

INSPECTION REPORT

ATHERSLEY NORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Barnsley

LEA area: Barnsley

Unique reference number: 131157

Headteacher: Mrs Mel Turner

Reporting inspector: Mr A J Dobell
10373

Dates of inspection: 21 to 24 May 2001

Inspection number: 205030

Full 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: | 3 -11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
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| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs Sam Smith |
| Date of previous inspection: | July 1998 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 10373 | Mr A J Dobell | Registered inspector | Music. Physical education. | What sort of school is it? School's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 13450 | Mrs J Madden | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 21910 | Mr G Longton | Team inspector | Science. Information and communication technology. Religious education. | How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| 30781 | Mrs W E Stenton | Team inspector | Equal opportunities. The Foundation Stage. Mathematics. Design and technology. Geography. | |

| | | | | |
|-------|--------------|----------------|---|---|
| 23290 | Mrs R Wilson | Team inspector | Special educational needs. English. Art and design. History. | How well does the school care for its pupils? |
|-------|--------------|----------------|---|---|

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the northern outskirts of Barnsley. It was formed in 1997 by amalgamating two infant schools and one junior school. The school had a difficult start with an unfinished building. Pupils are drawn from the immediate locality, and are virtually all from a white UK heritage. The school's catchment area is largely local authority housing with a small, recently built private development. The attainment of children when they enter the Nursery is well below that normally found nationally.

There are 352 pupils on roll including a full time equivalent of 39 children who attend the Nursery part time. The school is bigger than the average primary school. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (40.8 per cent) is well above average, as is the percentage of pupils who have special educational needs (47.6 per cent). Similarly, the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (5.1 per cent) is also well above average. Pupils on the school's register of special educational needs have a range of learning difficulties including dyslexia, moderate and severe learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties and physical difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school in the context in which it is working. It provides its disadvantaged pupils with an impressive level of care and support and a secure and stimulating learning environment. Standards of attainment are rising, and have risen by more than the average national trend over the last three years. While attainment remains well below the national average at Key Stage 1, and very low in relation to the national average at Key Stage 2, the school has made an impressive start on raising attainment from the extremely low levels of three years ago.

The quality of teaching is now good, and most pupils have good attitudes to their work. Since her appointment, the headteacher has worked unstintingly to improve the school, and, very well supported by her deputy, teachers and classroom assistants, offers excellent leadership. Given the very good progress that the school has made in the last two years from the very poor provision it was making, and the circumstances within which it is operating, the school now gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- There is very good provision for children under the age of five and for pupils with special educational needs: these are strengths of the school.
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral and social development.
- The quality of relationships is very good overall: most pupils have good attitudes to school and behave well.
- Systems for ensuring pupils' welfare are very effective: there is a very good programme for personal, health and social education, and for education in citizenship.
- The quality of teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2, and good in Key Stage 1. This results in stimulating learning experiences for pupils in all key stages.
- The headteacher, very ably supported by her deputy and all staff, provides excellent leadership. As a result, the school has an excellent commitment to improvement as part of its impressive ethos, which is to enable all its pupils to develop self-esteem and self-worth and reach their potential academically.

What could be improved

- Attainment at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The match of learning activities to pupils' individual abilities and needs.
- Pupils' use of standard English.
- The marking of work and the on-going assessment of the progress being made by individual pupils, with a view to promoting their further progress.
- The use of subjects across the curriculum to support the learning of the skills of literacy and numeracy.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Attainment in the National Curriculum tests has improved markedly over the last three years, but remains well below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and very low in relation to the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has an excellent commitment to raising standards and has plans in place to enable it to do so. The key issues from the last inspection have all been addressed effectively, although more remains to be done in the area of assessment.

There have been very good improvements in many areas. These include the quality of teaching and learning and the quality of the learning environment, the quality of relationships and pupils' attitudes and behaviour, the provision for the health and safety of pupils, systems of care and welfare and pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, parents' views of the school, and the quality of leadership and management including the role of the governing body.

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 | E* | E | E* | E | well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low in relation to the average. E* |
| mathematics | E* | E | E | D | |
| Science | E* | E* | E* | E | |

At Key Stage 1, in the National Curriculum tests in 2000, the school attained its best results in each subject since it was reorganised. The same is true of Key Stage 2 apart from a marginal decline in English between 1999 and 2000. At each key stage, the rate of improvement in attainment between 1998 and 2000 has exceeded the national trend. However, the school is aware that much remains to be done before pupils attain their potential. In 2000, the school exceeded its agreed targets for attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2.

Inspection findings are that speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science are below expectations at the end of both key stages. Writing is below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and well below at the end of Key Stage 2. Considerable progress has been made in information and communication technology, which is now in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but below at the end of Key Stage 2. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in design and technology, geography, music and physical education is in line with expectations. Attainment in art and design and history is below expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is in line with

expectations in music and physical education, but below expectations in art and design, design and technology, geography and history. In religious education, pupils attain the standards expected for those following the Barnsley agreed syllabus at the end of each key stage.

When they enter the Nursery, children's attainment is well below that normally found. They make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards remain below those normally found largely because of weaknesses in basic skills, for example, in writing. The school is aware of this. Standards of attainment are improving well, but are not yet high enough.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils have good attitudes overall. They are enthusiastic about their work and want to play a full part in lessons. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Most pupils behave well in class and at play. Some pupils throughout the key stages have short concentration spans so that their behaviour quickly deteriorates. They are managed very effectively. |
| Personal development and relationships | Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good overall. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development. |
| Attendance | The attendance rate in 1999-2000 was well below the national average, and the rate of unauthorised absence was well above the national average. |

Most pupils enjoy their work and enjoy school, and this is reflected in their conduct. As a result, relationships are very good and have a positive effect on attainment and progress. The school has very good systems in place to promote good behaviour and attendance. One pupil was permanently excluded from the school in the last full school year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Very good | Good | Very good |

The quality of teaching is good overall, which is a marked improvement on the last inspection. Then, weakness was found in the teaching of children under the age of five: this is now very good. At the time of the last inspection, seven per cent of teaching was very good or excellent; this is now 45 per cent. The last inspection reported that 83 per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better with 17 per cent being unsatisfactory. During this inspection, only one per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory, and 99 per cent was satisfactory or better.

At the time of the inspection, two experienced teachers from other schools were teaching in the school as a result of temporary staffing difficulties. Their teaching was observed along with that of permanent staff. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good. However, pupils start from such a low base that weaknesses in learning remain. Information and communication technology is taught well. Skilful questioning tests and reinforces pupils' knowledge and understanding. Throughout the school, the management of pupils is a strength, and class assistants are very effective in supporting teachers. Interestingly planned lessons motivate and interest pupils. Work is marked regularly, but the quality of marking, and its use to promote pupils' progress, is inconsistent. The use of homework to support learning is satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. There is good equality of access to the curriculum. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | The school has no pupils who speak English as an additional language. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | There is very good provision for pupils' personal development. Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good: for cultural development, it is good. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Personal support for pupils and their families is very good. Teachers and classroom assistants know pupils very well. All adults in the school are very concerned to promote their pupils' welfare. |

The school is carefully and successfully developing its curriculum to meet the needs of all its pupils. It is innovative in developing its systems of care, for example, in its provision of relaxation classes as an addition to the curriculum to help pupils to manage their behaviour, and in the provision of a breakfast club. These are having a positive impact on attainment. Parents and pupils appreciate the good quality of care and support that the school provides.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher, very ably supported by her deputy and other colleagues, provides excellent leadership. Her enthusiasm, determination and very high work rate have been central to the school's very good rate of improvement over the last two years. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governing body is effective and fulfils its statutory responsibilities. It is very supportive, and is developing its role well. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The school has very good systems for evaluating its work and deciding future priorities. Its use of on-going assessment to promote progress for individual pupils is inconsistent. |
| The strategic use of resources | The school uses its resources, human and physical, very effectively. It is very effective in ensuring that it gets the best value from its expenditure. |

Leadership and management have a very clear vision for the school. It is to raise attainment while ensuring that all pupils feel secure and valued. These aims are reflected very effectively in all that the school does. Equality of access and opportunity are central to the school's work, and are achieved for all its pupils. Staff have an excellent commitment to improvement, and a rapidly increasing capacity to succeed. The school is very well staffed to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. The quality of the school's accommodation is very good, and resources for learning are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children make good progress. ▪ Behaviour is good. ▪ Teaching is good. ▪ Children get the right amount of homework. ▪ Parents are happy to approach the school with concerns. ▪ Children are expected to work hard. ▪ The school works closely with parents. ▪ The school is well led and managed. ▪ Children become more mature and responsible. ▪ Children like school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eleven per cent of the parents who responded to the questionnaire are concerned about information about progress. ▪ Fourteen per cent question if there are enough activities outside lessons. |

The school distributed 320 questionnaires and 55 were returned (17 per cent). This represents less than one fifth of all parents and carers. Twenty five parents attended the meeting held before the inspection.

Inspectors support the positive views held by parents. The inspection judges that the quality of the information provided for parents is very good, and that activities outside lessons make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, in English 37 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least the national expectation of level 4 compared with 75 per cent nationally. Five per cent achieved the higher level 5 compared with 29 per cent nationally. These results were very low in relation to the national average, and well below the average achieved in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics, 53 per cent of the school's pupils attained level 4 at least, and two per cent attained level 5. This compares with a national picture of 72 per cent attaining at least level 4, and 24 per cent attaining level 5. These results were well below the national average, and below the average for similar schools. In science, 53 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least level 4, and seven per cent attained level 5. This compares with 85 per cent attaining level 4 at least nationally, and 34 per cent attaining level 5. These results were very low in relation to the national average, and well below the average for similar schools. Apart from in mathematics, where boys out performed girls, there was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

- 2 Since the school was reorganised, attainment in the National Curriculum tests has improved at a faster rate than the national trend. It remains very low in relation to the national average for a number of reasons. Standards of attainment were very low when the school was reorganised, there is a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and frequent staff changes disrupted the continuity of learning. For example, this is the first year in Key Stage 2 that the present Year 6 have had one teacher for the whole school year. They have made good progress in their learning during this year, but were so far below the level expected when they entered Year 6, that their attainment remains well below the national average. However, the school is in line to reach its agreed targets for English and mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2001, and has strategies in place to continue to raise standards of attainment in future years.

- 3 In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, in reading, 68 per cent of the school's pupils attained the expected level 2 compared with 83 per cent nationally. However, no pupils reached the higher than expected level 3, while 28 per cent did so nationally. These results were well below the national average and the average for similar schools. In writing, 61 per cent of the school's pupils attained the national expectation of level 2 compared with 84 per cent reaching at least this level nationally. Again, none of the school's pupils attained level 3 while nine per cent did so nationally. These results were well below the national average, and below the average attained in similar schools. In mathematics, 68 per cent of the school's pupils attained level 2 at least, compared with 90 per cent nationally. Seven per cent of the school's pupils attained level 3, compared with 25 per cent nationally. Teachers' assessments are that attainment in science is very low in comparison with the national average. Again, these results are well below the national average and the average attained by similar schools. In 2000, boys and girls attained very similar results.

- 4 Overall, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 as measured in the National Curriculum tests has improved more rapidly than the national trend in the reorganised school. At the time of the last inspection, teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage was a significant concern. This has now improved markedly and is now a strength of the school. As a result, pupils are much better prepared to begin work on the National Curriculum, and this is beginning to have a positive impact on attainment. Children now make very good progress in their learning in the Foundation Stage and good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- 5 Evidence from the inspection shows that, in English, speaking and listening are weak throughout the key stages. Pupils listen better than they speak. They have difficulty in expressing their views at length and in using an interesting and varied vocabulary. Their instinct is not to use standard English either in speech or in writing. In reading, pupils are below the expected level at the end of each key stage. For some pupils, the books that they read are unchallenging, and this hinders their progress to higher levels of attainment. In writing, attainment is below the level expected at the end of Key Stage 1, and well below the level expected at the end of Key Stage 2. This is partly because of the high proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register in the current Year 6. In mathematics, attainment is below the level expected at the end of each key stage. Levels of attainment are improving, but pupils are relatively slow in basic calculations, for example, in working out tables, and this is hindering their progress. In science, attainment is below average at the end of each key stage. At the end of Key Stage 2, this is largely because of the unsatisfactory progress made in Years 3, 4, and 5 as a result of staff changes. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is below average because pupils begin their school life with very little knowledge and understanding of the world. Progress in learning is now good in each key stage and attainment is improving well. In information and communication technology, attainment matches the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1, but remains below at the end of Key Stage 2. This is because the great benefits of the relatively new computer suite have not yet had sufficient time to have their full impact on the older pupils in the school. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is inconsistent, and pupils have yet to appreciate fully that this is an everyday tool for learning in all subjects.
- 6 At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain at the expected level in the other foundation subjects of design and technology, geography, music and physical education. Attainment in art and design and history is below the level expected. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in music and physical education is at the level expected, but below this level in art and design, design and technology, geography and history. In religious education, pupils attain at the levels expected for pupils following the Barnsley agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. There have been good improvements in attainment since the last inspection, and the school is in a good position to continue to improve.
- 7 Children enter the Nursery with levels of attainment which are well below those normally found. There is very good provision for them, and they make very good progress in their learning during the Foundation Stage. This is raising their levels of attainment so that they are now in a much more secure position to begin their work on the National Curriculum. Approximately half achieve the early learning goals, but half do not. While they make very good progress, attainment is still below that

found nationally. The school is beginning to make good use of this solid foundation so as to raise attainment further throughout the key stages.

- 8 Although standards attained by pupils with special educational needs are often well below national averages, these pupils are very well supported and make very good progress in the Foundation Stage, and good progress in Key Stage 1 and 2. Pupils with individual education plans related to their behaviour often make good progress. This is because the school has developed innovative and effective ways of relaxing and monitoring these pupils so that they are encouraged to learn and value the progress that they are making. Attainment is enhanced because all pupils have full access to all aspects of the school curriculum. However, the school has not identified pupils who are particularly gifted or talented, and so has no specific strategies to ensure that they reach their potential.
- 9 The school has introduced the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy successfully, and teachers have a secure understanding of their underlying principles. They are beginning to have a positive effect on attainment. However, opportunities to practise the skills of literacy and numeracy in other subjects are not planned systematically, which means that opportunities to reinforce these skills are missed.
- 10 The school sets agreed targets for attainment in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in English and mathematics and science. In 2000, these targets were comfortably exceeded, although they were set at a very modest level because the pupils concerned had experienced many disruptions to their learning as they moved through the key stages. Learning is planned carefully for pupils across the key stages. The school uses its resources well to promote learning, and there is good added value as pupils move through the key stages. The school has established a good basis from which to go on to improve attainment further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 11 Pupils' attitudes to the school are good overall. The majority arrive on time, settle quickly to the school day, and are eager to start tasks and settle to work. Most pupils move around the classroom and school in a calm and confident manner from the Nursery onwards. This confidence is evident in learning where they are happy to make an attempt at their tasks without fear of making mistakes. Pupils listen well and are eager to be involved in answering questions on work, which is made exciting and interesting by teachers. They are happy to explain their work to visitors and discuss what they are doing. The good learning environment, which is a strength of the school, is enhanced by the innovative use of music and aromatherapy in some classrooms. This background calms pupils and enables them to approach their learning in an orderly and tranquil manner. The good provision of extra activities made available to pupils in study support, booster classes, and clubs such as the French club helps to sustain the enthusiasm they have for the school, and to contribute to their personal development. Pupils with special educational needs similarly enjoy being in school where they persevere with work that they find difficult in an atmosphere where they are encouraged and supported.
- 12 Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good overall. Staff have clear expectations, well supported by the reward system, which play a significant part in encouraging pupils to behave well. They are courteous to adults, holding doors open, and offering help when they see the need. In a few lessons there were

instances of distracting behaviour as pupils lost concentration when, for example, they were not sufficiently challenged and became bored. During outside breaks pupils play well together and share equipment such as skipping ropes, skittles, and small balls. There was little evidence of inappropriate behaviour such as bullying during the inspection and parents are clearly pleased with the strong stand taken by the school on these matters. They feel that behaviour in the school is now good. One pupil was permanently excluded during the last full academic year.

- 13 Pupils with special educational needs usually behave very well. They show positive attitudes to their work and many develop increasing levels of concentration as they get older. They establish very good relationships with teachers and support assistants, who work hard to promote good learning habits, determination and a positive self-image.
- 14 Relationships in the school are very good. Teachers and other adults have developed a very good rapport with pupils. In response, pupils support one another and co-operate well. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils working as a group discussed relevant issues before deciding how to proceed. Most pupils have a satisfactory appreciation of the impact of their behaviour on others, and are tolerant of other people's feelings and values.
- 15 The personal development of pupils is good. From entry to the Nursery children are encouraged to become independent by, for example, self-registration and self-choice of activities with pupils moving calmly and confidently from one task to another. Pupils are given awards for such qualities as tolerance, self-respect and perseverance. The regular 'circle times' held in each class encourage pupils to think about and incorporate these attitudes into their lives. The school council is made up of two representatives from Years 2 to 6 and meets regularly to discuss items brought to the council by year groups. The meetings are chaired by a senior pupil. They are at present considering the possibility of brightening the playground and at the last meeting took suggestions from year groups as to how this could be done and how money could be raised to pay for the work. The school is working with pupils to help them to devise and meet their own individual targets in both their academic work and personal life. As pupils become more mature, they are encouraged to take responsibilities for the day-to-day life of the school by becoming monitors in the playground or library, for example. Two pupils each day, on a rota basis, answer the telephone at lunchtime whilst the secretary is at lunch, and other pupils act as 'buddies' for younger pupils.
- 16 Attendance at the school during the last reporting year 1999/2000 was well below the national average with the rate of unauthorised absence for the same year being well above the national average. Most pupils now arrive on time and those pupils who arrive late report to the school office. The school is working hard to improve attendance.
- 17 Since the last inspection, there has been an impressive improvement in pupils' attitudes and in relationships throughout the school. These are having a positive impact on attainment and learning. The school is in a good position to go on to improve further.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 18 The quality of teaching is good overall, and very good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. During the inspection, some 68 lessons were observed. In six per cent of these, teaching was judged to be excellent, and in 38 per cent it was very good. This compares with seven per cent being very good or better when the school was last inspected. Only one per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory compared with 17 per cent at the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved markedly since the school was last inspected.
- 19 The quality of teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is good overall, with examples of very good and excellent teaching in English at Key Stage 2, and mathematics in both key stages. As a result, the key skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in these subjects, although the school is aware of the need to continue this improvement. There is no structure for ensuring that the skills of literacy and numeracy are practised systematically in the other subjects of the curriculum. As a result, opportunities to practise them are missed.
- 20 Teachers have very good subject knowledge in the Foundation Stage, and good subject knowledge in Key Stages 1 and 2. The quality of teaching has improved particularly well in information and communication technology, where it is now good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. As a result, attainment in this increasingly important subject is improving rapidly. In history and geography, in Key Stage 2 particularly, teachers concentrate in teaching facts as opposed to skills such as the skills of mapping in geography and of different sources of historical information in history. Attainment in Key Stage 2 is below the expected standard because these types of skills are not systematically developed across the key stage.
- 21 Teachers' planning is excellent in the Foundation Stage and very good in Key Stages 1 and 2. In most classes, a major strength is the imaginatively planned learning experiences which motivate and interest pupils. These learning experiences benefit from the very stimulating learning environment which has been created throughout the school. Attractive, eye-catching and colourful displays celebrate pupils' work and show what can be achieved. Teachers share the learning objectives for the lesson with their pupils and, in the best lessons, refer to them again to discuss whether they have been achieved. This engages pupils' interest and concentration well and promotes effective learning. In these lessons, learning proceeds with pace and variety.
- 22 A major strength for teaching and learning is the very good relationships which exist in most classes. All adults are very skilled in the way in which they manage pupils. Very good and excellent lessons are characterised by a unity of purpose between teachers, classroom assistants and pupils as they share in the pleasure of learning. In these lessons, teachers communicate their enthusiasm for what they are teaching, and their high expectations motivate their pupils to give of their best. As a result, the quality of learning is very good in the Foundation Stage, and good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Throughout the school, there is very good use of time, support staff and learning resources.
- 23 The management of behaviour is underpinned by the school's interesting and innovative use of relaxation techniques to help pupils to understand and manage their own behaviour and learning better. Pupils throughout the school are aware of these techniques, and practise them, for example, while waiting for assembly to

begin. These techniques are having a positive impact on learning and attainment. It is a measure of the success that most teachers have in managing their pupils that, in many lessons, effective routines mean that the management of behaviour is almost unnoticed. Pupils' need for the security of adults who they know is illustrated by the fact that standards of behaviour deteriorate quickly in a different situation. During the inspection, because of temporary staffing difficulties, two experienced teachers from neighbouring schools were temporarily in the school. They did not know their classes well, and, experienced and competent as they were, they did not find the management of pupils easy. In these classes, the time needed to gain and maintain pupils' attention slowed the pace of the lesson, so that the quality of learning became satisfactory as opposed to good.

- 24 For much of the time, learning activities are carefully controlled by teachers. This means that pupils, particularly higher attaining pupils, have relatively few opportunities to take decisions about how to manage their own work. As a result, their skills as independent learners are not being developed effectively. Homework is used satisfactorily to support learning, but there is scope for it to be used more effectively to develop such independence for pupils who would benefit. A system for identifying such pupils would help the school to plan more challenging work for them, and so enable them to make more rapid and structured progress.
- 25 Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and support assistants. All staff treat these pupils with respect and sensitivity so that their self-esteem develops well. Their learning tasks are well suited to their particular needs, and support assistants are well trained and deployed to enable them to learn well, and make good progress towards achieving their learning and behavioural targets.
- 26 The school has good systems in place for assessing pupils' work and promoting their progress, but, at this stage, the way that these systems are used in the classroom situation, is inconsistent. Work is marked regularly, and there are examples of positive comments suggesting how further progress might be made. These enable pupils to understand what they are learning and why. However, other marking does not include such helpful comments. Further, the use made of assessments to guide the planning of future learning is inconsistent. While the quality of on-going assessment is satisfactory, there is scope for it to be used more consistently and purposefully to promote future progress for individual pupils.
- 27 Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. The school is in a strong position to go on to improve further.

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

- 28 The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall and meets statutory requirements. It promotes pupils' intellectual, physical, social and personal development and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- 29 The previous inspection identified many aspects arising from the curriculum within the key issues for improvement. Since the appointment of the present headteacher these have all been fully addressed with a high level of success, and rapid progress is being made in all areas of curricular provision. Planning for the curriculum is based on national schemes of work, which the school has adapted effectively to

meet the needs of its pupils. Appropriate opportunities for staff training are built into the school development plan and effective use is made of teachers' interest and expertise. All subjects now have a policy and a scheme of work. These provide good guidelines for medium and short-term planning and include clear and precise learning objectives, which most teachers now share with pupils at the beginning of lessons.

- 30 All teachers take good account of the guidelines of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these have been implemented successfully throughout the school. They are having a positive impact on standards. Teachers' weekly and daily planning for literacy and numeracy contains good detail and makes a strong contribution to the quality of teaching English and mathematics.
- 31 There is very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education including education in citizenship. The governing body has approved policies for sex education and an awareness of drugs misuse and these are incorporated effectively into teaching and learning. The school makes satisfactory use of the community to support learning, and has good links with the local comprehensive school, which result in an easy transition into the next phase of education.
- 32 An interesting range of educational visits enriches and supports pupils' learning in the curriculum. These include visits to places of interest such as the science museum in Sheffield, the Eureka 'Hands On' Experience, Castle Howard, and The Wetlands Centre. During the inspection Years 3 and 4 spent a day at the Yorkshire Mining Museum which motivated pupils very effectively in their work in, for example, history. The school organises a residential weekend at Kingswood Activity Centre in Staffordshire for Year 6, and this gives pupils an insight of a wider environment. Many visitors to the school have included a folk music group, a theatre group, a brass band and a group of Zulu dancers.
- 33 A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided, and there is good provision for pupils in both key stages. Provision includes competitive sport, a breakfast club and lunchtime game's clubs as well as clubs for French, science and story telling. Pupils are offered tuition in first aid. The head teacher, many teachers and support assistants give of their time outside lessons to organise clubs, which extend and enrich pupils' learning. These activities are supported very well by the pupils. The school is good at ensuring that, with due regard to age, all pupils have equal opportunities to participate.
- 34 Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress in basic skills within the whole curriculum of the school. The very good early identification of needs, which has been put in place during the last two years, triggers a clear and effective programme of action involving all staff who work with a pupil. Teachers set detailed targets in pupils' individual education plans, and plan work so that pupils make good progress towards the achievement of those targets.
- 35 A central feature of the school's work is its determination to value all pupils and to include them in all aspects of its work. This is underpinned effectively by the school's equal opportunities policy. All pupils have equal access to the school's curriculum and to activities outside lessons. Most pupils value people whatever their race, colour or creed. This awareness is being promoted very well by the school's current Japanese visitor.

- 36 The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. This is an impressive improvement over the past two years.
- 37 The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Positive contributions are made by religious education lessons, by the art and music in the school, and by curriculum areas such as science, in which pupils are introduced to the wonders of the natural world. For example, pupils in a Year 3 class were filled with awe and wonder when the flowers changed colour during an experiment to find out how water moved up the stems of plants. Discussions in many subjects help pupils to understand and develop spiritual awareness. Assemblies make an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual development. During a Reception class assembly, pupils listened very carefully to soothing music and thought about their own special qualities. A Year 4 class assembly helped pupils to think about their own special talent. Again the use of appropriate music and the lighting of a candle helped pupils to reflect calmly about their own situation, even comparing their lives to those of pop stars and the life and work of Mother Teresa. This linked the theme to a recent visit to school from representatives of Doctor Barnardo's. In an assembly for the whole of Key Stage 1 the school's excellent routines for relaxation helped create a wonderful atmosphere in which every pupil was totally involved. The innovative use of relaxation techniques and aroma-therapy is making a significant contribution to pupils' self awareness and spiritual development.
- 38 The provision for moral development is very good. All adults encourage positive approaches to behaviour and the school's discipline policy reflects this. Pupils are helped to understand the difference between right and wrong and to appreciate the consequences of their actions on others and themselves. There is a strong emphasis on good behaviour throughout the school. Staff aim to create an orderly environment and to help pupils to become responsible members of the community. All adults in the school set a good example to pupils and encourage good relationships. Collective worship makes a valuable contribution to pupils' moral development. Lunchtime supervisors have received training on how to promote good moral values and attitudes. The whole ethos of the Nursery and the main school is to create an atmosphere for work and learning within a happy and caring environment. This clarifies what is acceptable behaviour in and out of the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated very well and are valued by the whole school community.
- 39 The provision for social development is very good. The school has clear systems that ensure that all pupils are made welcome in the Nursery and the school. All pupils are encouraged to work together in lessons and to share ideas in a collaborative way when working. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils were observed sharing ideas and working well together in a friendly way while conducting experiments to test the strength of various materials. Pupils are regularly given opportunities to take responsibility in lessons, for example, by clearing away equipment. The very good relationships between all members of staff and pupils help to create a positive atmosphere and to develop this provision further. At no time was any adult heard to raise a voice when speaking to pupils. This respect, shown by adults to pupils, is reflected in the way pupils work collaboratively together and welcome visitors to share in their activities. The residential visit provides pupils with further opportunities to develop their independence and personal and social skills through a range of challenging and exciting activities.

- 40 The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. Pupils visit places of interest such as Castle Howard. Theatre groups and the local arts centre visit the school and enhance the pupils' understanding of the world in which they live. Visitors, such as Zulu dancers and an African drummer represent other cultures. The school has also enjoyed visits from folk musicians and a brass band. During the inspection Year 6 enjoyed a Greek afternoon, which extended their knowledge and understanding of life in ancient Greece. Through religious education lessons pupils study other religions such as Judaism and Islam as well as Christianity. This helps pupils to broaden their understanding of the diversity of the world in which they live.
- 41 There has been good progress in curricular provision over the last two years, and the school is in a good position to go on to build on these improvements and enrich its pupils' educational experiences further.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 42 The school provides an extremely caring and supportive environment where all pupils are well known to their class teachers in particular and more generally throughout the school. Similarly pupils with special educational needs are very well known and cared for so that they make very good progress in their learning as well as being fully involved in the life of the school.
- 43 Child protection arrangements are very good. All staff have received training from the headteacher who is the named person with responsibility for this work, and guidelines are clear and are followed. The school nurse holds regular 'drop in' sessions for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to enable them to talk over any worries they may have. With the pupil's permission, these will be passed on to the headteacher, if necessary. The local family of schools has formed a multi-agency group, which is co-ordinated by the headteacher to ensure good practice in this important area of pupils' care.
- 44 All aspects of health and safety are regularly monitored by a governor, the teacher's union representative, and the caretaker. Findings are passed directly to the local education authority so that swift action can be taken if necessary. The headteacher and the union representative are due to undertake training on risk assessment. Key Stage 1 pupils are delivered and collected from school by parents and carers known to teachers who will not allow pupils to leave school unless accompanied by a known individual. Within the classroom, pupils are taught to work responsibly in, for example, science and design and technology, whilst, during the inspection, the Year 3 teacher made a quick intervention when a saw was being handled incorrectly.
- 45 First aid equipment and trained staff are in place and aspects of pupils' health are regularly monitored by the school's doctor and nurse.
- 46 Procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are very good. Effective behaviour management around the school, in the classroom and in the playground generally ensures that pupils meet the school's high expectations. This management relies on the consistent implementation of strategies by teachers and all adults throughout the school. In addition, effective use of the reward system, which enables pupils to contribute to the success of their houses, and to their own success, is popular and valued by pupils. Instances of bullying are dealt with immediately, and parents are involved when necessary. In addition, the local

community constable deals with aspects of behaviour as part of the curriculum and in 'circle times'.

- 47 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Self-esteem is monitored by class teachers and reflects the small targets agreed by pupils and teachers. 'Circle time' is used to develop pupils' self-awareness and their ability to communicate, as well as teaching aspects of caring, and social and moral development. From their entry into the Nursery, pupils are encouraged to become independent and take responsibility for themselves. Minor upsets are dealt with on the spot with the full involvement of pupils concerned. Pupils are encouraged to talk freely to staff about worries and, for those pupils who will benefit, anger management and relaxation techniques have been introduced and are being very effective.
- 48 Arrangements for pupils entering the Nursery are well thought out. Home visits are undertaken by the teachers and nursery nurses, and parents and children take part in induction days when they are helped to become familiar with the Nursery routines. Those pupils moving into the Reception class are introduced into the main school gradually, including attending school lunches. Arrangements for pupils to move to the secondary school are improving, and are now good, with teachers from the secondary school teaching Year 5 pupils French and Year 6 pupils First Aid at after school clubs.
- 49 Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Attendance is monitored daily and parents are contacted immediately if no word has been received about absent pupils. Registers are completed efficiently and returned to the office. Pupils who arrive late have to report to the office where a record is kept. A weekly analysis, class by class, of attendance and punctuality is prominently displayed in the school with a weekly prize being awarded to the best class and a termly prize for pupils who have achieved 100% attendance. This is part of a whole school initiative to improve attendance. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer to help those families who find getting children to school on time a problem.
- 50 All requirements in the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are very well implemented and met. There are now very good procedures for identifying and assessing the special needs of pupils, and information is used very well to match the curriculum to their needs by planning their learning in manageable small steps, or by providing additional support. Teachers and support staff work closely together to monitor and record pupils' progress towards their targets, and make good use of specialist support such as speech therapy. Pupils receive consistent, good quality help and support for their work and behaviour. This is given quietly and unobtrusively so as not to lessen their self-esteem.
- 51 The school has worked very hard to improve its assessment procedures since the headteacher was appointed. It now makes very good use of information from national and other tests to monitor progress in English, mathematics and science for all pupils, and to identify pupils or groups of pupils who are not achieving as well as they should. This information is used well to adjust the curriculum and teaching in order to improve pupils' progress, for example, through additional teaching in literacy. There are formal assessments in these subjects each term which help teachers to 'track' progress for pupils in their classes. This means that class teachers, support staff, the assessment co-ordinator, subject co-ordinators and the

headteacher have the means to know at what levels pupils are working, and to use this information to set targets for pupils and for the school.

- 52 Assessment in other subjects is less well developed, and this leads to the curriculum not always being well matched to the needs of all pupils, especially those capable of reaching higher standards. Although teachers assess pupils' learning during lessons, they do not always use this information to adjust the next lesson in order that all pupils are challenged and make good progress. Marking does not always give a clear picture of what the pupil has attained, and pupils are not always clear about what they could do to make further progress. Subject co-ordinators are developing portfolios of assessed work to indicate assessment and progress. The school has not identified enough opportunities for teachers to work together when assessing by using the National Curriculum level descriptions, so that they are sure of the accuracy of their judgements.
- 53 The school has made good progress in meeting the key issue regarding assessment, which was identified in the report from the last inspection. It is in a secure position to use assessment more consistently successful across the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 54 Parents are happy with the school. Over ninety per cent of those responding to the questionnaire feel that their children work hard to achieve their best and make good progress as a result of the good teaching whilst becoming mature and responsible. Further, children like school, and parents are comfortable when approaching the school, which they feel is being well led and managed and which works closely with them. They are only slightly less happy that they are well informed about their child's progress, that the behaviour of pupils is good, that their children are receiving the right amount of work to do at home and are provided with an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team agrees with parents in these positive judgements.
- 55 The school's links with parents are very good. Parents receive monthly newsletters informing them about the whole range of school life, including events, visits, meetings, and courses for parents. In addition, each classroom and teaching area has a parents' notice board with a similar range of information. Policy documents and information leaflets are freely available in the school entrance hall. A comfortable room has been set aside for the use of parents, which includes computer and Internet facilities, resource ideas to use at home, a job-seekers board which is updated daily, and facilities for refreshments. A family learning partnership is provided with groups of parents on, for example, literacy and numeracy, design and technology and computing courses. A recent workshop on drugs was attended by a large number of parents including school governors. The school consults parents on a regular basis on such areas as behaviour, after-school study support, changes in the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, homework and the recently formed breakfast club. Overall, the contribution of parents to their children's learning is satisfactory.

- 56 Reports to parents are now good. They present a clear picture of each pupil and their abilities as well as outlining those areas where improvements are needed. Parents are given guidelines as to how they can help their children make progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved as closely as possible in their child's individual education plan. To help them to understand the process they receive a guide, which explains each stage, and a copy of their child's present plan. The school holds a termly parents' meeting to discuss the progress of their children.
- 57 Few parents help in the school, but those present during the inspection on a visit to the mining museum and in the classrooms were effective and well informed. The breakfast club is run by trained and qualified parents; it provides a meal and activities for pupils before the start of the school day. Some parents make great efforts to help their children with work after school including spelling, tables and reading. However, a considerable number of pupils return books to school unread and homework incomplete. The school is making considerable efforts to involve parents as partners in their children's education and this is proving effective in a number of ways. However, progress is slow and the full impact of these initiatives will probably not become apparent for a number of years.
- 58 Overall, parents have supported the home-school agreement well. It was introduced after an evening for parents and Year 6 pupils when its purpose was explained. Most parents support it in practice, although support for its provisions for supporting learning at home is less consistent.
- 59 Parents are now much more confident about the school and their children's education than was the case at the time of the last inspection. The school has improved the quality of its relationships with parents significantly and has a good basis on which to build further.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 60 The school has an excellent ethos, which is reflected in all aspects of its work. It is to value all its pupils equally, include them fully in all activities, and give them the self-confidence and self-belief to fulfil their potential academically.
- 61 The headteacher has been in post for two years, and has been central to the development of this positive ethos. In this, she has been given very good support by her deputy, her senior management team, and all adults in the school. Effective systems are now in place to enable the school to operate across all areas of activity, although some, for example, assessment, have yet to be fully developed. She has created a united staff team of teachers and other colleagues who have an excellent commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed. There are very good systems in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Her drive and determination, together with clarity of thought have enabled the school to improve substantially from a long period of lack of leadership due to absence and a succession of temporary headteachers, and a time of staffing difficulties with long term absences and many staff changes.
- 62 The key issues from the last inspection have all been addressed effectively, although work in assessment is on-going. The governing body is an almost entirely new since the last inspection. Under the astute leadership of the new chair, it is

now much more effectively involved in the leadership and management of the school. It fulfils its statutory responsibilities and has a good level of awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Many governors are frequently in school, and most are linked to specific areas of the school's work. These different sources of first-hand knowledge enable governors to bring a good level of understanding to the governing body's meetings and discussions. Governors are now effectively involved in determining the priorities for the School Improvement Plan and in monitoring progress towards them. The School Improvement Plan is now discussed at every governors' meeting. The governing body is also appropriately involved in setting the budget, and, via its finance committee, monitors income and expenditure throughout the year.

- 63 The headteacher is frequently about the school, and her presence is a major factor in the school's orderly conduct and serene atmosphere. She and her colleagues value equality of access and opportunity as a key entitlement for all pupils. She recognises that all pupils will not be fully included in all aspects of the school's work unless they develop a sense of their own worth. To this end, she has introduced relaxation classes into the school together with aroma-therapy, and these are having a significant effect on pupils' ability to manage their own behaviour. This increased self-awareness and sense of self-worth is enabling many pupils to benefit from all aspects of the school's work who would formerly have found it difficult to do so.
- 64 The headteacher recognises that a key priority has to be to raise standards of attainment. There has been a good start on this since 1998, but the school was at such a low level of attainment that, even with the improvements made, attainment is still well below the national average. Initiatives put in place by management, are having positive effects which are working their way through the school. For example, the problem identified in the report from the last inspection with regard to poor standards of teaching and learning in the Reception class has been resolved very effectively. Teaching and learning for children under the age of five is now a strength of the school. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve attainment.
- 65 The management of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good. Pupils in need of support in their learning or behaviour are identified early and given individual targets so they can make progress in small steps, which they will be able to recognise so that they will be motivated to go on to improve further. The writing of individual education plans for pupils is managed very effectively. The requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice for pupils who have statements of special educational needs are met fully. The co-ordinator for special educational needs ensures that funds available for this area of the school's work are used efficiently for the maximum benefit of the pupils. However, similar rigorous systems are not in place to ensure that pupils with particular gifts and talents are given work which consistently challenge them to achieve their potential.
- 66 The school makes very good use of new technology in administration. Information and communication technology is also taught very well overall. The provision is managed very effectively, and is making an increasing contribution to the quality of teaching. The school is aware that there is scope to develop its use of information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum further.

- 67 The school runs efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Its routines are clear and well understood, and little time is lost in moving from one activity to the next. The school administrator manages the budget effectively in the short term, and the school has efficient procedures for ordering and paying for its purchases. There are very good systems for ensuring that the school gets best value from its expenditure. The school manages its budget prudently.
- 68 Overall, the school is very well staffed to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. A particular strength is the management of the very good classroom assistants who are deployed very effectively. The success with which teachers and support staff work together is a key factor in determining the good quality of the learning activities available to pupils. The enthusiasm and commitment of all adults in the school have underpinned the very good improvements that have been achieved since the last inspection. Teaching is managed well, staff development has a high priority, and new staff are settled into the school effectively. Subject co-ordinators are very effective in managing their subjects. The school supports initial teachers' training well.
- 69 The school benefits from very good quality accommodation, and uses it very effectively. Classrooms are largely spacious, there is an excellent multi-purpose hall, good hard play areas, and an adjacent playing field. Resources for learning are good overall. Staff have worked very hard and very effectively to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment. The quality of the learning environment is maintained well by the caretaker and his staff. Resources for learning are mostly of good quality, although the stock of books for reading needs attention throughout the key stages.
- 70 Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, the school's rate of improvement has been very good since the last inspection. She has received very good support from all her colleagues. Much remains to be done, but the school has the determination and the capacity to continue to improve.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 71 In order to raise further the standards of attainment achieved by the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) continue to raise attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2; (see paragraphs 1, 3, 5, 64, 92, 93, 97, 99, 106, 116, 117);
 - (2) develop the use of standard English throughout the school with a view to improving the quality of pupils' writing; (see paragraphs 5, 95);
 - (3) carefully match learning tasks to the needs of all pupils so that all are appropriately challenged and have suitable opportunities to take initiatives in managing their own learning; (see paragraphs 24, 52, 65, 97, 102, 135, 136, 138);
 - (4) ensure that the marking of pupils' work consistently follows the school's marking policy, and that on-going assessments at Key Stages 1 and 2 are in line with National Curriculum levels and are used to enable individual pupils to make further progress; (see paragraphs 26, 52, 61, 103, 111, 115, 167);
 - (5) plan to make maximum use of subjects across the curriculum to develop pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy; (see paragraphs 9, 19).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 68 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 42 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 6 | 38 | 43 | 12 | 1 | 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

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 39 | 313 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 0 | 128 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 16 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0 | 149 |

| 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 | 9 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 6 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 8.8 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 1.9 |
| 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 | 24 | 20 | 44 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 16 | 13 | 16 |
| | Girls | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| | Total | 30 | 27 | 30 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 68(53) | 61(45) | 68(60) |
| | National | 83(82) | 84(83) | 90(87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| | Girls | 11 | 11 | 12 |
| | Total | 21 | 22 | 24 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 48(51) | 50(60) | 55(60) |
| | 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 | 25 | 18 | 43 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 7 | 15 | 15 |
| | Girls | 9 | 8 | 8 |
| | Total | 16 | 23 | 23 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 37(37) | 53(38) | 53(25) |
| | National | 75(70) | 72(69) | 85(78) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 5 | 9 | 7 |
| | Girls | 8 | 6 | 7 |
| | Total | 13 | 15 | 14 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 30(31) | 35(29) | 33(31) |
| | 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 | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 291 |
| 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 | 1 |
| 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) | 15 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 22.4 |
| Average class size | 28.5 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 16 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 308 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 39 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 50 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 13 |
|--------------------------------|----|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 1999-2000 |
|----------------|-----------|

| | £ |
|--|----------|
| Total income | 676,348 |
| Total expenditure | 654,898 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,671 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | - 8, 777 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 12,673 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 320 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 59 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 49 | 42 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 64 | 29 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 41 | 45 | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 41 | 46 | 8 | 2 | 3 |
| The teaching is good. | 71 | 25 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 58 | 32 | 8 | 2 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 64 | 25 | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 76 | 22 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 41 | 47 | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 51 | 39 | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 56 | 41 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 36 | 49 | 8 | 5 | 2 |

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

- 72 The provision made for children under the age of five is very good. The Nursery and Reception classes provide a very well resourced, safe and secure environment for learning. Children begin to attend the Nursery in the autumn, winter or spring after their third birthday. They attend an open day with their parent or carer, which helps them to settle well. Thoughtful planning of the transfer arrangements to school is helped by regular activities in the main school building before they move into the Reception classes. Parents are helped to find out more about the Nursery and about how children learn by notices, leaflets and activities such as open days. Analyses of assessments on entry to the Nursery confirm the inspection findings that the majority of children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below the average that is normally found throughout the country. This particularly applies to social development, language and vocabulary skills. Very good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes enables children to make very good progress, and, by the age of five, many are well on the way to reaching the national learning goals. However a significant proportion are still below average when they begin their work on the National Curriculum. In spite of this very good progress, standards remain below those normally found. Children with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment in the Foundation Stage.
- 73 The facilities for the Foundation Stage are very good and well organised and staff have worked exceptionally hard to achieve this. All areas of learning are well covered and the curriculum provides experiences for children that are firmly based on the nationally identified early learning goals. Planned activities ensure that small steps of learning are firmly built into work areas such as sand, water and role-play. These are well used to develop vocabulary. Support staff interact very effectively with children to achieve this. The quality of teaching is very good and is focused on activities which are rigorously assessed. The outcomes of these assessments are used very effectively to determine the next stage of children's learning. Teachers and support staff form very good relationships with children, helping them to become more confident and willing to work together and to ask for help when they need it. Teachers, nursery nurses and support staff in both the Nursery and Reception classes successfully plan and work together to ensure that children's learning is both continuous and progressive through these two years. Curricular planning is very good. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection. The school has introduced the recent national changes in the provision for children aged three to five well. The steps in learning are clearly understood and the quality of leadership and management in the Foundation Stage is very good. Children are given a very good start to their education in this school.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 74 Social skills are poor when children start in the Nursery but they make very good progress in this area of learning due to the positive role models provided by the staff and their high expectations that children will work and play together. Direct teaching, together with focused and self-chosen activities promote sharing and taking turns. Opportunities for reflection and intellectual development challenge children and take them forward in their learning. The very good management of behaviour and the continuity of routines from the Nursery to the end of the Reception stage help the

children to feel secure and to promote independence in personal skills and learning. There are opportunities for children to work alone and in small or large groups and for them to make choices about which activities they would like to do, although some are unwilling to share toys and some play by themselves rather than mix with others. However, the very good teaching they receive enables children to gain confidence quickly.

- 75 The good link established with parents enables most children to settle well. Children come into their classes happily and confidently select from a range of activities. Very good relationships exist between all staff and children; adults know the children well and constantly seek opportunities to raise their self-esteem. Vulnerable children and those with emotional or behavioural difficulties or developmental delay are well supported.
- 76 In the Nursery, during snack time, children are polite and considerate to each other. In the Reception class, they select their tasks using a 'job ladder' and help themselves quietly to their drink and snack in the course of a session. In class sessions they concentrate well when listening to the teacher. Most take turns to speak without calling out and carry out the teacher's instructions with increasing confidence by the time they are in the Reception class. They understand what is expected of them, learn to take turns and share in activities such as water, painting, or using gravel and wheelbarrows. They learn to relate to adults and other children and develop a sense of right and wrong. The 'feelings tables' set up by staff are a very good strategy to help children to explore and express their emotions, especially those who are unable to communicate sufficiently in words. By the age of five a significant number of pupils are still below expectations in this area of learning and some have individual education plans relating to social skills. Children make good progress in this area of learning due to the very good teaching provided.

Communication, language and literacy

- 77 Children's language development is well below that expected for their age when they start in the Nursery. Very good teaching encourages them to improve their speaking and listening skills, and the timetable plans ample opportunities for children to interact with adults and to communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas especially the focused activities and whole class teaching times. Children quickly gain confidence to talk to others in the class and most ask for help when they need it. On entry to the Nursery, many children have an extremely limited vocabulary and do not speak in sentences or phrases. They do not have the ability to communicate their learning. All staff rightly concentrate on this area and make positive attempts to extend vocabulary, for example, in story telling, when words such as 'sulking' or 'swooped' are explained. In the Nursery, children join in games and discussions. By the end of their Reception year they greet each other politely at the beginning of the day and listen to and mostly follow the teacher's instructions accurately.
- 78 In all classes listening skills are clearly taught through songs, games and stories. Children take part in story sessions and listen to tapes. They learn to join in rhymes and songs. By the age of five children's speaking skills have greatly improved and efforts are made by all staff to continue work on this aspect. However a number of children still show immature speech patterns by the time they enter Key Stage 1.

- 79 Parents are encouraged to share books with their children, so that they learn to use books sensibly and that print carries meaning. Books are readily accessible to children in the classrooms and they enjoy the comfortable surroundings of reading corners. From time to time they choose to look quietly at books. They enjoy listening to stories but some find difficulty recalling the story or expressing in their own words what they have heard.
- 80 Children are introduced to letters in the Nursery through and begin to link these to sounds. They often choose to practise letters in well-equipped, attractive writing areas both indoors and out on white boards or a range of other materials. The making of lists, notices and other ways of recording are also actively encouraged in role play areas so that children are helped to see the need to write. Letters and words of the week encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning and books can be taken home on a regular basis.
- 81 Teachers and support assistants continually encourage children's language skills by posing questions such as "What do you think?" and giving children time and help where necessary to articulate their answers. The accurate use of precise language such as "crunchy" and "sour" in a Nursery tasting activity, for example, extends the use of subject specific language. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are used well by teachers in the Reception class as they plan their lessons to meet the differing needs of the range of children they teach. Children with special educational needs have well-targeted individual education plans to help to support their learning. The teaching of this area of learning is very good, but only about half of the children achieve the expected level by the time they are five.

Mathematical development

- 82 Children enter the Nursery with mathematical skills which are well below those expected for their age. However, because they are taught very well they make good progress in counting and in recognising shapes and patterns. About half achieve the early learning goal; the rest are below the expected level. They learn number rhymes and songs and play counting games. They experiment with water and sand, and gain an early understanding of capacity. Children begin to learn number recognition and to match one object to another. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, a good range of practical activities is provided to support number work, and these are well matched to learning needs. Focused activities in both the Nursery and Reception classes enable teachers to assess and plan for the next steps of learning. Whole class based numeracy sessions matched to the National Numeracy Strategy in the Reception year enable children to make very progress in their mathematical learning.
- 83 By the age of five those with higher attainment count reliably to 20 and write numbers to 20. They add numbers to ten and sometimes to 20. They recognise a circle, square, rectangle and triangle and copy a simple pattern using coloured cubes. They know the meaning of heavy and light and understand that two is one less than three, and that six is one more than five. They understand position and place objects behind, in front, over or under a fixed point, and form numbers correctly. Average attainers count objects reliably to ten, recognise a triangle, circle and square, and are beginning to copy a repeating pattern. They show early understanding of addition but do not always form numbers correctly. Children with the highest prior attainment and some with average attainment are achieving the early learning goals for this stage. Others are not able to do this as their

understanding is often limited by the poor vocabulary and language skills with which they begin.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 84 Children have very limited experiences on entry to the Nursery. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, an environment rich in learning opportunities has a positive impact on their learning so that, by the time they are five, children are approaching the levels of skills expected for their age, but have not yet reached them. Where this is not so, their development is influenced by their lower language and vocabulary skills.
- 85 There are many activities planned to give first hand experiences, for example, those of touch in wet and dry sand or play-dough, or taste in trying a variety of picnic snacks. Adults make very good efforts to stimulate the children's limited curiosity and poor vocabulary skills by skilful questioning and careful explanations of new words. Children have a wide range of construction equipment and building materials such as large wooden bricks to explore how things work. Well-developed role-play areas both indoors and out are planned for and used to widen the children's vocabulary and experiences. Children are then encouraged to use these skills independently, without adult intervention using the words and knowledge that they have acquired.
- 86 Children in both classes, with support from adults, discuss and explore the natural world; in the Nursery, children experimented with wet and dry sand to see which made the best sandcastles. In the Reception class children made predictions about several objects as to whether they would float or not. After experimenting to see if their predictions were true, they then discussed their results with the teacher. Some successfully explained what they were doing, but, too often, the children's limited language skills inhibited their learning because they were unable to explain events and talk about the world around them.
- 87 All children have access to, and are eager to use, the computers. In the Reception class, the higher attainers name the mouse, screen, keyboard and monitor, type letters, and click and drag. Average attainers name the mouse and are beginning to gain sound control of the mouse as they use simple language and number programs. Visits and visitors extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Such good provision extends the children's world beyond their immediate environment and prepares them well for their work on the National Curriculum.

Physical development

- 88 Physical skills develop well and, by the age of five, children are in line to meet expectations in this area of development. There are well-resourced outdoor areas giving opportunities for climbing, balancing, and using wheeled toys. Through practice, children learn to climb safely, balance on planks, and steer and control tricycles and wheelbarrows. Their developing control of pencils, brushes and scissors is evident in written and creative work, although those who have not had the opportunity to use these skills before coming to school show a low level of skills, well below that expected for their age. Since the last inspection the improvement to a very good provision for outdoor activities is helping to raise the standard of physical skills so that by the age of five children are meeting or approaching the

national expectations in this area of development. The outdoor curriculum is well planned and allows plenty of time for children to practise their skills on the range of apparatus available. Reception children also take part in physical education lessons in the hall.

Creative development

- 89 Children make increasing progress through the Nursery and Reception classes. They observe and paint and draw natural things like a vase of daffodils, mixing and selecting appropriate colours well. Those who have had limited pre-school experiences are still learning the techniques of holding pencils, brushes and scissors and often cannot do this without adult support. Some children are beginning to paint people and faces adding features but, as yet, many do not add hands and feet. They experiment with different media and mix colours, for example, when making pictures of sea creatures using collage, glue and paint. They extend their cutting skills by making three-dimensional monsters and use a variety of fastening skills with different types of sticky tapes and glue.
- 90 Work is attractively displayed so that children can appreciate the value that teachers place on it. The very high quality outdoor role-play areas include, for example, under sea exploration with treasure chest, shells and sea creatures, or the use of dinghies, fish, nets and life jackets. They provide excellent opportunities for children with limited vocabulary to be helped to extend their imagination and to explore their own creativity. Children make very good progress, but, by the age of five, some children's work is still immature and skills are below those normally found. Children use instruments to make music and listen to music and songs. They enjoy singing and know a good repertoire of songs.
- 91 There has been a marked improvement in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. This is now a strength of the school.

ENGLISH

- 92 By the age of 11, standards in English as measured in the National Curriculum tests, are well below the national average and below those of pupils in similar schools. In the tests in 2000, 37 per cent of the pupils reached the nationally expected standard of level 4, and five per cent attained level 5. This was slightly less than the previous year, but standards have risen significantly since 1998. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning throughout the school. There is little difference between results for boys and girls.
- 93 By the age of seven, standards in reading are below the national average with 68 per cent of pupils attaining the expected level 2 in the year 2000 National Curriculum reading tests. However, no pupils attained the higher level 3 which meant that attainment overall was well below the national average. There was little difference between the attainment of boys and girls. In writing, 61 per cent of pupils in Year 2 attained the expected level. No pupils attained the higher level 3. The improvements that the school has made recently, both in the implementation of the Literacy Hour and in the quality of teaching, have resulted in standards rising significantly in all aspects of English. Over 50 per cent of the pupils in the current

Year 6, however, have special educational needs, and, as a result, standards are not expected to show significant improvement this year.

- 94 Pupils enter the school with very poor language skills. Although they make good progress, by the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening are still below those expected nationally. Many pupils in Years 1 and 2 have short concentration spans, and come to school tired, which means they only listen for a short time. Teachers provide good opportunities for questioning, discussion and role-play and most pupils make good progress. All pupils are eager and confident in answering questions in lessons, but some only give a little detail.
- 95 Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2, and, by the age of eleven, many attain standards similar to the national average. They listen carefully to teachers, often for long periods, and many answer questions clearly and confidently. Pupils ask questions to make sure they have understood, or to develop an idea, and many give reasons for their opinions. For example, pupils in Year 4 justified their views well in a lesson linked to their learning in history, when debating poverty in mining families in Victorian times. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to make progress in speaking through drama, and pupils work together well, listening and responding to each other's suggestions. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn to speak in standard English when they feel it is appropriate, so that they are still below the level expected nationally. This inhibits their ability to use their understanding of grammatical structures in speech to improve their attainment in writing.
- 96 By age seven, pupils' attainment in reading is only slightly below average, which reflects the good improvement in standards made in the last three years. The reading of higher attaining pupils is lively and they use good expression to interest the listener. They read unknown words like 'dawdle' accurately, and make a good guess at its meaning from the sense of the story. Most pupils retell stories and say which stories they have enjoyed, and some are beginning to make predictions about what might happen next. Lower attaining pupils have fewer skills when reading new words, and read with less expression and understanding.
- 97 Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 attain standards in reading which are below the national expectation. Although all pupils continue to make good progress, by age 11 less than one half are reading at the expected level 4 or higher. Higher attaining pupils read confidently and accurately. They talk about books they have read, naming favourite authors and describing characters. Some explain the term 'classics' well, and talk confidently about how the catalogue system in the library works. Most explain the difference between fiction and non-fiction successfully. Lower attaining pupils enjoy stories. They read hesitantly but clearly, and will use several strategies to try to read unknown words, such as letter sounds and picture clues. They retell the story and talk about the main characters in simple words. There are examples of pupils reading relatively undemanding texts which do not challenge them to reach higher levels.
- 98 Over two-thirds of seven year olds attain average levels in writing. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 at the age of five with poor writing skills. They are given many opportunities to write and they make good progress by the age of seven. Successful targeting of writing skills by teachers has led to significant improvement in standards, so that, at the time of inspection, 70 per cent of pupils were writing at the expected level 2. Most pupils write in simple sentences, and use full stops. They join sentences by

using 'and', and use phonic skills well to try to spell words they do not know. For example, their writing of words such as 'adventure' and 'intelligent' was easily recognisable even though the spelling was not quite accurate. Some pupils are beginning to use commas, question marks, exclamation marks and speech marks, and try to begin sentences in different ways so as to make their writing interesting. There is not always enough length, description or detail in their writing, however, and the neat, joined handwriting learned in handwriting lessons is not often used in class work. This means that, overall, writing is below the level expected nationally.

- 99 Standards of attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 2, are well below the standards expected nationally. Throughout the school, pupils are given good opportunities to write, and writing skills are well taught in the Literacy Hour, so that all pupils make good progress. The high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6, however, means that standards seen in writing during inspection were still well below the standards expected. Higher attaining pupils write in a lively style, changing the ways in which they join or begin sentences to make them more interesting. For example, "Although not everyone would agree..." and "I have three reasons for believing this" are interesting ways to vary the style of writing. They add detail and description, and use interesting words such as, 'fantastic', 'suitable' and 'selection'.
- 100 Pupils learn how language works in their literacy lessons. For example, in a lesson in a Year 5 class pupils were able to identify the root word in the adverb 'ferociously', and to say it is the adjective, 'ferocious'. Progress in the use of joined writing in work is slow, because all pupils are taught at a similar pace and higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 are not challenged to use it all the time. This means that many pupils do not develop a well-formed and fluent style of writing by the age of 11.
- 101 In Key Stage 1, the teaching observed was good overall, and never less than satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, the teaching observed was mainly good and sometimes excellent, although one lesson was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in English has improved well since the last inspection. Teachers use the Literacy Hour well to raise standards for pupils in the school. The planning and the organisation of lessons have made good improvement and are now very good. Most lessons move forward briskly, and teaching is often lively and exciting, so that pupils stay interested and motivated to do well. When teaching is excellent, the teacher's knowledge of the subject, use of a wide range of resources, enthusiasm and humour, and the excellence of her relationships with her pupils resulted in pupils being eager and excited, enjoying their learning, and taking pride in the progress they made. In the unsatisfactory lesson, almost half the pupils did not make sufficient progress because the work planned did not meet their needs, and they showed little interest in it. Pupils with special educational needs made better progress than other pupils, because the work was better matched to their needs and they were well supported by adults.
- 102 Throughout the school, teachers use a very good range of well-prepared materials, and support assistants are very well trained and employed to raise standards for the pupils they support. They share teachers' planning, including the targets for pupils with special educational needs, and make a good contribution to learning in this subject. Work is planned thoroughly and matched to the different abilities in the class, although activities planned for higher attaining pupils do not always allow them to use their skills in independent learning or set enough challenge for them. All

teachers expect pupils to behave very well and to work hard, and they make very good use of music, physical actions and thinking techniques to achieve a good learning atmosphere, for example, by saying, "Let's get some brain power." As a result of these strategies pupils develop very good attitudes to this subject. Teachers expect pupils to understand and use the technical vocabulary of this subject. For example, pupils in a Year 1 class understand and respond to the terms, 'story setting', 'features' and 'focus words'. Teachers talk with pupils and question them all the time, matching the difficulty of questions to the attainment of the pupil, helping them to think deeper and to add information to their answers. Teachers use probing questions to challenge pupils, for example, in a Year 6 lesson the teacher asked, "What does it say in the text to tell you that?" Good use is made of information and communication technology, to promote learning, and homework is appropriate, with pupils attending a study club if necessary. Greater use could be made of opportunities in other subjects to reinforce learning in English.

- 103 The quality and use of assessment information to group pupils and set targets for their learning is good. All teachers open the lesson by telling pupils what they are going to learn, and the objectives are written on the whiteboard. Many teachers remind pupils what is expected throughout the lesson, and help pupils to show how well they have achieved at the end of the lesson. Marking of work is usually thorough, but does not always explain well enough what pupils have achieved, and what they need to do next to improve further. Assessment of the learning of higher attaining pupils is not always used to plan more challenging work for them. All teachers track pupil's progress through school assessment systems, and use the information to plan additional work for pupils who are underachieving. This is beginning to improve standards throughout the school.
- 104 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards their individual targets because teachers plan their learning very well in small steps. Support staff are used very well to promote learning. Boys and girls make equally good progress.
- 105 The quality of leadership in English is very good and has improved since the school was last inspected. The co-ordinator has excellent subject knowledge, and a clear vision for the further development of the subject. There is a very good action plan to raise standards further, and the co-ordinator is provided with time to manage the subject. She monitors lesson plans, observes lessons and provides teachers with useful written and verbal feedback. She demonstrates teaching, leads staff training, and manages resources very well. There are not enough choices in current fiction in class libraries or the central library, and some books are in poor condition or are unsuitable. The English co-ordinator has an excellent knowledge of the standards attained by pupils in English throughout the school. She analyses the data to monitor the progress of all pupils, and acts quickly if any pupil or group of pupils is not making the progress expected. She has a very good understanding of where the school has come from, where it is now, and what needs to be done next and in the future, in order to continue the current good progress in raising standards.

MATHEMATICS

- 106 The results attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, were well below the national average and the average found in similar schools. National Curriculum tests indicate that the school's results have improved at a better rate than nationally between 1998 and 2000. This shows that pupils' attainment in mathematics has

risen since the last inspection but is still well below that expected of pupils in their last year of primary school. Realistic targets for attainment have been set for the pupils in Year 6 based on assessments and the monitoring of progress. Pupil performance during the inspection indicates that these targets will be met, although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level for 11 year-olds is well below that expected across the country. Over the three years 1998 to 2000, there has been no significant difference between boys' and girls' results in mathematics at Key Stage 2.

- 107 The 2000 National Curriculum test results for seven year-olds, were well below the national average, and below the average attained by similar schools. National Curriculum tests indicate that the results from 1998 to 2000 are showing a gradual rise in standards even though there was a slight dip in attainment in 1999. Teacher's marking of the 2001 tests suggest that there has been a further rise in standards this year, although these results have yet to be publicised to parents and governors. Inspection findings indicate that pupils in Key Stage 1 make very good progress from low standards on entry, and are approaching the standard expected for this age group. Teachers have a secure understanding of the levels of attainment of pupils, and teacher assessments generally match test results. There is no significant difference between the test results of girls and boys.
- 108 By the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils have a thorough grasp of most of the key skills required at Level 4 of the National Curriculum. Year 6 pupils begin to solve problems on ratio and proportion with understanding after being introduced to this in a lesson observed during the inspection. They understand doubling and halving, and different strategies for adding and multiplying numbers. They multiply numbers up to 900 by single digit numbers, identify simple percentages, and work out areas and perimeters of simple and irregular shapes. They recognise negative numbers and solve problems using multiplication, division, addition and subtraction. This attainment is at the level expected. Pupils of average attainment are aware of different strategies for calculation, and successfully convert a fraction to a decimal with some prompting. They do addition, involving thousands and multiply with one digit. They know angles within triangles and measure perimeters accurately. They round numbers to the nearest ten or hundred with understanding. All pupils are increasingly encouraged to use mental strategies and to give reasons for their answers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress with the support they receive from class assistants, particularly those pupils working in the lower sets for mathematics. However, their attainment is below the level expected. All pupils have equal access to the mathematics curriculum.
- 109 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are developing their skills in mathematics well by using mental activities. By the time they are seven, pupils at a higher level of ability, are working at the level expected for their age and add and subtract to 20, and work out simple money sums. Many pupils recognise common two and three dimensional shapes, measure in centimetres using a ruler, tell the time at least to the hour, halves and quarters, and some accurately tell the time using analogue or digital clocks. They are learning to multiply by two, three and four, and distinguish odd and even numbers. Those of average ability do not yet fully understand time other than the hour or half-hour. They do simple addition and subtraction up to 20, are beginning to understand the value of tens and units and understand what they are doing in problems involving weighing, knowing which are heavy and light objects. They recognise two and three- dimensional shapes. These pupils are working at the expected level.

- 110 The quality of teaching and learning is always at least satisfactory throughout the school, and is often good or better; overall, it is good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are taught in ability sets from Year 3 onwards and the school has found this to be an effective strategy in improving standards. In the best lessons, tasks are carefully chosen to meet the needs of the differing levels of ability within the set and to support those with less confidence. A good example seen in a Year 6 lesson was where a picture of a fish tank containing two different colours of fish was used to introduce ratio and proportion. This enabled the pupils to understand exactly what these terms meant. In almost all lessons, pupils are able to make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Where this is not the case work has not been well matched to pupils' prior learning. Those pupils with special educational needs receive a high level of adult support and are helped to sustain their concentration and keep focused on their tasks. For pupils throughout the school, emphasis is placed on developing correct mental strategies to help their calculations.
- 111 In Key Stage 1 particularly, well -chosen practical tasks help pupils to make gains in their learning. In all lessons observed pupils were encouraged to use correct mathematical vocabulary. Pupils' use of mental calculation skills and the ability to explain the methods used to find the answers to problems are strategies being used to improve knowledge and understanding. Teachers' planning identifies tasks to suit different ability groups and targets support assistants effectively in order to help different groups of pupils to learn. It is firmly rooted in the National Numeracy Strategy. Marking, however, is inconsistent and little evidence was seen of targets being set to help future learning. Where it is used well, it helps to raise pupils' self-esteem. In exercise books, presentation is variable and not always commented on by the teacher if it is of a poor standard.
- 112 Teachers place appropriate emphasis on the development of numeracy skills in mathematics lessons. There is also evidence of these skills being used in science, information and communication technology, design and technology and art and design. Where numeracy skills are used, for example, in making pamphlets, they are sufficient to support the activities undertaken. Literacy skills are being used in mathematics lessons as teachers identify key vocabulary and, in most lessons, use it consistently, expecting pupils to do so as well. Opportunities are made to extend speaking and listening skills when pupils are asked to explain how they arrived at an answer and a sensible pace to lessons ensures that teaching points are grasped sufficiently well. Throughout the school there is good progression in learning because of the clarity of explanation and the quality of the learning resources. Where pupils are working well below the level expected for their age, it is because of the very low level of ability with which they entered the school. Teachers also ensure that all pupils are included equally in the learning of mathematics and that all are given equal opportunities to achieve well.
- 113 The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has resulted in a consistent approach to teaching mathematics throughout the key stages. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subject and build on previous learning. Where teaching is good or better, the higher attaining pupils are given challenging questions which require them to explain their methods clearly, and to use the range of mental strategies that they have been taught in order to give accurate answers. For example, they are asked to add hundreds, then, tens, then units when adding large numbers mentally. In most lessons, learning objectives are shared at the

beginning of the lessons to keep minds focused on what pupils are expected to learn and achieve. Where teachers sum up their lessons by referring back to these objectives to test pupils' understanding, teaching and learning are at their best.

- 114 Behaviour management is very good and teachers use effective strategies to keep pupils motivated and engaged. The movement of pupils to different rooms for their mathematics lessons is managed quietly and efficiently, and the appropriate resources are readily available. Lessons often begin with challenging mental activities, and interest is maintained by keeping up a good pace and moving quickly on to each new part of the lesson. This ensures that pupils concentrate to the best of their ability. They work co-operatively on tasks in twos or fours, talk freely and naturally, give attention to the tasks they are given and make good gains in learning. The presentation of work is usually satisfactory but some evidence of careless work was observed. Resources are well prepared, easily accessible and in sufficient quantity to help pupils to understand the concepts being taught. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning about graphs. Time is used very effectively and most plenary sessions are used well to assess understanding and extend learning further. Almost all pupils listen carefully to their teachers, and because a good pace is sustained in lessons, they are motivated to answer questions and explain what they are doing. The setting of homework, an issue identified at the last inspection, still lacks consistency and is of concern to some parents.
- 115 The curriculum planning for mathematics is very good with pupils being offered a range of relevant activities. Planning follows the framework for the National Numeracy Strategy and is effective in ensuring that pupils' learning will build on previous work after the age of five. An audit of needs was undertaken after the co-ordinator was appointed to lead the subject, and external advice was sought and used appropriately. Both the mathematics co-ordinator and head-teacher have observed teaching. The co-ordinator checks teachers' planning and gives advice where necessary. She has effectively led the setting up of the Numeracy Strategy and ensured that resources are in place to teach it successfully. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and teachers keep appropriate records of pupils' progress and of the numeracy strategy objectives covered. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to analyse assessments in order to track pupils' progress through school carefully and ensure that they are achieving their maximum potential. The school is developing the analysis of assessment information to set targets for all pupils with a view to ensuring that they continue to improve. Key issues from the last inspection have been addressed successfully by analysing progress and introducing booster classes in both Year 5 and Year 6. The co-ordinator's role is clearly defined and well understood, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The subject is very well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has a clear vision of how the planning, teaching and learning of mathematics should best be managed to raise attainment from below average which it is at present.

SCIENCE

- 116 In 1998, when the first set of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum test results for the new school were available, the school's performance in science at the end of Key Stage 2 was well below the national average and the average for similar schools. In 2000, Key Stage 2 results show good improvement and, although they are still well below the national average and the average for similar schools, they are the best results achieved since the school was reorganised. Boys out-performed girls in this

particular year, but there is no evidence to suggest that this is part of a pattern. The rate of improvement over the years 1998 to 2000 is better than that achieved nationally. The present Year 6 pupils had a very difficult time through staff changes for the two years prior to September 2000. Since then they have had good quality teaching on a regular basis and this has helped them to make good progress, though their present attainment is still very low for their age.

- 117 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments in science for the year 2000, indicate that attainment was well below the national average. Boys and girls achieved similar results. Again inspection evidence indicates that very good progress is being made, and results are improving year by year though they are still below the national average and the average for similar schools.
- 118 The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance, and, consequently, behaviour is good. Pupils are managed well. Pupils' attitudes to work, their good behaviour and their orderly work in lessons are key factors in the improvement of standards.
- 119 Pupils' learning is good throughout the school. They work with enthusiasm and interest, and most concentrate well. Pupils are encouraged to predict the outcome of an activity or experiment and they understand how to devise a 'fair test'. During the inspection the Year 5 and Year 6 classes prepared an experiment to investigate a variety of materials to suit a particular purpose. Each group discussed the issues sensibly and decided how to proceed. They recorded their results in a scientific way and presented their findings in graph form thus making good use of their knowledge of mathematics. Year 1 pupils enjoyed collecting and sorting a variety of plants from the school grounds in their investigation of root systems. Returning to the classroom they enjoyed looking at their specimens through the hand lenses and recorded their finding appropriately. Teachers' encouragement of investigation and experimentation is beginning to enable good progress to be made.
- 120 The quality of teaching in science is now good throughout the school. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Teachers know their pupils well and are able to capture and sustain their interest for prolonged periods of time. They plan interesting activities and make their pupils enthusiastic about science. For example, Year 3 pupils were amazed to see how quickly carnations absorbed colour into their petals when colouring was added to the water. Planning for lower attaining pupils is included in the overall planning and allows for teaching and learning to be in small, achievable steps so that pupils can make progress through gradually building up their knowledge and understanding. Learning is effective because teachers use questioning well to establish how much pupils have remembered from earlier lessons and to ensure they understand the scientific vocabulary they will be using. Teachers make sure that all pupils contribute to class discussion. All pupils, even those who find talking in front of the class difficult, are encouraged to explore alternative answers, and to express their opinions even when their first answer may not be correct. Teachers always make their pupils aware of health and safety issues when using and handling tools and materials.
- 121 The co-ordinators provide very effective management. They offer support to their colleagues and have been given the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. There is now a comprehensive scheme of work, and medium and short term plans are carefully linked so as to provide good working documents. In science, assessment is managed well, and the information is used to guide the

planning of future work. In the last two years most resources have been replaced. The subject managers ensure that teachers have access to the good quality resources they need and that the resources are maintained and stored in good condition. The use of information and communication technology is included in some science lessons but could be developed further to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding and to increase the efficiency of recording.

ART AND DESIGN

- 122 In both key stages, pupils' attainment is below the standards expected nationally, but good standards in drawing and painting have been maintained. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, enjoy art and make good progress in the areas of work available to them.
- 123 All pupils work in a range of media, which includes pencil, paint, chalk, pastel, and collage. They work from a variety of starting points including observation, study of the work of artists, and imagination. They learn to use materials safely and with care. Pupils are taught about the work of artists, such as Monet and Paul Klee, and use their work as a stimulus, but many are not able to recall what they learned. Many pupils say how they feel about their work, and identify similarities and differences between their own and others' work, but, by the age of 11, many are still not able to suggest improvements that they might make to their own work, or describe how they might develop it further.
- 124 Only two lessons were seen during inspection, and teaching in both was very good. A teacher in a Year 1 class made very good use of a review of pupils' previous experiences in a range of media, to remind them about the different effects they could produce. Pupils passed round their previous work, examining it thoughtfully using touch and observation. The teacher then used skilful questioning to challenge pupils, saying, 'Why does glue make the picture go different? What does glue do to paint?' She persisted until a pupil replied, 'Because when the glue dries it goes hard and shiny'. The teaching seen in a Year 6 class also challenged pupils to use their knowledge of media in making choices, saying, 'But this one has nice colours too, so why have you chosen that one? Can you justify....?' Pupils respond very well to the high expectations the teachers have of them; for example, one pupil explained how the combination of media was chosen by saying, 'Because oil and water do not mix, so it will resist'.
- 125 Teachers' planning has improved since schemes of work have been put in place, and is now very good, so basic skills are taught well and pupils make good progress in drawing and painting. However, they are not given enough opportunity to work in sculpture and clay, or to paint on a larger scale. Pupils throughout the school use sketch books to try out ideas, but in some classes they are not given enough opportunity to make choices, investigate ideas and experiment with different media. It is these factors which prevent standards from reaching national expectations.

- 126 The good teaching observed was clear, lively, and exciting, so that pupils understood what was expected from them, were eager to work and made very good progress in the lesson. The materials available were of good quality and very well organised, so that pupils' time was used well in working to develop skills. For example, very good organisation meant that Year 1 pupils were able to work safely and independently in paint, water and PVC glue to produce the effects they wanted, and Year 6 pupils were able to make thoughtful choices from a range of media and tools.
- 127 There is now an identified co-ordinator in place for the subject, and she is providing good leadership so that the school is in a good position to raise standards. There is a good action plan to ensure that the curriculum is developed further, and that all staff receive the support needed to make improvements. There is a whole-school agreed policy for display, which is managed very well, so that the high quality and range of displays make a very good contribution to the learning environment. Resources are good, although more books for research would extend the learning of higher attaining pupils. Not enough opportunities are planned to use the local environment as a stimulus. Good use is made of information and communication technology to investigate pattern and shape.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 128 Attainment is at the level expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1, but below the nationally expected level at the end of Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 2, pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their skills to the required level.
- 129 Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, but there are insufficient opportunities for older pupils to work by developing ideas through shaping materials or assembling components to make quality products. As a result, pupils make unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. At the end of Key Stage 2, there is a lack of evidence of focused practical tasks that would develop a range of skills, techniques, processes and knowledge. There are insufficient designing, making and evaluating tasks that utilise a range of materials or items that could be assembled to make products. This prevents pupils from attaining a satisfactory standard of achievement. Although pupils are working below the level expected for 11 year-olds, Year 6 pupils made and designed a satisfactory paper pamphlet about the Ancient Greeks using a set of criteria they had previously agreed. Some have made miniature prototypes of their designs. In work on the Ancient Greeks an effective model of the Acropolis was constructed to match the original. However, in an analysis of work during the inspection, little evidence was found that pupils at the end of the primary stage are able to follow through the many designs in their folders and no evidence was seen in folders of pupils evaluating their work. There was some very good work on bridges and structures in Year 3 classes. Here pupils designed and made bridges using a variety of materials, for example, clay, balsa wood, cardboard, paper and plastic. They joined materials together using a variety of fixings, for example, bolts, screws, nails and glue. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are working at the level expected for 7 year-olds. They have designed and made playground equipment in various types of small construction kits. They have designed and then decorated plant pots. They communicated their ideas by using drawings and lists of the materials that they might need. They have evaluated designs for bunk beds, and readily express their likes and dislikes about a product. In both key stages, pupils use tools and materials safely. Those with special

- educational needs are given help where needed as for example, using scissors in Key Stage 1, and so make satisfactory progress.
- 130 In the two lessons observed during the inspection, pupils show a positive attitude. They listened to their teachers and responded with ideas and suggestions. In describing and discussing designs and finished products, pupils develop skills of literacy satisfactorily. Measuring skills are promoted well by some tasks. Pupils list materials and are enthusiastic about the practical aspects of the subject. They work hard and make effective use of pictures or books for ideas. They concentrate well on the task and handle materials and equipment sensibly. Behaviour is good, and pupils work well together in pairs or small groups.
- 131 In the two lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was good overall. Lesson objectives were clear, planning was good and safety rules were reinforced well. The subject knowledge of teachers is good. Opportunities are provided for pupils to make decisions for themselves and teachers move around the classroom, interacting with pupils in a way that enhances understanding. Teachers promote social skills by ensuring that pupils collaborate. Resources are well organised. Teachers expect good behaviour and this has a positive impact on learning, so that in the lessons observed, good progress was made. The very good use of support assistants ensures that no pupil is excluded from taking part and enables all pupils to make sound progress. The use of information and communication technology in the subject is under-developed.
- 132 The co-ordinator has only led the subject for a few months and so has had insufficient time to have a significant impact on the leadership and management of the subject. She has, however, carried out an audit of needs and reorganised resources so they are being used to the best effect by staff. A scheme of work is underway that will combine the national guidelines and the school's own long term curriculum plans. She is aware of the shortcomings in the teaching and learning of design and technology particularly towards the end of Key Stage 2, and that improvements need to be made. An action plan has been prepared that will address most of the issues identified during the inspection. Because she has been the subject manager for only a short time, no monitoring of teaching has yet been carried out and work collected in has not been levelled. The school has not yet developed a clear view of standards of attainment in the subject, but is aware of the need to do this. However, statutory requirements in the curriculum are being met which is a sound improvement since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

- 133 Pupils make satisfactory progress in learning facts in geography across the both key stages but the planned curriculum does not offer them sufficient opportunities to learn the full range of skills required. For example, geographical skills such as mapping and understanding environmental geography are insufficiently developed. This prevents pupils from attaining higher standards, and, by the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is below that expected. They learn about the features of rivers and the water cycle and look at similarities and differences between their own locality and one abroad, for example, the alpine areas of Switzerland. They learn terms such as "source", "tributary" and "estuary". The effect on our environment of tourism or pollution is considered in pieces of work observed but in insufficient depth for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 draw line graphs of temperature and mark key features in the locality on a route to school.

- 134 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are working within the level expected for their age. At Key Stage 1, pupils are considering the similarities and differences between the fictitious island of Struay, off the west-coast of Scotland, and North Athersley. They notice physical differences in the photographs shown to them and identify that Struay has no street lights, cars, hairdressers or betting shop. They plan what to pack in a case to take to Struay. They draw where they live and identify where the library, clinic and shops should be on a map of their route to school. They plot simple co-ordinates on a map and write down likes and dislikes about their own locality. This work is at a satisfactory level.
- 135 In the two lessons observed pupils showed a positive attitude and this enhanced their learning. They listened well, responded to questions and made suggestions as to possible answers. They completed their tasks, but, in one of the lessons, these were insufficiently challenging for higher attaining pupils. Literacy skills are being used as pupils make lists of similarities and differences in what they have decided to pack into their 'cases'.
- 136 In the lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory in one lesson and good in the other; overall it is satisfactory. The scrutiny of work and analysis of teachers' planning show that planning at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and closely follows the nationally agreed scheme of work, although, in lessons, tasks do not always challenge the higher attaining pupils. Planning at Key Stage 2 is narrowly based and concentrates on pupils acquiring facts; there is little evidence of pupils having the opportunity to develop geographical skills such as map making. This means that planning is unsatisfactory. Pupils are not yet given the opportunity to consider wider environmental issues about land use or the effect of people on the environment in line with national expectations for their age. Few opportunities are used to develop information and communication technology, literacy and mathematical skills through the geography curriculum. The progress of pupils with special educational needs was well supported in the lessons observed and was satisfactory.
- 137 The new joint co-ordinators have led the subject since the start of the summer term 2001. They are currently working from the national schemes of work and the school's long term curriculum plan. They are aware of the gaps in the teaching and have identified these on costed action plans. They are also conscious that efforts by the school to raise attainment in the core subjects and address issues raised during the last inspection have meant that geography has not been a priority for the school. Lessons have not been monitored but the co-ordinators have been given non-contact time to do this and also to revise the schemes of work to include a planned progression of geography skills for teachers throughout the school to use. Neither co-ordinator has had training in leading this subject, but both have clearly defined job descriptions that outline their responsibilities. They have a clear knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses in geography and have set realistic targets to improve planning, teaching and learning. Pupils' knowledge of geography has improved since the last inspection, but their mastery of the skills has not. The school is in a position to address the weaknesses in teaching and learning in this subject.

HISTORY

- 138 By the age of eleven, pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain standards below the expectation for pupils of this age. They make very good progress in learning facts about the periods of history studied, however, and, by Year 6, two thirds of pupils have the knowledge and understanding of facts expected for pupils of their age. However, their understanding of the skills required to learn history effectively are unsatisfactory. For example, they have little understanding of the different sources of information available to them. It is this that prevents standards from being satisfactory.
- 139 Attainment in historical knowledge is good by the age of eleven. There are not enough opportunities, however, for pupils to develop their skills in independent research, or to make comparisons between different periods of history other than our own. By the age of seven, pupils answer simple questions about people's lives and events in the period studied. They say whether things belong to life now or in the past, give reasons why simple ways life in the past were similar to or different to life today, and most record their answers in words and pictures. There is little difference between the attainment of different pupils because they often do the same work. Pupils use their skills from literacy and numeracy to show their knowledge of history, for example in writing, and in sequencing dates on time lines. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and many attain close to the expected standard. Higher attaining pupils are not given enough opportunity to work independently, or to use their full range of literacy skills in extended work. Most pupils place events on a time line but do not develop a good sense of chronology, or understand the way discoveries and events in the past have influenced life today. Pupils in a Year 5 class explained confidently how and why we use the terms 'BC' and 'AD', but defined 'AD' as 'after death.' They talked confidently about the period they were studying, but were unable to give information from previous studies, or to compare different periods.
- 140 No history was seen in Key Stage 1 during the inspection, but the evidence from the analysis of pupils' work is that standards are below those normally found. In Key Stage 2, the teaching observed was always at least good and in one lesson was very good. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the periods studied, and the teaching of historical skills was satisfactory. The school uses the national scheme as a basis for good planning so that lessons are very well organised with all the resources needed for pupils to learn at a good pace. Teachers enliven the subject, and their enthusiasm makes pupils very interested in their history lessons so that they show good attitudes, listen attentively and answer questions eagerly. Some teachers make very good use of role-play and drama to increase pupils' understanding and interest. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils used costume to take on the roles of participants in the Battle of Marathon, so that they could identify with the feelings of different characters. The teacher in a Year 6 asked her pupils to reflect on the passing of time in their own lives, and in the lives of people they knew well, like herself. As a result, they understood that the past is gone, and is only remembered through people retelling it, or writing about it, or leaving other evidence behind. Teachers question pupils very well so that they give all the information they have, and higher attaining pupils are encouraged to explain how we know things were in the past.

- 141 Teachers plan good opportunities to visit places of interest such as the Yorkshire Mining Museum, to experience life down a coal mine. They invite theatre groups into the school to make their study of the Ancient Greeks 'come to life', and use the knowledge and experience of local people about life in the past. For example, the caretaker talked to pupils in Year 4 about his work as a coal miner, and the pupils asked thoughtful questions, making good progress in understanding the harsh conditions and anti-social hours. However, full use is not made of all opportunities to bring history to life. For example, when a class was experiencing life as Victorian children at school, no opportunity was provided to wear appropriate clothing. The opportunity to develop Year 6 pupils' understanding of how life in Ancient Greece has affected life today was missed, during a very lively and enjoyable Greek afternoon. Some good links are made between history and other subjects, particularly literacy, art, music and mathematics, and the subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, cultural, personal, and social education.
- 142 The co-ordinator for the subject is well qualified and has very good vision for the development of the subject. There is an action plan for improving resources and to update the policy. Time has been identified for the co-ordinator to monitor progress in pupils' work and to observe teaching in order to improve standards for pupils. Good use is made of the local authority's resource centre to provide artefacts and research material to support each topic studied. The co-ordinator collects samples of pupils' work each term, and is developing a portfolio to show progress in the subject. The opportunities for developing pupils' personal, social, and health education, and their sense of citizenship, have been identified in curriculum plans. Good use is made of information and communication technology to present work and for supporting research, for example, through the Internet. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of facts in history and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Their knowledge of how to undertake historical enquiry is unsatisfactory, but the school is in a good position to develop these skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 143 Until two years ago, very little development in information and communication technology had taken place, but, since then, very good progress has been made. The school has worked hard and to good effect to develop the subject. The acquisition of a new computer suite now allows all pupils much improved access to information and communication technology. There is a well-planned curriculum to support the systematic teaching of skills.
- 144 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach national expectations. They are confident in using the mouse, are familiar with the keyboard, and know how to print their work. They use listening centres independently in order to assist them in developing their literacy skills. Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning and develop confidence, particularly in using a computer for word processing. Year 1 pupils use information they have collected competently when making a pictogram and answer questions by using the printout. Year 2 pupils write conversations in speech bubbles; this helps to improve their skills in literacy.
- 145 Small groups of pupils were observed using computers in the suite to improve their spelling. They made lists of words that included the sounds 'ch' and 'th'. By using the suite and receiving good support from the classroom support assistants and their carers who have received training on computers, they were highly motivated

and made good progress in their learning. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have developed competent word processing skills. Some pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 know how to insert a picture from 'clip art' or the Internet into a web page, although a significant number need a great deal of help to achieve this. Although the standard of work seen in Year 6 is improving in word processing, the new systems have not been in place long enough for pupils to meet the full range of National Curriculum requirements. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, while improving rapidly, does not meet national expectations.

- 146 Pupils' attitudes towards the subject are good at both key stages. The youngest pupils are confident when using computers and other technology such as listening centres. Pupils of all ages collaborate well and are helpful to each other. Whilst working in pairs and small groups, they share ideas and show confidence and independence. They take good care of software and hardware and can be trusted to work independently in pairs. Behaviour in classes, and especially in the computer suite is good. There, pupils listen carefully, and watch while teachers demonstrate on the 'interactive' board the skills that they are to learn.
- 147 The quality of teaching is always least good and, in three-fifths of the lessons observed, it was very good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology and their skill in handling equipment have improved enormously since the last inspection. This helps them to lead pupils to develop a good range of skills. They plan lessons carefully and make some use of computers to support and enhance other areas of the curriculum. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils' attainment. They manage pupils very well and make good use of the time available. All this combines to motivate pupils. Such motivation is evident from the way in which pupils work hard and enthusiastically in this subject.
- 148 The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The policy and scheme of work are now complete. Under the direction of the knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator, who has been leading the subject for the past two years, the whole staff is working hard and their commitment to high attainment is beginning to improve standards. There is a system of assessment in place, but the co-ordinator is aware of the need to improve it further to help the development of the subject.

MUSIC

- 149 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in their learning throughout the school, and standards of attainment are at the expected level at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards found at the time of the last inspection. Whole school singing is satisfactory. Pupils sing largely in tune and with appropriate attention to rhythm and dynamics. Pupils in Key Stage 1 sing to piano accompaniment and make good progress. In Key Stage 2, pupils sing mostly to taped accompaniment, and do not need to make much effort to sing since the tape carries on playing so that it is not clear whether they are singing with enthusiasm or not.
- 150 In Key Stage 1, pupils sit up straight and sing with enthusiasm. They sing songs that they know confidently, and have a good memory for the words. The learning of new songs is well organised, and pupils quickly learn the words of a new song. Learning is reinforced well by a discussion of the meaning of the words. Pupils

know the names of the basic percussion instruments and use them satisfactorily to reinforce the pulse of the song that they are singing.

- 151 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 sing eagerly when they know the song, but are less secure when learning a new one. They have good control of dynamics when following the teacher's signals and maintain their own line satisfactorily in two-part singing. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 sing tunefully and maintain their place well in a three-part round. However, they tend to shout in their determination to maintain their line which forces them off the note. They use percussion instruments well to maintain the pulse, although some need help to maintain a rhythm. Pupils in Key Stage 2 identify different orchestral instruments successfully and usually identify sounds accurately, being able to say whether the sound is created by blowing, plucking, bowing or striking. They understand the difference between the strings, woodwind, brass and percussion sections of an orchestra and why larger instruments produce sounds which are lower in pitch. A few pupils, mostly in Year 4, enhance their learning in music by instrumental tuition in trumpet and clarinet.
- 152 Learning is further enhanced by opportunities for performance. All of Key Stage 2 took part in 'Hosanna Rock' at Christmas, which gave them experience of the joy of music making, but also that effort and discipline are needed if it is to be successful. Visiting music groups have also increased pupils' awareness of different types of music. These include a banjo player, a band playing music from the 1950's to the 1990's Zulu dancers who included drumming and singing in their performances, and the Grimethorpe Junior Brass Band.
- 153 The quality of the teaching observed during the inspection was good overall, with one very good lesson. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, and effective planning ensures that the National Curriculum programmes of study are covered. Good resources, including a good range of orchestral instruments, help teachers to plan interesting lessons which motivate pupils and ensure sound learning. Teachers have good expectations for effort and behaviour, and their skilful management of pupils ensures a good level of concentration. Support assistants are used well to help pupils with special educational needs so that they are fully involved and make progress at the same pace as the rest of the class.
- 154 The subject is well co-ordinated by a teacher who has clear views about developing the subject. A policy and good scheme of work are in place, and the co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, and has had some opportunities to evaluate teaching and learning. Resources are now good, although there are no multi-cultural instruments in the school, and information and communication technology is not used to support teaching and learning in music.
- 155 Music has not been a priority for development since the school was last inspected, but sound standards of attainment have been maintained. The school has the capacity to go on to improve further in this subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 156 Standards of attainment are average at the end of both key stages, although there are examples of above average attainment in Year 3. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. However, problems with staffing since the last inspection resulted in a fall in

standards, so that the good progress is now restoring the school to the levels of attainment found when the school was first inspected. Attainment in swimming is below average with about 70 per cent of pupils able to swim at least 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2. During the inspection, dance and games were observed in Key Stage 1, and dance, games and gymnastics at Key Stage 2.

- 157 In Key Stage 1, pupils are able to bring their imaginations into play when interpreting a dance scenario about fish. This links to their current work in literacy. They understand that different groups will behave differently, for example, shoals of small fish, large fish and predators. They follow others' movements and some invent new movements well. A few are simply so excited by the whole lesson that they run around as quickly as possible. Most pupils have a good awareness of each other and the need for safety. They have a good appreciation of the need to warm up before physical exercise, and to cool down after it. Other pupils in Key Stage 1 have satisfactory skills in throwing and catching large and small balls and dribbling them. They have the level of skill expected for this age group when throwing, catching and balancing quoits and bean bags. Some are very adept at managing a 'hula-hoop'.
- 158 In Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have average skills in using plastic racquets and small balls. Most balance the ball on the racquet successfully while moving, but a number find bouncing the ball difficult. By Year 6, pupils execute a range of passes with a medium-sized ball, for example, chest and shoulder passes. Some have good skills in throwing, catching and dodging. In Year 3, attainment in gymnastics is above average because of the very good teaching that pupils get from the subject co-ordinator who is himself a very good gymnast. They are capable of developing a good sequence of movements with good concentration on balance and quality. They have a very good awareness of the need for safety in gymnastic performance. They made very good progress in their learning during this lesson. In a Year 6 lesson on dance from other cultures, pupils made very good progress in their learning as a result of the very good teaching they received. However, attainment was below that normally found because pupils were unable to use balance, scale and a range and vitality of movement as would many pupils at this age. This reflects the disruptions to their education which resulted in unsatisfactory progress in Years 3, 4, 5.
- 159 Pupils have good attitudes to physical education in Key Stage 1, and very good attitudes in Key Stage 2. These attitudes have a positive impact on their learning and progress, and reflect the school's efforts in promoting good behaviour. Pupils work together well in groups and teams, and show a mature awareness of the need for safety. The residential weekend organised for Year 6 pupils enables them to experience outdoor and adventurous activities and makes a valuable contribution to their social development.
- 160 Teaching is good in Key Stage 1, and very good, overall, in Key Stage 2. Lessons are carefully planned, often as part of a sequence, to build up pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding systematically. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are good overall, and very good in Key Stage 2; their teaching methods are effective. The management of pupils is a strength, as is the use of support staff, particularly with pupils who have special educational needs. As a result, they play a full part in lessons and make sound progress. The quality of learning would be improved if pupils had greater opportunities to evaluate each other's work with a view to improving their own.

- 161 The subject is well resourced and benefits from good hard play areas, a good playing field, and an excellent hall. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning but has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. Pupils have the opportunity to experience competition in soccer and athletics. They much enjoyed the 'Athersley World Cup' last year. They have benefited from professional coaching in rugby league. The policy for the subject and scheme of work introduced since the last inspection ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study.
- 162 Standards of attainment are improving, having fallen since the last inspection because of frequent staff changes. The school is now in a good position to go on to improve further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 163 The observation of lessons, displays of work throughout the school and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that pupils are attaining the standards expected for those following the Barnsley Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. Those with special educational needs are well supported so that they make progress in their learning in line with their ability either as a result of work which is adapted to suit their needs or by additional help from their teacher or support assistant. The school has made very good progress in developing the subject since the last inspection.
- 164 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach the expected standards in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils in Year 1 learn the story of the creation, reflecting on the beauty of the world and understanding the need to look after it. This makes an important link with the pupils' own efforts to improve their school grounds. Pupils are proud of their results and enjoy looking after their flowers and plants both inside and outside the school. They learn about the Old Testament in the Bible and that Adam and Eve were the first man and woman. Year 2 pupils learn about the Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter and about Christian worship. Pupils like to hear stories about Jesus. They know that the cross is a symbol of Christianity. Pupils are aware of the importance of special food in other religions and have looked at a Shabbat meal.
- 165 Pupils in Year 4 remember symbols that they saw on a visit to a local church, and understand how important they are in worship. In the lesson observed, the teacher brought many precious things of her own to show the pupils and tell them why they were precious to her. Pupils thought carefully about things that were precious to them. This made a good link between pupils' knowledge of Christian worship and their everyday lives. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of different faiths. They learn about different places of worship, for example, a cathedral and a synagogue, and look at symbols in worship. Year 5 pupils formed groups and acted short plays which helped them to understand how their own behaviour and their attitudes to each other can be much better if they think of the meaning in the stories Jesus told. Year 6 pupils wrote a questionnaire for the vicar learning about his role in the neighbourhood. They are familiar with many stories and events in the Bible.
- 166 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They use precise, specific language in their

discussions with pupils in order to increase their vocabulary in a structured way. Pupils are later questioned and encouraged to respond. In a Year 4 lesson the teacher showed pupils objects, which were special to her, and several pupils enjoyed telling the class why objects they had chosen were special to them. Pupils are well motivated and are able to work in small groups with minimum supervision. Pupils are managed well and have very good relationships with their teachers. In the few lessons observed, behaviour was good, and pupils respected each other's work and took great care of resources, including artefacts. These are of very good quality and are used to create attractive displays in many classes and other areas in the school. The school has close contact with the local Methodist and Anglican churches. At the end of each lesson there is a short period when all the class gather together to discuss their work and to reflect on their achievements.

- 167 The co-ordination of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject and has worked very hard over the past two years to implement the new policy and scheme of work as well as organising staff training. The whole school was involved in a production of the musical 'Hosanna Rock'. This was very successful, helping in many ways to raise pupils' self esteem and raise the school's profile in the area. The school took the production to a local church and a home for elderly people as well as producing it for parents. Religious education lessons make a significant contribution to spirituality and the excellent ethos in the school. Assessment, however, is at an early stage of development, and is not effective in promoting the progress of individual pupils.