curriculum
- Promotes and monitors pupils' academic and personal development

What could be improved

- The provision for information and communication technology
- The way governors organise their work and monitor school development

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1997 and since then has made good progress. It has maintained and improved pupils' standards of attainment in the core subjects and successfully implemented the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy and for the Foundation Stage (children under five). It has made good progress on nearly all the Key Issues for improvement in the last report and in the other it has made satisfactory progress. As a result, children under five have a considerably wider choice of activities in the nursery and more opportunities for writing in the reception classes. The quality of teaching has improved and the headteacher and senior staff now monitor it. The school development

plan now covers a three-year period. Governors have a greater involvement in school planning and in monitoring, although there is scope for further improvement. The school has amended its policy on special educational needs and reports to parents include pupils' progress on information and communication technology.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	B	A	A
Writing	A	A	A	A*
Mathematics	C	B	A	A

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

This table shows that the school has maintained the high standards of seven year old pupils' attainment in reading and writing and has improved them in mathematics. This shows that these pupils made very good progress from their starting points on entry to the school. In the three years to 2000, seven year olds' standards of attainment were mostly well above the national average. In 2000, the results were well above the average of similar schools and in writing they were in the top five per cent nationally. In science in 2000, seven year old pupils' standards of attainment were in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In 2001, the school made further improvements in reading and writing results, with a very slight decline in mathematics and science. However, in all these subjects, a larger proportion of pupils reached higher than expected levels of attainment. The school has exceeded its targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics for the last two years. In the current Year 2, at this early stage in the school year, the trend of high performance in the core subjects continues. Most pupils now are working within the level expected of them by the end of this year and the school is on course to meet its challenging targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. In English, pupils make very good progress. They read well and can write longer pieces of work. Their spelling is usually accurate but their choice of words is not as wide as it should be. They make very good progress in most aspects of mathematics and satisfactory progress in using and applying their skills. Their number work is good and they know how to work out sums in their heads. They make very good progress in most aspects of science and they progress satisfactorily in investigative work. In information and communication technology, most pupils make satisfactory progress but do not have enough practice to achieve more highly. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, mostly in learning to use the sounds letters make in their reading and writing. They also make good progress against the targets in their individual education plans in such things as improvements in behaviour or concentration.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They quickly gain confidence in the nursery and reception classes and want to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are very well behaved. They are patient with one another when learning to share equipment and when playing games in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	The school enjoys excellent relationships. Pupils are calm, kind to one another and willing to take on responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance is good and above the national average.

Pupils enjoy their schoolwork and keep on trying to make improvements. For instance, they are very keen to become better spellers and neater writers. Up to half of them lack confidence when mixing with others in the nursery but they quickly overcome this. They look after one another and listen when others are speaking. In the occasional assembly, a few pupils do not pay enough attention. Pupils carry out tasks very well and older pupils behave responsibly when they work on their own.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Most of the teaching is good and about a fifth of lessons are very good. One lesson was satisfactory and another was unsatisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Staff in the Foundation Stage (children under five) help children to settle in very well. Staff teach the skills of literacy and numeracy well. Lessons begin very well but a few end without enough revision of the main points. The quality of English and mathematics teaching is good partly because the skills are taught in other subjects. All lessons have a calm learning atmosphere, and there are effective routines so that pupils know what to do and so gain confidence. They listen carefully and manage their work well. A few pupils find it difficult to wait to ask the teacher a question or give an answer. This does not disturb the lessons because teachers handle it well and other pupils are patient. The school makes sure that pupils of all abilities have the right work to do. About half of the staff do not know enough about information and communication technology to teach it confidently. Teachers generally plan their work well although a few lesson plans are not detailed enough. Teachers work well with learning support assistants. They know what to do and help pupils make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has a broad and well-balanced curriculum. In the Foundation Stage, staff introduce children very sensitively to school and plan a very wide range of learning opportunities. In Years 1 and 2, pupils practise basic skills well in most subjects and all pupils enjoy visits to local places of interest.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good and is a personal concern of the headteacher. Pupils' needs are very carefully assessed and they are given a lot of support to help them improve. The school closely follows their progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	The school provides well for this area of pupils' development. Staff are very keen to help pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, to know how to behave well and to share their equipment and ideas.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils and carefully assesses their individual social and academic progress. Staff are just starting to use their information on the progress of successive year groups of pupils to judge the difference the school is making to them.

The school works very well with its parents and they think very highly of it. The school concentrates on increasing pupils' speaking and listening skills. This helps them increase the words they know and to talk through what they are learning and understanding. Staff teach the skills of literacy and numeracy thoroughly: they help pupils practise these skills in other subjects and they get them to discuss what they are doing. The school efficiently assesses and records pupils' progress. Staff know pupils and their families well. They look out for any changes in pupils' behaviour and work well with parents to support the children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff lead the school well. They plan the curriculum well, assess pupils' progress carefully and make sure that the school meets its targets.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors work more closely with the school than at the last inspection but they are not well enough organised to monitor the school's progress or consider school decisions in enough depth.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Senior staff monitor the quality of teaching and discuss any need for improvements with the staff. The school makes good use of its information on pupils' attainment to judge how well it is doing. The senior staff check the progress of the school development plan to help them with the next version.
The strategic use of resources	The school has improved its strategic planning by looking ahead further than at the last inspection. It spends its finances wisely on its main priorities.

The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily. It is well staffed with a higher than average number of learning support assistants to help pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The school has looked at its development over three years. However, it has not looked carefully enough at how to deal with what could be higher staff costs in the future, now that the extra money it has carried forward each year in its budget has been reduced.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like the school • Good teaching • Being able to come to the school with a problem or a question • Children are expected to work hard • Children make good progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More activities outside lessons

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Relatively few parents (12 per cent) felt that the school should provide more activities outside lessons. In common with most infant schools, Tornedale does not have activities after school. There are, however, organised lunchtime games in the playground well supervised by support staff, and the school plans to start a breakfast club. It also offers all the pupils a very wide range of visits to local areas of interest and has regular visitors to enrich pupils' learning. The inspection team feels that this is sufficient.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Promotes pupils' high standards of attainment and progress in the core subjects, mainly through good quality teaching

- 1 In recent years, the school has kept up or improved its high standards of pupils' attainment. Seven year old pupils' standards in reading and writing have been above or more often well above the national average and the school has improved their standards in mathematics from average to well above average. In 2000, the school received a national award for its excellence in pupils' achievement. In that year, pupils' attainment was well above the standards expected in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The results were even more impressive when they were compared to those of similar schools (a group of schools from across the country that have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal). By that comparison, pupils' attainment in writing and science was far above those expected. Since a significant minority of pupils start school with levels of attainment below those generally found, especially in speaking and listening, their overall attainment by the time they are seven shows that they make very good progress.
- 2 This progress is due to several things, mainly the consistently good teaching. It is also due to the sensitive ways pupils are introduced to the nursery class and transferred to reception classes. Other ingredients in its success are the school's careful assessment of pupils' learning needs, how well staff follow these up and pupils' very good attitudes to school. They want to work hard and to make progress. They listen carefully to their teachers and work very well in groups. As a result, most pupils in the current Year 2 classes are making very good progress and, at this early stage in the school year, are already working within the standards expected of them by the end of it.
- 3 In English, most pupils make very good progress from their starting points. This reflects the high priority the school places on developing pupils' English skills and their confidence. When they start in the nursery, pupils have a very wide range of speaking and listening skills. A few are confident and expressive. They speak clearly and confidently to adults and other children. They listen carefully, follow instructions, answer questions and go on to ask their own. Most are a little more hesitant. They speak less clearly but enjoy listening to stories and rhymes and talk about them. Up to half the pupils start in the nursery with limited speaking skills. They work very quietly and staff work skilfully to draw them out through questions and suggestions. For instance, a small group were making scones. Throughout the session, the nursery nurse asked them questions like how the mixture felt, and whether they needed any more liquid, and she helped them name the ingredients.
- 4 Children have a very good range of activities from which to choose and staff help them by encouraging them to talk about what they want to do, name the activity and say what they might like to make. As a result of this consistently very good teaching, the children grow in confidence. They talk about their ideas and other experiences and listen to other children discussing their work. They begin to link up the spoken and written word through reading books with the adults and start to recognise some letters and words. They quickly learn the nursery rules about sharing and taking turns. They work things out by saying them aloud such as when they plan the next thing to do, "I'm going to make a car like Dad's", or when they notice things are not right, "This one's not got much", when talking about the amount

of flour in a bowl. Staff catch these moments and encourage the children further so that their overall progress is rapid and they are helped to play a fuller part in the lessons.

- 5 In the reception classes, children continue to be interested in their work. They begin to ask why things happen in stories and talk about their families and events at home with confidence. They start to use the correct names for shapes such as squares and circles and retell favourite stories. They recognise common, short words and the sounds that some letters make. They use this knowledge to write lists, for example, and try to read what they have written. This is very good progress and most children are in line to complete or go beyond most aspects of the early learning goals (what is expected of most children) in language and literacy by the time they start Year 1.
- 6 In Year 1, lessons such as circle time introduce the pupils to the rules of speaking and listening in a group. Teachers encourage them to use polite forms of speech such as introducing themselves by saying, "My name is (their name) and I like the colour (their favourite colour) because (and give a convincing reason)." Everyone listens carefully and respects what other pupils try to explain. They learn to value everyone's attempts and gain confidence through the routines of the work. Higher attaining pupils read different types of text and talk about what they have read. Lower attaining pupils recognise familiar words and phrases and can use a few letter sounds to read new words. They find it hard to concentrate. Average attaining pupils make good progress with their reading skills and use letter sounds as well as the sense of the text to read new words. Parents help most pupils with reading at home and this makes them more enthusiastic and confident. .
- 7 In Year 2, pupils have a wide experience of reading and writing by practising the skills in other subjects such as history, geography and science. There is regular teaching of spelling. Pupils practise spelling groups of words with the same letter pattern at home. They then go over them with support staff and the teachers using a routine of "look, cover, spell and check" to help them retain what they have learned. Teachers also use this emphasis on the sounds letters make to help pupils with their reading. Higher attaining pupils are very keen on books, love reading and make very good progress. They read avidly and retell complicated plots from stories they have read. Teachers know that pupils find it difficult to predict what might happen next in a story and to think about what sentences might mean other than what is plain on first reading. They concentrate on this and last year the proportion of pupils who could use these higher reading skills increased. Average attaining pupils make good progress in reading but do not have the same self-confidence in their ability. Lower attaining pupils make very good progress in breaking up new words into their separate sounds and trying to work out the meaning. Pupils' writing is direct and refreshing and tends to mirror their speech. Higher attaining pupils write lengthy descriptions but their imaginative work lacks fluency and relies on a narrow range of familiar words. Teachers are alert to this and emphasise the introduction of new words. A good example of this was in a Year 2 lesson when the class was trying to describe how owls fly. The teacher reminded them of 'hover' and 'swoop'. While the pupils learned these new words, the lesson did not prompt many further examples from them.
- 8 In mathematics, most pupils make very good progress. In the nursery staff introduce them to the correct mathematical terms while they are taking part in group work. Children learn words like 'balance', 'measure', 'guess', 'full', 'empty', 'light' and 'heavy' when measuring ingredients or working with playdough. They learn to add small amounts to make scales balance, to count scoops of sand and to vary the

amount of water that they pour to make a waterwheel spin. By Year 1, pupils count beyond 10 and are quickly grasping the concept of more and less than. For instance, pupils could peg out numbers in sequence on a 'washing line'. They could use this to count up and back and work out the difference between numbers. In Year 2, pupils can count up to and beyond 100 and are developing a good understanding of the value of numbers. They can quickly recall addition and subtraction facts such as 3 plus 2, and 4 less than 9, and are good at explaining how they do this in their heads. Generally, pupils set their work out well. By the end of the year, previous groups of high attaining pupils were working with simple fractions, measuring accurately and using bar charts to show information. This is a high level of attainment and teachers' plans show that they aim to achieve this with the current Year 2 pupils. They recognise that there is more work to do in encouraging pupils to solve problems and in improving their use of correct mathematical terms. Similarly, teachers are beginning to use information and communication technology more fully within mathematics

- 9 In science, most pupils make very good progress. In the nursery, the children are encouraged to examine materials and notice when they change, such as when they feel wet and dry sand. They use construction toys to build models and then make changes to them. They are beginning to use equipment such as tape recorders independently so that a group of them can listen to a favourite story tape. It was noticeable that girls took the lead in activities such as this and made the system work. Pupils are beginning to control a mouse when using a computer to click on icons and make choices. In Year 1, pupils carry out experiments to find out how waterproof materials are or measure how far model cars can travel after being released down a ramp. While they find this interesting and can measure and record, there is little to suggest that they predict what might happen or consider why some materials are better at resisting moisture than others. In Year 2, pupils use their writing skills well to describe clearly what they have done, such as when they planted and measured the growth of beans and understood what they needed in order to grow. They describe the different uses of paper and understand some of its characteristics (such as strength and flexibility) that make some kinds more useful than others for wrapping awkward sized objects. Currently in their flight topic, pupils are learning about the properties of feathers such as their lightness, area coverage and warmth. This is helping them to see how animals and birds are adapted to their different surroundings.
- 10 Most of the teaching (70 per cent) is good and a further 20 per cent is very good. One lesson was satisfactory and another was unsatisfactory. Overall, the consistently good quality of teaching helps pupils make very good progress over time. Teaching has a number of strengths and, because most teachers have been at Tornedale for a large part of their careers, they know the pupils and their families very well. They use this knowledge very well to understand pupils' strengths and weaknesses and match what they teach to pupils' interests and abilities. They link this to well-established classroom routines such as when Year 2 spend the first ten minutes of the morning in concentrated spelling practice. During this staff support all pupils very well. As well as working with small groups themselves, teachers make very good use of learning support assistants to teach and test other pupils.
- 11 Pupils know what is expected of them and have confidence in the staff that their work will be challenging but not out of their reach. In the circle time lessons, for instance, teachers value all their efforts and have high expectations. This is best shown in the questions teachers ask. For instance, they know that many read well but are not inclined to read beyond the immediate sense of the text. In the literacy

lessons, teachers use well- illustrated big books to gain pupils' attention and then keep it by asking questions that become more difficult. Teachers ask pupils to recall the names of the baby owls and then ask them to suggest why those names were chosen. They ask what the owls look like and then suggest how they might feel at different points in the story. In this way, pupils of all abilities are included in the lesson and all are challenged to think hard. This use of questions to include all the pupils is also found in the early part of the daily mathematics lessons. Teachers approach the mental exercises in similar ways so that pupils know what to expect. They all use learning support assistants well to sit with pupils who lack confidence in speaking to the whole class. They encourage the pupils to answer first to them and then to volunteer this to the class. This works very well and all pupils can make a contribution. These parts of the lesson move at a brisk pace and this keeps up pupils' interest and reinforces their understanding and recall of number facts. In other lessons, though, when the teacher is speaking to the whole class, the learning support assistants do not have such a clear role and pupils are not as well supported.

- 12 Teachers plan well. They work in year groups on the detail of their half-termly plans using a mixture of national guidance (for example on literacy and numeracy) and the National Curriculum programmes of study for each subject. They use the same formats for their plans and support each other well with suggestions and advice. In nearly all lesson plans, the teachers make it clear what they want pupils to learn. This helps give a sharp focus to most lessons and to reinforce the learning at the end of them. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, the planning was not detailed enough and the teacher recognised that this was why it did not go as well as she had hoped. Literacy and numeracy lessons begin brightly with the class working together well. The teachers then carefully set tasks for groups, to match the needs of different pupils. The later parts of the lessons are mostly satisfactory but teachers could improve these by asking more of the pupils than, for example, what parts of their work pleased them most. For instance, they could pick out the main teaching points or help pupils to see how their work links to the next lesson.
- 13 Children start their school life at Tornedale in a well-managed and sensitive way. They benefit from the staff's deep understanding of the learning needs of very young children and from their knowledge of the newly introduced Foundation Stage curriculum. At this early stage in the term the children are just being introduced to life in the nursery. The careful build-up of activity and involvement is having a very powerful influence on how the children feel about school and about themselves as learners. The staff visit all the pupils at home for a morning to introduce themselves and to get a better understanding of each child's learning needs. The children who are visited in the morning start in the nursery that afternoon along with a few others with slightly more time in school. They have a very wide choice of activities and staff encourage them to try out several and to talk about them. Teachers encourage the children to be independent and share what they do. They are taught to treat others politely and staff provide excellent role models for this. Where children do not have the right words, staff help them by going through short routines. For instance, the teacher asked one child to ask another for permission to share his building bricks and gave a form of words for him to use. Children quickly feel safe enough to try out different activities. For instance, a girl initially hesitated when using a play telephone and left it alone. Later she returned to it, dialled a number and smiled with satisfaction when she 'spoke' to her Mum. This development of pupils' social and personal skills is a strength of the nursery. While feeling safe to try things out, they are not allowed to feel too comfortable. This is because staff consistently prompt children to think about what they are doing and to

talk about it. They ask questions such as, "Can you see the balance going down? What happens if you shake it? Can you make it yourself? Oh, you look lovely dressed like that. Are you going somewhere special?" This teaching method keeps children thinking and helps them make very good progress. They use their imaginations and begin to see causes and effects in a variety of practical situations.

- 14 A member of staff visits the homes of those children joining the reception classes who have not attended the nursery first. This ensures that all pupils have the same treatment. Teachers use the accurate assessments of their progress made by the nursery staff to place the children into classes. Teachers adjust the time that children start in the reception classes so that they can get used to the change from part-time to full-time attendance. This works very well. Children are introduced to their new classes and teachers in small groups. They spend a morning in school, stay for lunch and have part of the afternoon in class before going home earlier than the older pupils. Children quickly find their feet under this arrangement and settle readily into class routines. This builds their confidence so that they establish their independence when choosing or putting away equipment or responding to the teachers' questions. They take an increasingly active part in new class activities. A good example of this was in a mathematics lesson in the hall when the teacher asked them to recognise number names and symbols from cards that children held up. They were quick to do this and a few could have counted up to the chosen number without the teacher's help.
- 15 The school's assessment of what the children know, can do and understand begins early. It is thorough and based on accurate observations, testing and recording. In the nursery, staff take fully into account parents' views of their children's development when forming their judgements. They make rapid, incidental observations of children's social and personal development as well as their academic progress and use these skilfully to pinpoint the next steps in children's learning. They also plan group and individual assessments of particular activities and ensure that these include all pupils. This pattern continues in the reception and later classes so that teachers build up an accurate picture of individual pupils' progress. In Year 2 classes, the teachers plan when to assess particular aspects of pupils' work and note this in their forecasts. This is very good practice and the school intends to make this a regular feature of Year 1 assessments as well. In addition, teachers keep many examples of pupils' work at their different stages of development. This provides a back-up to their judgements and helps them to compare what they think with their colleagues and increase the accuracy of the decisions. It also gives them evidence of pupils' progress in subjects, other than mathematics and English, where assessment is less systematic.

Has good quality, sustained leadership

- 16 The headteacher and most of the teachers have devoted most of their professional lives to teaching successive groups of pupils at Tornedale Infant School. This has not led to complacency or staleness because the school is well led. It has consistently set itself challenging targets and met or exceeded them. It has taken the best of the national initiatives and blended them well with the school's best practice. This means that the school has established a clear view of its priorities and a realistic view of how to achieve them. For instance, staff know that their pupils need extra support in developing all aspects of English. This enjoys a high priority and improves their progress.

- 17 The headteacher leads the school with modest authority. She has well-placed confidence in her senior staff and together they run the school well. The headteacher encourages a strong sense of teamwork among the staff and the teachers discuss all major school decisions. This builds up a clear sense of school identity and a confidence in the things that the school does well. It also helps the staff look at what needs improving and tackle this in a considered way. A good example of this is the school's approach to raising pupils' attainment and boosting their progress in information and communication technology.
- 18 The school has chosen its priorities wisely and expresses these clearly in its improved development plan. It now plans over three years and this helps it stage developments over the medium term. The school set its major tasks as incorporating into its curriculum the national initiatives on literacy, numeracy and the Foundation Stage. At the same time the headteacher recognised the need to improve the provision for information and communication technology. While the school did not ignore this need, they established a sensible priority. They considered it more important to concentrate their efforts on making a success of implementing the national initiatives and have done so. During this time, they built up information and communication technology resources and replaced outdated equipment. They are now well placed to concentrate on staff training and curriculum planning and these aspects are well expressed in the subject's action plan. This sensible staging of developments has stood the school in good stead and helped to maintain or improve standards of attainment in the core subjects while keeping pace with other developments.
- 19 Staff with management responsibilities carry them out well. Most have written good policies in collaboration with their colleagues and provide them with good guidance on planning their teaching. Most also monitor the teachers' lesson plans. This helps to establish a generally high expectation and level of teaching consistency. A few co-ordinators have observed and commented on the quality of teaching in their subjects. This has given them a better view of the school's work and a clearer idea of the next steps to take to improve their subjects. The English and mathematics co-ordinators have led staff training and helped with planning so that staff are implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. The science co-ordinator has led staff training and worked with Foundation Stage colleagues to link in with their planning. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has overseen two major developments. These developments are the re-organisation of the Foundation Stage base to align practice in the nursery and reception classes, and the successful development of the Foundation Stage curriculum. This re-organisation has worked well and has helped to improve the continuity of children's learning in the Foundation Stage. In line with the priorities in the school development plan, the information and communication technology co-ordinator has prepared herself well. She has developed a useful action plan to train staff and build up equipment. In addition, she has made sure that she can lead the subject confidently by taking part in a high-level training course. This has given her the skills to service equipment as well as the knowledge to use it well.
- 20 The headteacher sets a good example. She saw that identifying pupils' learning needs at an early stage and then doing something positive about them should help the pupils make rapid progress. To this end she has worked with the deputy headteacher and the nursery teacher to work out which pupils would benefit from additional support. She organises this support in a number of ways. She is the overall co-ordinator for the school's work with pupils with special educational needs.

This involves arranging the support, assessing progress and keeping parents up to date and involved. Besides managing the administration capably, she devotes a good proportion of her time to teaching groups of pupils and this skilled attention helps them make very good progress in reading and writing.

Provides an enriched and well-balanced curriculum

- 21 The school has designed its curriculum well to meet the needs of all its pupils. Staff plan the curriculum using national guidance and turn this into a series of well thought out topics that draw together different subjects. The work is clearly drawn from the Foundation Stage curriculum for pupils under five and from the National Curriculum programmes of study for the older ones in Years 1 and 2. Staff have worked hard making the changes and have made a good start on linking the Foundation Stage to what follows it. In this way they are trying to ensure that the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well across the school and that those of geography and history, for example, are developed as well. For instance, children in the nursery pay a regular visit to a local garden. The owner has a passion for trains and has stocked his garden with models of them. Besides being an exciting day out for children, parents and staff, it starts the process of broadening pupils' horizons. They start to establish ideas of place and distance. They begin to understand different methods of transport and the different ways areas of land can be used. These ideas are developed further up the school as pupils widen the scope of the visits they make and the experiences they write and draw about.
- 22 A strength of the curriculum is the carefully planned way in which skills learned in English lessons are practised and developed within remaining subjects. Teachers try to make sure that the writing tasks are relevant to the pupils. For instance, Year 2 pupils write instructions for washing clothes as it was done in Victorian times, after they have done it themselves. Pupils write accounts of their visits to Cleethorpes or Bolsover Castle. In the nursery and reception classes, they learn the usefulness of writing by "recording telephone messages" or writing shopping lists. In Year 1, pupils write captions for their stories to make the link between pictures and words. To help them become more accurate in their spelling, pupils have a thorough grounding in letter sounds and how they combine to make different sounds and words. Teachers give pupils a lot of practice in writing and they respond well. They keep on trying to improve both their accuracy and neatness. The school has also decided to give pupils more practice in writing longer pieces of work. They plan extra time for this during the week so that pupils get used to the routine and the high expectations. Teachers provide interesting topics for pupils to write about that often develop themes from stories they have been reading or from their current topic, such as flight in Year 2.
- 23 In a similar way, pupils practise the basic skills of number work regularly in numeracy lessons and then teachers give them additional practice in other lessons and at different times of the day. During registration, for instance, pupils count up how many pupils are present and work out any difference from the number on the register. The youngest children work out for themselves (with a little help from adults) how many there are at the water tray, for example, and compare that with how many there should be. In science, older pupils record the results of experiments in both tables and charts and write commentaries about what they show. As with the practice of English skills, the keynote is relevance. Pupils use their skills to solve problems that are real to them and this immediacy engages their interest and keeps them motivated to learn.

- 24 The school has significantly more boys than girls in some year groups and staff know that there is a tendency for some boys to make slower progress than girls. Although this trend was not apparent in Tornedale's previous attainment results, staff worked effectively in a local schools' initiative to raise boys' attainment. The teachers continue to put into practice some of the ideas from this work. One teacher leads training for these schools on the teaching method of circle time described earlier in this report. Because of lessons like these, an interesting and relevant curriculum and staff's high expectations of behaviour and effort, boys' attainment has kept pace with that of girls.
- 25 The school caters well for pupils with special educational needs and they make very good progress. Through identifying pupils' needs and working effectively with parents from the outset, the school targets its resources on those who need them most. The school employs additional staff (learning support assistants) and trains them to play a full part, guided by the teachers, in supporting and testing pupils' progress. For instance, they regularly test the spellings pupils have learned for homework. They listen to pupils read, talk to them about the stories and note their progress. They work with small groups of pupils in class so that their learning keeps pace with their classmates'. They also take small groups of pupils out of class to practise their reading and writing skills. This could make it difficult for them to catch up with the rest of the class when they go back. However, staff overcome this in these ways. They timetable the work well so that so that pupils do not regularly miss the same things. They make sure that pupils' work outside the class is similar to what they would do inside. They practise basic skills of reading and writing with them so that they are better able to make good progress with the rest of the class in other lessons. The headteacher also regularly works with small groups of pupils to boost their progress in reading. They learn about letter sounds and how these build into words. In some lessons, a few pupils find it difficult to cope with what to them are large numbers of children and adults. They look for the teachers' attention and occasionally ask too much of them. Learning support assistants and teachers work well together with these pupils and help them adjust their behaviour and concentrate on their work. A good example of this was in a Year 2 class when the teacher skilfully responded to many of the extra answers from one pupil. She then altered her arrangements for the next part of the lesson so that the pupil played a useful role and all pupils made progress.
- 26 The school provides a wide range of learning opportunities for its pupils in the form of visits to the local area and beyond and by encouraging visitors to the school. For example, pupils go to the theatre and visit a farm and a zoo. They make visits to the local community by going to the church, local shops and a building site and go to see older people at Benton House. The school welcomes visitors to work with the pupils. Touring theatre groups and visiting musicians, such as the Doncaster Woodwind group, add to the school's provision. The local priest takes assemblies and the pupils support national charities such as the Children's Society and Help the Aged by listening to their presentations and making collections. The school is near to a major railway line and this is a potential hazard. The Railtrack safety officer speaks to the pupils regularly about the possible dangers to keep the issue fresh in their minds. Teachers plan carefully for this wide range of additional activities so that pupils are well prepared before they take part and for when they follow them up at school.

Promotes and monitors pupils' academic and personal development

- 27 The school supports pupils' learning by building up its knowledge of them and their families. This begins as the children start school when staff visit them at home and talk to their parents about their development. Foundation Stage staff can then teach to the children's strengths and help them overcome their weaknesses. They have adapted their previous records to allow them to track pupils' individual progress against the stepping stones (points of development for children under five). Their records are completed diligently and give a detailed account of children's progress before they start the National Curriculum in Year 1. They are also adapting their records so that the pupils who begin the National Curriculum before leaving the reception classes have this progress recorded. Teachers base their recording on their observations of pupils while they work and on what they produce, such as artwork or writing. They listen carefully to what pupils say when answering questions and they arrange special pieces of work so that they can look at pupils' progress in depth.
- 28 In Years 1 and 2, the teachers continue with these methods of assessment and, because these pupils can record more for themselves, teachers take careful note of all their work in different subjects. Twice a term pupils complete a special piece of writing that teachers assess and keep. This is a valuable way of keeping track of pupils' progress and also of showing them how they have improved. The learning support assistants help with these assessments and make notes of reading and spelling progress. Pupils are keen to know how many spellings they get right and the school rewards their success. The teachers use the assessment information well to help them group pupils and to adapt their teaching plans. This helps them match their lessons well to pupils' attainment so that they set challenging and relevant tasks particularly in English, mathematics and science. The school keeps less detailed records of the pupils' progress in other subjects. The assessment co-ordinator recognises this and has plans to examine national guidance and make more use of it to make improvements.
- 29 The assessment co-ordinator leads this aspect of the school's work well. As a result, staff are confident in their assessments of pupils' progress and use them to plan the next steps in learning. She has developed a good balance of planned and continuing assessments in Year 2. She has ensured that teachers build up a comprehensive picture of individual pupils' progress and that this includes their recent work in the Foundation Stage. She works with the headteacher to identify the trends in pupils' attainment and the strengths and weaknesses in their general progress and their performance in tests.
- 30 From this detailed view of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' test performance, the school now emphasises the teaching of higher order reading skills. Consequently, the nursery teacher, when leading a very good story session, regularly got the children to think about what might happen next in the Humpty Dumpty story. This established the idea of story sequencing, increased anticipation and introduced them very early on to the skill of prediction. This is something that the teachers of older pupils are building on. The assessment co-ordinator sees that her next steps are to build up year group profiles of assessment data. By using these the school can alter its annual curriculum plans and make better judgements about the value that it adds to pupils' learning and its overall value for money.

- 31 Alongside its assessment and recording of pupils' academic progress, the school keeps a careful track of pupils' social and personal development. Foundation Stage staff pay particular attention to promoting children's personal, social and emotional development. Staff note their reactions to the wide choices that face them. For instance, nursery staff allow children to choose their activities for part of the session to encourage independence and sharing. They watch carefully to see what pattern of choices children make. If children keep choosing the same activity, staff offer them more guidance and encouragement. Staff also note if any children avoid the activities that adults lead. Since these are often where staff assess progress, again they involve the more reluctant children in these activities. Teachers keep a careful track of pupils' personal development and record significant points in it. They report these to parents at each parents' evening. They discuss their child's attitudes to learning, what improvements could be made and how parents can help. With the parents, teachers set targets for pupils' personal development and review the progress at the next meeting, or before if necessary.
- 32 Staff complete individual records of pupils' personal and academic progress and keep examples of their work. They pass these on to the pupils' next teacher so that her planning can begin from an accurate view of each pupil's starting points. This detailed system of assessing and recording the many sides of pupils' progress gives teachers very good information on which to base their planning so that they can promote it further.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The provision for information and communication technology

- 33 The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' attainment and progress in information and communication technology. As a result they make satisfactory progress in all parts of the subject and by the time they are seven, their attainment matches the level that is expected nationally. However, not many pupils achieve beyond this and the school's success in promoting high attainment in English, mathematics and science suggests that they are capable of more in information and communication technology.
- 34 Teachers are currently planning for and using information and communication technology in their lessons, although their planning is yet not based on the new equipment. During the inspection, although it was not possible to see a full lesson, there were examples of pupils in every year group working on computers in the classrooms. Teachers have made a start on pupils using information and communication technology skills in other subjects, such as word processing in English and number games in mathematics. Although the range of pupils' activities during the inspection was limited, there was other evidence to show that pupils experience all aspects of the subject's programme of study. However, the depth of their work and the time devoted to it, in data handling for instance, do not promote enough higher attainment. The school has recognised this and improvements in the subject are a major focus. To bring these about, the school has already updated its computers and software. The information and communication technology co-ordinator has written a very good action plan to guide the subject's further development. This includes using nationally funded staff training to improve teachers' subject knowledge and to give them more confidence in exploring the potential of the new equipment with their pupils.

The way governors organise their work and monitor school development

- 35 Since the last inspection, the governors have made satisfactory progress in increasing their involvement with the school so that they have a better understanding of its planning and monitoring. During this time, they have also introduced new governors to their group. Governors have chosen to link themselves to aspects of the school's development such as the literacy initiative or the special educational needs provision. To help their understanding, they have attended training with the staff and visited the school to look at provision. They have also had training on governing body responsibilities. They fulfil their statutory duties for setting and monitoring the budget as well as for other aspects such as the school's recent introduction to performance management. They discuss the school's results with the headteacher, and agree the school's development priorities. They have also been responsive to parents' suggestions. For example, some parents felt that they would like a little more privacy to talk about their child's progress at parents' evenings. Governors discussed this with the headteacher. The school tried out new arrangements and a governor took note of them and reported back to the governing body.
- 36 The full governing body try to deal with all of the work without the support of a committee structure and some of their work is not done in sufficient depth. An example of this is their involvement in development planning. Governors consider the priorities for development that are initially worked out by the headteacher and her deputy but do not look at the full range of options. The development plan now covers three years but governors do not monitor the school's progress against the targets in the plan. The plan has improved over time but the success of some targets is not easy to measure and governors should consider ways to improve this. The governors have a great deal of confidence in the headteacher and trust her judgement. While their confidence is justified, they need to know more about the reasons behind some school decisions, and question them. An example of this is the larger than usual amounts in the school budget that were being carried forward each year until now. This was spent on improving levels of staffing to help all pupils make progress. The surplus has now reduced but governors have not considered with the school what this could mean for future staffing levels or how it might affect pupils' progress. Another example is the spending on pupils with special educational needs. This did not match, until recently, the proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. Governors did not query this although the reason was easily explained and the money was found to be well spent.
- 37 Governors visit the school to follow up their areas of interest described above. This is good practice and helps individual governors get a first-hand view of the school's work. If they could make written reports to the governing body on their visit, however, then all of them would benefit. In a similar way, much of the governors' information comes from the headteacher's report. There is room to improve the report, to give the governors more explicit information about the progress of the development plan or matters that governors decide they need more details of. For instance, curriculum co-ordinators produce action plans for the development plan. Checking progress on these or conducting a systematic review of policies and their implementation, for example on health and safety, could be useful additional features of their work.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

38 In order to improve the school further, the governors and staff should:

- (1) Implement its action plan for improving the provision for information and communication technology by:
 - Organising staff training *
 - Supporting their planning *
 - Using the resources to their full potential*
Paragraphs 33, 34

- (2) Improve governors' organisation and their monitoring of school development by
 - Setting up a curriculum and monitoring committee to receive reports on curriculum development and monitor aspects of school improvement
 - Ensuring fuller involvement in deciding school priorities for development
 - Linking school visits to governors' responsibilities and writing reports on progress
 - Regularly reviewing progress on the school development plan with the headteacher on the basis of improved reports by her
Paragraphs 35-37

* This indicates that the school has recognised the need for improvement and has plans to deal with it.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	14	1	1	0	0
Percentage	0	20	70	5	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30 (FTE)	193
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		51

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	44

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	32	34	66

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	31
	Girls	34	34	34
	Total	62	62	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (95)	94 (88)	98 (94)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	30	32
	Girls	34	34	34
	Total	62	64	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (92)	97 (94)	100 (94)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	135
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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30 FTE
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
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	£
Total income	487500
Total expenditure	476489
Expenditure per pupil	2046
Balance brought forward from previous year	40083
Balance carried forward to next year	51094

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	200
Number of questionnaires returned	64

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	90	8	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	82	16	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	30	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	62	32	3	3	0
The teaching is good.	89	11	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	23	3	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	13	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	39	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	71	25	0	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	34	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	34	6	6	5