

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Ferham Primary School**

Rotherham

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique reference number: 106839

Headteacher: Mrs J Ryan

Reporting inspector: Mr C Smith  
25211

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> October 2001

Inspection number: 218157

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ferham Road  
Rotherham  
South Yorkshire  
Postcode: S61 1AP

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A. A. Khaliq

Date of previous inspection: September 1999

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |                  |                      | Subject responsibilities                                                           | Aspect responsibilities                                                                                                                                |
|--------------|------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25211        | Colin Smith      | Registered inspector | Religious education<br>Design and technology<br>Music                              | The characteristics and effectiveness of the school<br>The school's results and pupils' achievements<br>Teaching and learning<br>Key issues for action |
| 9952         | Lillian Brock    | Lay inspector        |                                                                                    | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development<br>Pupils' welfare, health and safety<br>Partnership with parents and carers                        |
| 30724        | Delia Hiscock    | Team inspector       | English<br>Art and design                                                          | Quality and range of opportunities for learning                                                                                                        |
| 23887        | Peter Nettleship | Team inspector       | Science<br>Geography<br>History<br>Equal opportunities                             | Leadership and management                                                                                                                              |
| 30954        | Brian Ashcroft   | Team inspector       | Mathematics<br>Information and communication technology<br>Physical education      |                                                                                                                                                        |
| 17907        | Mike Bowers      | Team inspector       | Foundation Stage<br>Special educational needs<br>English as an additional language |                                                                                                                                                        |

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is average in size and is situated close to the town centre of Rotherham. The area served by the school is amongst the most disadvantaged communities in England and movement into and out of the area is high. There are 237 pupils; 109 boys and 128 girls and the school has a 52 part time place nursery. Sixty five per cent of pupils are white and 35 per cent are of Pakistani ethnic origin. English is an additional language for 53 per cent of the pupils. The free school meal figure of 51 per cent is much higher than the national average. One hundred and twenty four pupils have special educational needs, which is also much higher than average, of which six pupils have statements. Approximately 60 per cent of the pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties and 40 per cent have emotional and social difficulties. The current head teacher has been in post for four terms. Pupils enter the school with very low attainment.

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

This is an improving school, standards are rising and the school now provides sound value for money. Pupils achieve well in the main subjects but because of the high incidence of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, the standards reached in English, mathematics and science are well below the national average. However, they match those of similar schools in mathematics and in science. Teaching is good and pupils behave well and enjoy learning. The headteacher, senior staff and governors together provide good leadership. The learning of all pupils is carefully monitored and very well supported. This enables pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, to make good progress.

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

- Pupils achieve well in English, information and communication technology and art at both key stages and in mathematics and design and technology at Key Stage 2;
- Teaching is good in the reception class and in Years 2, 4 and 6;
- The school benefits from the very good leadership provided by the head teacher and key staff;
- Pupils are cared for and well managed. As a result, they have good attitudes and behave well;
- The school provides a good curriculum, which caters well for pupils' different learning needs. This helps pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language to make good progress;
- The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development and assesses and monitors their learning and their development effectively.

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

- Teaching and learning in the nursery needs to improve;
- There is scope to raise standards in English by improving pupils' reading comprehension;
- There is scope to raise standards in mathematics by improving pupils' understanding of mathematical terms;
- More needs to be done to improve the attendance of the small number persistent absentees and those pupils who are away on family holidays for long periods.

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

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

The school was found to have serious weaknesses when it was last inspected in September 1999. A new head teacher was appointed six months later. In the following September, inspectors monitoring

the school's recovery concluded that the school was making satisfactory progress in each of the areas requiring improvement. Standards in English, mathematics and science have started to rise. Analysing results and identifying and stemming the weaknesses have helped. Teaching has improved, largely because teaching and pupils' learning are closely monitored and teachers now plan work for pupils of different abilities. Standards in information and communication technology were too low at the time of the last inspection but pupils are now achieving well and reaching the standards expected. Leadership and management of the school are now effective and governors play a central part in decision making. Attendance has improved by two per cent but there is scope for further improvement. The school has made sound improvements since the last inspection and because it continually evaluates its own performance and seeks to improve it, the serious weaknesses have been overcome.

## STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | Compared with |      |      |                 | Key                                     |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------|
|                 | All schools   |      |      | Similar schools |                                         |
|                 | 1999          | 2000 | 2001 | 2001            |                                         |
| English         | E*            | E*   | E*   | D               | Well above average A<br>above average B |
| Mathematics     | E*            | E    | E    | C               | Average C<br>Below average D            |
| Science         | E*            | E    | E    | C               | Well below average E                    |

Although results in English are amongst the lowest five per cent nationally, standards are improving in line with national trends. The targets set for English and mathematics were reached in the year 2000 but fell 10 per cent short in 2001. Movement of pupils, into and out of the school, played a large part in this. By the end of Key Stage 1, although results in reading, writing, mathematics and science are well below the national average, they match those of similar schools in reading and writing. More pupils throughout the school are reaching higher standards because challenging work is now provided. In Years 3, 4 and 5, the school's assessments show that pupils' attainment is higher by 10 to 15 per cent. These are positive signs.

Pupils enter school with very low attainment. They achieve steadily in the Foundation Stage and through Key Stage 1 and they achieve well through Key Stage 2. Children's achievements in the reception class are better than in the nursery, particularly in their learning of language and literacy. This is because teaching in the reception class is consistently good but there are weaknesses in teaching in the nursery. By the end of the reception year, children have almost reached the levels expected in their creative and physical development and in their personal and social development. However, very few children are on course to reach the levels expected in language and literacy, mathematical understanding and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Although pupils achieve well in many aspects of English, they struggle to read with good understanding. Pupils achieve well in mathematics in Key Stage 2 but many pupils find difficulty in using mathematical language correctly. In the knowledge and understanding elements of science, pupils achieve steadily, but they achieve well in developing the skills of investigation. Standards in science are well below the national average at the end of both key stages but results have improved by over 20 per cent over the last two years. Pupils now achieve well in information and communication technology to reach the standards expected. In religious education, pupils achieve steadily to reach the standards expected in Rotherham schools. Pupils achieve steadily in history, geography, physical education and music. Pupils achieve well in design and technology in Key Stage 2 and in art throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress



because of the good quality support they receive. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress because their learning and language needs are well provided for.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Attitudes to the school                | Good; pupils are interested in learning and concentrate well.                                                                                                                                 |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Good; pupils are friendly, helpful and well behaved in class and around school.                                                                                                               |
| Personal development and relationships | Satisfactory; relationships are good but pupils need a lot of reassurance and only a small number are able work independently.                                                                |
| Attendance                             | Unsatisfactory; despite the two per cent improvement, a few pupils are persistently absent and others are absent for long periods on family holidays. These absences affect their attainment. |

Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well behaved, attentive and keen to answer questions.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good or better in six lessons out of ten. The good teaching is mainly in the reception class and in Years 2, 4 and 6. Teaching is sometimes excellent in Year 6. However, teaching in the nursery is not good enough because the purpose of the activities provided is not made clear to the children and their language skills are not sufficiently developed. In the reception class, teaching is good because activities are very carefully planned and well matched to children's needs and interests. This helps children to learn skills, such as reading and counting, successfully. The teaching of English is good in most classes and mathematics is taught well, particularly in Key Stage 2. Basic skills are soundly taught. This is where pupils need the most help. There is still some room for improvement in the teaching of literacy, specifically to help pupils to acquire a better understanding of what they read. In mathematics, learning could be improved if teachers made more frequent use of resources to help pupils to understand mathematical ideas and extend their understanding of mathematical language. Information and communication technology, art and design and technology are taught well, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' capacity to learn and they set work of a good level of challenge for pupils with different learning needs. Classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and are particularly successful in helping pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language to make good progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect                                              | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The quality and range of the curriculum             | Good; strenuous efforts are made to ensure that learning is carefully planned and all pupils are well catered for. This enables pupils with different learning needs to learn successfully. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good; their needs are identified early and good support is provided to encourage them and to help them to reach the targets set.                                                            |

|                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                 | Good; teachers and support assistants ensure that these pupils understand the language needed to complete the tasks and provide additional opportunities for them to improve their learning of English. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good in all areas and very good in the area of pupils' moral development. The racial harmony and good behaviour of the pupils is attributable to the good provision.                                    |
| How well the school cares for its pupils                                                    | Good; pupils' learning and their personal development are closely monitored and very well supported. The procedures to assess pupils' academic progress are particularly good.                          |

The school works very hard to encourage and keep parents well informed. A number of valuable initiatives have been launched to involve parents but the response is limited.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect                                                           | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Very good; the new headteacher has a clear vision for the school, good communication skills and a high level of energy and determination to drive up standards. The staff work well as a team with a shared commitment to improving all aspects of the work of the school. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Satisfactory; governors are eager to be involved and understand what the priorities are. They are beginning to monitor the work of the school.                                                                                                                             |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Good; assessment results are carefully analysed as a basis for making improvements and teaching is monitored closely to raise standards.                                                                                                                                   |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Good; financial planning is good and based on agreed priorities. Outside agencies are consulted and account is taken of how the school compares with others to ensure that the school provides best value.                                                                 |

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are all at least satisfactory.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

One parent attended the meeting, 16 parents returned the questionnaires and a further twelve parents offered their views. The parents' responses to each question would not provide a helpful picture. The table below summarises the views of the small sample.

| What pleases parents most                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | What parents would like to see improved |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children like school, are well behaved and make good progress;</li> <li>Parents find the staff helpful easy to talk to;</li> <li>Parents have confidence in the leadership of the school and in the teaching;</li> <li>The school is successful in helping children to act responsibly and to care for others.</li> </ul> |                                         |

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Taking the school as a whole, standards have improved since the last inspection by at least one grade in all subjects against those of similar schools. Results are now well below average, rather than very low. The pupils attaining least well are those in Year 6, despite the very good teaching in that class. Many pupils, in Year 6 and in other age groups, have to overcome significant barriers to learning. In addition, when the current Year 6 pupils were lower down the school, the teaching was not as good as it is now. As a result, their attainment is still very low in English and below that of similar schools. Standards are well below average in mathematics and science but equal to those of pupils in schools within the same band. However, the comparison with similar schools does not take into account the special circumstances, which many other schools do not experience. For example, half of the pupils have special educational needs and a third speak English as an additional language. Many families are moving into and out of the area and half of the pupils who took part in the most recent national tests had spent only three years or less in the school. In addition, many of the pupils who enter the nursery begin at a very low starting point.
2. The school's own end of year assessments and the 2001 national test results for pupils aged seven, paint a brighter picture. Standards reached by pupils aged seven, although well below the national average, match those in similar schools in reading and writing but remain below in mathematics and science. Assessments completed in Years 3, 4 and 5 show a 10 to 15 per cent improvement on previous test results, raising attainment to within 10 per cent of what is expected nationally. This reflects a determined effort on the part of the new headteacher, staff and governors to improve pupils' performance. The school's thorough analysis of test results to detect and stem any weaknesses and the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning, to ensure that all pupils are challenged, have been crucial factors in the drive to raise standards.
3. Considering the very low level of attainment on entry into the school, pupils achieve well and improve their performance over time. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language benefit from a good level of support. Their specific learning needs are carefully assessed and goals are set to help them to improve. These factors help them to make good progress. A small but increasing number of pupils are reaching the higher levels. This is because the work provided for them is now more demanding. Three Year 5 very able and gifted pupils currently work with Year 6 pupils to ensure that their learning is fully extended. This is a good example of the school's efforts to cater for all pupils. There is little difference between the achievement of boys and girls. A well-organised system of tracking the individual progress made by each pupil has been

implemented. Teachers and support staff use the information well to detect any falling performance and to allocate pupils to different groups, such as booster classes.

4. Children make steady progress through the Foundation Stage. However, in the nursery, children do not achieve as well as they should, particularly in improving their use of language. Many children enter school with very poor speaking and listening skills and, in the nursery, not enough is done to engage them in talk. Opportunities are not planned carefully enough and this results in children playing for long periods with very little communication. Children achieve well in the reception class where there is a higher level of challenge and more purposefully planned opportunities for children to listen to and talk about stories and develop an understanding of letters, words and numbers. Never the less, very few children are on course to reach the early learning goals in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. In the areas of creative and physical development children's attainment is below rather than well below average. In the nursery and in the reception class, children's self-confidence grows and their capacity to concentrate is extended. They learn to share and work together. As a result, their personal and social development increases, even though they do not all reach the learning goals expected. They achieve well in their mathematical understanding, particularly in the reception class where they learn to count, add and sequence numbers. Children make good progress in their creative development but outdoor play in the nursery is not well organised or sufficiently structured and this limits children's physical development.
5. Although pupils achieve well in English, the battle to raise standards is hard fought. When inspectors visited the school to monitor the school's response to being judged to have serious weaknesses, writing was identified as an area requiring attention. Since then, writing standards have improved considerably. Teachers write with their pupils, showing them how to select words and organise their ideas. Even though many pupils struggle to apply spelling and grammar rules correctly and to present their work neatly, they are able to express their ideas fluently and in different forms. Good teaching of how to break unfamiliar words down into recognisable letter sounds and word parts helps pupils to read more fluently, however, more work is needed to overcome pupils' difficulties in understanding what they read. Although many pupils are not confident speakers, their listening skills are improving because of the many good opportunities to discuss their ideas.
6. Pupils achieve steadily in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and achieve well in Key Stage 2. Pupils are secure with numbers in so far as they know how to add, subtract, multiply and divide. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to solve problems in mathematics lessons, if not always in other subjects. Pupils are gaining confidence in tackling mathematical investigations. However, they stumble over new vocabulary and this could be improved if all teachers revised the wide range of mathematical terms needed, at every opportunity.

7. Pupils achieve steadily in science but make good progress in developing the practical skills of experimenting. Even though standards are well below the national average, the proportion of pupils reaching the standards expected has doubled in recent years and increasing numbers of pupils are attaining the higher levels. Many pupils lack background knowledge and struggle to understand and use scientific language correctly. Teachers are aware of this and approach science through practical investigations. This ensures that pupils have good opportunities to predict, observe and draw conclusions. This gives them plenty to talk about, which in turn helps them to extend their vocabulary.
8. Standards in information and communication technology have shot up since the last inspection and pupils now achieve well. The computer suite is an important asset but effective staff training has enabled teachers to cover all elements of the subjects well. The good teaching in the school helps to compensate for the very limited opportunities pupils have to use computers in the home.
9. Pupils achieve steadily in religious education to reach the standards expected in Rotherham schools. Teachers draw effectively on the diversity of faiths amongst the pupils. As a result, they learn about religion and from it develop an understanding and a respect for the beliefs of others.
10. Pupils achieve steadily in geography and history although standards are below those expected. This is largely because many pupils do not have good background knowledge. Pupils also achieve steadily in physical education and in music, although their singing could be better. Pupils achieve well in art and reach high standards. They also achieve well in design and technology in Key Stage 2, particularly in the way they plan and evaluate their work.
11. Although standards are still low, many pupils have considerable difficulties to overcome. Despite their very low attainment on entry, the good teaching they receive enables them to achieve well. The school is doing everything possible to provide a good education for these pupils and standards are rising steadily. The serious weaknesses in standards found at the time of the last inspection have been largely eliminated.

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

12. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour is good and their personal development is satisfactory. There have been improvements since the last inspection. There is a happy atmosphere in school and this has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to school life and to their learning. Pupils enjoy being in school; the majority arrive on time and settle down to the school day. Children in the foundation years settle quickly into classroom routines and try to behave well. Some of these children need a lot of reassurance but they are developing positive relationships with each other and their teachers. When they enter

Year 1, they have made sound progress from a low starting point. The school prepares pupils well for learning. There is time allowed for relaxation and reflection following morning playtime. This, together with the 'Can Do' ethos and the 'Listening Code' ensures that pupils get off to a flying start in lessons. Appropriate levels of praise and good levels of classroom support further encourage them.

13. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Most pupils move around school quietly and with the minimum of fuss, holding doors open for adults and other pupils. Movement up and down stairs is also orderly. During playtimes and lunchtimes, most pupils behave well. There is harmony between pupils and this contributes well to pupils' personal and social development. Year 6 pupils exemplified this good behaviour during a visit to the swimming baths. Their behaviour was good both on the coach and during the lesson. Pupils identified as needing additional support to conform to the school's code of behaviour are quickly identified and helped. This was seen both in lessons and in the nurture group in the Rainbow Room, where pupils are withdrawn for small group or individual support. As a result, they are quickly brought back on course. Children in the Foundation years work and play well for extended periods of time. There is no evidence of harassment or racial tension and pupils confirm that any bullying would be dealt with well. There have been eleven fixed period exclusions involving six pupils. This reflects the school's determination not to allow the inappropriate behaviour of a few affect the learning of many.
14. Relationships between all members of the school community are good as seen in lessons when pupils work in pairs and groups. They receive support from good role models like teachers, classroom assistants, learning mentors and the positive play worker. As a result, their personal and social development is enhanced and pupils, from a range of cultures, work together in harmony. There are opportunities in classrooms and around the school for pupils to take on a few responsibilities and they have shown by their mature attitudes that they are capable of accepting more. Older pupils help younger pupils in the playground and support them with reading. Pupils have helped to write their own expectations for an orderly classroom environment but have yet to have a full 'voice' in the school through a school council. Opportunities for independent research and learning are not yet fully developed. There is a range of study visits to museums and stately homes that extend and enhance pupils' learning and they participate well in extra-curricular activities.
15. Attendance is unsatisfactory and well below the national average, unauthorised absence is higher than the national average. There has been a two per cent improvement since the previous inspection. Records show that extended holidays abroad account for almost two per cent of all absences from school. There is also the poor attendance of a small but significant number of children from families who do not appreciate its detrimental effect on learning. To balance this, 41 per cent of children have attendance that is above the national average. Most pupils enjoy school, arrive on time and start lessons promptly.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. Under the direction of the new headteacher and following several changes of staff since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has been transformed. Teaching in the school is now good, particularly in the reception class and in Years 2, 4 and 6. In this inspection, the teaching in six out of every ten lessons was good or better. There is some excellent teaching in Year 6. At the time of the last inspection more than one in every ten lessons was unsatisfactory. There is now only a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching in the nursery.
17. In all classes teachers manage their pupils well. There are many pupils for whom allowances have to be made, including a third of the pupils whose understanding of English is only just developing. In addition, half of the pupils have special educational needs and teachers often have to settle new pupils into their classes at short notice. Teachers are patient and caring, yet they are firm but fair. Good relationships are established and the learning atmosphere in classes is positive and purposeful. Class teachers, specialist teachers and classroom assistants, work together well to prepare activities to meet the very wide range of pupils' different learning needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs are taught well in small groups. Well-trained learning support staff help them to understand the nature of the task by discussing any unfamiliar words but they are encouraged to think for themselves. The climate of success is evident. These pupils are growing in confidence, their self-esteem is nurtured and these factors help them to make good progress towards their learning goals.
18. There are marked differences between teaching in the nursery and teaching in the reception class. In the reception class, lessons are highly structured and purposeful and children's learning is carefully guided. Lessons often focus on improving children's spoken and written language. There is a good level of challenge and activities are closely matched to children's different learning needs. As result, children make good progress in all areas of learning. The conditions for learning in the nursery are not good enough, despite the positive support provided by the nursery assistant. The activities provided are not sufficiently linked to children's stages of learning. Many of the children are not confident speakers when they arrive and they tend to play in isolation. Even when they are sharing equipment, few words are exchanged. On some occasions, they are left alone for too long without adult intervention and this does little to extend and improve their speaking and listening skills. There are too few planned opportunities for children to meet new and interesting experiences which encourage them to ask questions and express their feelings creatively. This is because the planning is based on what children will do rather than what they should learn. As a result, their progress is slower than it should be.



19. In Key Stages 1 and 2, lesson planning is good and based on clear assessment of pupils' day-to-day learning. Teachers plan lessons together and assistants are involved and well briefed. Much thought goes into how pupils of different learning needs will be catered for. Although all pupils have the same entitlement to learn, the lesson content is adjusted and additional learning support is provided to ensure that all pupils are challenged. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection and the efforts teachers make to grade the tasks are greater than is the case in many schools. Teachers expect their pupils to respond to the challenges set and pupils rise to these expectations. As a result, pupils achieve more than they used to. Unfortunately, the current Year 6 pupils were not so well provided for when they were younger. Some of these pupils are still unsure of their letter blends and this holds their reading and their learning back. Their attainment is low but pupils lower down the school are gaining from more purposeful teaching. The assessments carried out show rapidly improving results.
20. Teachers have good expertise in English, art, design and technology, investigative science and in many aspects of mathematics. Teachers' subject knowledge of information and communication technology has vastly improved since the last inspection. In these subjects, particularly, teachers employ effective methods, use demonstration well and ask very searching questions to make pupils think. In science for example, teachers often ask 'what if' questions, which encourage pupils to think ahead, to make predictions and to observe the outcomes very carefully.
21. The teaching of English is good. Lessons are packed with activities designed to improve pupils' speaking and listening and their reading and writing. Writing is taught very well and most pupils show confidence and interest in expressing their ideas. For example, in several subjects, pupils write evaluatively about the model they have made or the investigation they have completed. Their writing flows well but they encounter difficulties with spelling, punctuation and grammar. Although literacy skills are taught soundly, pupils find difficulty in transferring them to everyday writing. One area of improvement needed is the teaching of guided reading, which does not always focus well enough on helping pupils to read with understanding.
22. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Pupils are helped to understand the processes taught and to apply their numeracy skills to solve problems. Teachers use questioning techniques well to probe pupils' understanding. End of lessons discussion sessions are also valuable in drawing together important ideas. However more imaginative use of calculating aids and a more determined attempt to extend pupils' mathematical vocabulary would improve the mental mathematics sessions.
23. There are relatively few weaknesses in teaching compared to the last inspection. However, some teachers are too ready to accept untidily presented work and occasionally computer programmes, used in lessons, are not well matched to pupils' learning needs. Resources could be more widely used, in design and technology, for example, to enable pupils to understand

moving parts. A more common weakness is the loss of pace in some lessons. On occasions, teachers talk to the class or listen to one pupil for too long. When this happens, pupils become restless and lose concentration. Homework is provided regularly but only about half of the pupils complete it. This limits its potential impact.

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

24. The school provides a good curriculum that is broad and relevant to pupils' needs. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection because all subjects are taught and the school has made great efforts to ensure that learning opportunities are planned well. Teaching time has also been extended. These factors contribute to the rising standards. The curriculum planned for children who are under five in the Foundation Stage, is satisfactory and is based on all the areas of learning recommended for children in nursery and reception classes. The curriculum opportunities in reception class prepare children better for the next stages of their learning, than is the case in the nursery where planning is not as purposeful. There are strengths in the recently introduced provision for information technology, and religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and pupils' understanding and achievement in other subjects is being raised.
25. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy successfully. The very thorough planning is leading to consistently good practice across the school. This is having a positive effect on standards in the school and helping to continue this rising trend. Particularly good features are the teaching of writing across the school and the provision for speaking and listening. The Numeracy Strategy has also been implemented successfully and as a result, lessons have improved and pupils' skills and understanding are better in the basic skills.
26. The carefully planned curriculum provides a clear framework for teaching. This is strong in all subjects because pupils with different learning needs are well catered for. This is leading to a good level of challenge for each pupil. Additional support is effectively provided to boost pupils' attainment in reading and writing. However, a small number of pupils are frequently absent and it is more difficult for them to build on their learning from year to year.
27. All pupils have equality of opportunity and access to all aspects of the curriculum and the school makes extra provision to meet all requirements. This ensures that both new and existing pupils have full access to the curriculum, regardless of gender, age, attainment, ethnic heritage or individual needs.
28. The provision for pupils with special education needs is good because their needs are identified at an early age. Carefully prepared education programmes are provided for them and well-trained learning assistants

support them effectively in all lessons. This ensures that they make good progress.

29. There is also good provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language and this significantly raises their achievement. Teachers are very aware of the need to explain the meaning of words and check that pupils with English as an additional language understand the tasks. On most occasions, support assistants, skilled in developing and extending pupils' language, work alongside them to ensure that they have good opportunities to listen and to talk.
30. Pupils' personal, social and health education is suitably provided for. Outside agencies, parents, governors and staff are all involved in the planning and this leads to secure provision for pupils' sex education and raising their awareness of the dangers of drugs. Valuable opportunities are provided for pupils to talk about a range of personal and social experiences in their lives. This helps them to make balanced decisions.
31. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that extend and enrich the curriculum. There are many adults involved in these activities, including one or two parents. The range of sporting activities includes cricket, football and netball. This programme is enhanced by the residential visit for Year 6 pupils. Many visitors are welcomed into the school to enrich the curriculum. Pupils regularly use facilities at the high school and teaching experts in physical education. The normal range of visits out of school is provided but these pupils benefit more than most in view of their very limited home experiences. For example, pupils visited the seaside, and many were highly delighted to play in the sand for the first time.
32. The provision for pupils' spiritual, social development is good and very good for moral development. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The provision for spiritual development reflects the school's aims well. There are good opportunities within circle time and religious education lessons to pause and reflect on their thoughts, feelings and emotions. For example, spiritual growth is well planned for in religious education. Some very sensitive writing was seen in pupils' work about the occasions that made them happy or sad. In a lesson for reception children, they looked with wonder at the changing colours and textures of the leaves. Some subjects contribute to pupils' spiritual development. In an art lesson for Years 3 and 4, a new entrant to school without any English was able to communicate with the teacher through smiles or nods, the effect that a painting had on him. Assemblies are carefully planned to reflect the multi-cultural nature of the school's community. Pupils are asked to contribute ideas based on their own religious experiences. This broadens pupils' understanding and promotes respect for other beliefs. The sensory room attached to the Rainbow Room offers a tranquil haven for pupils with special needs to calm themselves in preparation for the lesson.

33. The effects of the very good provision for pupils' moral development is seen in the way pupils are willing to share their ideas in personal and social education lessons. The school actively promotes knowledge of right from wrong and this is reflected in the consistent way that teachers manage behaviour in lessons. The class expectations are on display and constantly referred to by teachers and pupils. In a whole school assembly, pupils reflected on the people all over the world who do not have enough food. A class assembly for Year 6 developed the theme of giving people a second chance and pupils took this very seriously. The school achieves its aim of developing an orderly place where learning flourishes.
34. The caring and friendly atmosphere in the school is the result of pupils and all adults being encouraged to play a full part in the life of the school. Pupils are expected to care for each other, help visitors and take on appropriate activities around the school. In lessons, they co-operate well in pairs and groups. From an early age, pupils are expected to share resources and help each other. Because of this, pupils from all cultures get on very well as seen in the way they work and play together. In an information and communication lesson, Year 1 pupils planned together the route a programmable toy would take and laughed and cheered when their plans were successful. The school is a harmonious community because any conflicts from outside stop at the school gate.
35. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school has been successful in widening pupils' horizons and is now building on the rich cultural nature of the school community. Pupils have visited a mosque and a Christian church and all major religious festivals are acknowledged. Pupils enjoy celebrating these festivals and successful Eid parties are organised in addition to events like the harvest festival and nativity plays. A visiting arts group was seen helping pupils to prepare for a performance of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and pupils participated with real enjoyment. In the nursery, children are introduced to the work of Picasso and there are Islamic patterns on display. There is good use of religious artefacts to extend pupils' knowledge of faiths other than their own. Visits to museums and stately homes help pupils with their study of the Tudors, the Victorians and the Egyptians. Displays in the school include examples of pupils' poetry and work on the environment. The school's aim that it should be viewed as part of an interdependent local, national and global society is achieved.

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

36. The school's procedures for ensuring pupils are safe and their individual needs recognised are good and a strength of the school's provision. Pupils' individual academic and social needs are well understood and well provided for. In addition, classroom assistants, learning mentors and a positive play worker enhance and enrich the support which children receive. Child protection procedures are fully in place with a designated teacher who ensures that staff are fully informed of them and that they are given clear

guidelines on how to implement them. Parents are informed of the procedures in the school brochure.

37. The procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. Teachers and pupils are involved in establishing codes of conduct within each classroom and this contributes to the good behaviour that is a common feature of class lessons. Pupils are familiar with teachers' expectations of their conduct in and around school. Unkindness and bullying are strongly discouraged and instances are rare. When they do occur, procedures to resolve them are well developed and implemented. The good racial harmony in the school is partly due to the development of responsible attitudes and respect for others that the school promotes. There is good support for pupils with English as an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs.
38. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory and whilst they have been instrumental in improving attendance since the previous inspection, attendance is not currently improving. Attendance is well below the national average and unauthorised absence is higher than the national average. With the help of the education welfare service, the amount of unauthorised absence has been reduced but this has only led to an increase in authorised absence. Records show that a large amount of the absence is due to extended holidays abroad and the continued absence of children from a few families. The reward system is beginning to have a positive impact on attendance. Pupils compete for the best attendance cup and their percentage attendance is displayed on classroom doors. For example, forty one per cent of children have attendance that is above the national average. A full review of the procedures and analysing what is successful within them is called for.
39. Health and safety procedures are clear in the new policy. The school is aware of the different medical needs of pupils and the procedures work well. Whilst most members of staff have obtained the one-day emergency first aid qualification, there is currently no one with the full four-day first aid qualification. Inspections of the premises are carried out, both by the caretaker and the headteacher, on a regular basis, and by external agents. Sex education is covered well and older pupils have additional support from the school nurse. Pupils are made aware of the dangers of substance abuse in science and personal and social education lessons.
40. The procedures for monitoring and supporting academic and personal progress are very good and the procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Whilst personal and social education is included in teachers' planning, there is no whole school documented programme of personal, social and health education, including citizenship, which helps teachers to monitor progress from one year to the next.
41. Pupils' academic progress is monitored and supported well. Arrangements for assessing and recording progress in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

Baseline assessments help to provide clear information about children's learning needs and their day-to-day progress is recorded. However, in the nursery, it is not clear how the information collected by staff is used to identify the next learning task for each child and consequently children do not make the progress of which they are capable. Very good use of assessment information is made in the reception class enabling the teacher to provide suitable and challenging learning activities that carefully extend the children's acquisition of language and their development of skills.

42. All pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual education plans. These enable their progress to be checked frequently and systematically. Those pupils with special needs who are given support by the local authority make good progress with the basic level of extra support used well to help them achieve their targets.
43. Pupils learning English as an additional language also make good progress. Skilled and enthusiastic adults carefully assess the progress of these pupils giving them good support to enable them to understand the tasks set and to be fully involved in their lessons.
44. There are very good records of pupils' progress in English, mathematics, science, religious education, information and communication technology and all foundation subjects. This enables teachers to identify specific learning targets for their pupils and to plan lessons that include clear and relevant learning goals and tasks.
45. The school makes effective use of a wide range of assessment procedures including national tests, end of project assessments and teacher observations. These are carefully scrutinised by the class teachers, enabling them to organise their pupils into groups of similar abilities and then prepare suitable work. Samples of work for each pupil are collected, assessed and placed in a folder. This ensures that every teacher is fully aware of the progress each pupil is making and is able to accurately adjust the weekly lesson planning. However, many of these procedures are new and their effect is more evident on the learning of younger pupils. The systems were not in place at the time of the last inspection when the older pupils were making their way through the school.

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

46. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. It was difficult to gain the views of parents before the inspection took place as only one parent arrived for the pre-inspection meeting and only sixteen parents responded to the questionnaire. The inspection team requested an informal meeting with parents during the inspection and twelve parents attended. When the new headteacher was appointed, she saw parental involvement in the school as a priority for development. She is trying to reach out to parents by organising home visits. This is gradually helping to overcome the language barriers. Staff and the headteacher are a visible presence around the school when

children arrive and depart. They willingly listen to parents' concerns and parents confirm that staff are approachable. Many parents were seen escorting their children to and from classrooms although very few stayed to help.

47. The information that parents receive is satisfactory overall and there is a weekly newsletter to keep parents up to date. The school brochure is in 'parent-friendly' terms and meets legal requirements. The annual report of the governing body contains useful information. There are two parents' evenings each year and an annual report of pupils' progress sent out in the summer. Parents confirm that these reports are clear and easy to read and contain targets for future development. There is an induction meeting for parents of reception children and all nursery children receive a home visit before starting in nursery. There is also a helpful booklet for parents of children in the foundation years. In an attempt to involve parents in children's learning, the school sends details home of the targets that their children are aiming for. The individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs are sent to parents and they are invited to review meetings but these are not always well attended.
48. A very small number of parents help with extra-curricular activities like football, netball and line dancing. The newly appointed community liaison worker has already been instrumental in starting an Asian Women's group and has organised coffee mornings following the Friday award assembly. At these meetings, the few parents who attend have the opportunity to share ideas, obtain information and find out about school life in general. A numeracy workshop was held for parents in the summer. It is still early days for these initiatives to have an impact on children's learning but the signs for the future are encouraging. The school confirms that parents do not turn up in any significant numbers for meetings of an academic nature but there is better attendance at other meetings like the one on drugs abuse. Parents provide food for Eid parties and other celebrations in the school. The school welcomes parents to the Breakfast Club but only six or seven attend. The school is right to continue its drive to involve parents. There is scope to raise standards further and to improve attendance but only if parents support the school more actively.

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

49. The headteacher and key staff provide very good leadership for the work of the school. The arrival of the headteacher marked a new beginning and led to many changes in the way the school was organised and run. As a result, both staff and governor morale have been significantly boosted. As well as providing clear direction herself, she has shared out responsibilities by giving new powers to the senior management team and to all subject leaders. The governing body fulfils its role as a critical friend of the school with increasing confidence. Governors share the headteacher's goals for the school and are clear about their roles in effecting change. There is a strong team

commitment towards improvement that has given an added impetus to all new initiatives. For example, it is evident in the very close working links between teachers and support staff, that is a feature of so many lessons and that raises teaching effectiveness considerably.

50. The headteacher has been central in moving the school on. She has established programmes to raise standards based on thorough assessments of pupil needs. An early initiative was to seek the views of all parties in re-writing the school aims. These then became the principles that guided future action. For example, standards of behaviour and discipline were identified as areas requiring improvement. New systems to promote positive behaviour were introduced; additional staff were employed to fill particular roles; careful monitoring procedures were established. As a result of these changes, better conditions now exist for learning throughout the school. There have also been many staff changes, with careful selections made. Teachers are now well aware of the school's high expectations of them to raise standards in the quality of their teaching.
51. The governors' contribution to the leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. There is a good blend of experience and new appointees on the governing body. They are aware of their statutory duties. All governors have links to classes and some have links with subject areas. They are beginning to agree on procedures to monitor the work of the school. For example, one of the governors oversees much of the extra funding that comes into the school to ensure that it is well targeted to improve children's learning. Governors are well aware of the school's strengths. Over the last two years they have been helping to monitor those areas in need of improvement. They are strongly committed to the school, to raising its standards and to developing its role in the community. For example, initiatives planned for the new school building, to be built shortly, envisage a wider role for Ferham Primary in the life of the local area.
52. The senior management team is now a force for change in the school with greater responsibility for monitoring the progress of both teaching and learning. Subject leaders for English and mathematics have worked well with the headteacher and advisers to develop the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Leadership in information and communication technology has had a dramatic impact in raising standards since the previous inspection. Other subject leaders have responsibilities for the organisation and assessment of their own areas. This enables them to gain a view of their subject across the school. Leadership is particularly strong in science, history and religious education. There is now a unity to the thorough planning, the regular assessment and the monitoring of teaching throughout the school and across the curriculum.
53. The school has identified the right targets for improvement. Raising standards in English and mathematics remains the key goal. However, when comparisons are made with other schools, the poor levels of attendance by some pupils always disadvantage this school. Improving attendance rates is



rightly a priority to ensure all pupils benefit fully from the good learning opportunities provided. Involving parents in the life and work of the school is another important goal, although the response from parents is a slow to develop. The school also recognises the need to improve teaching and learning standards in the nursery. This will ensure all children are given a secure foundation to their education.

54. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. The school now has a more stable staffing structure and has a sufficient number of teaching staff who are all suitably qualified. The school also has a large number of learning support assistants who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Performance management has been successfully implemented in the school and targets have been set. Newly qualified teachers and other members of staff who are new to the school are inducted well into the procedures of the school. They received good guidance and support. Monitoring systems help staff to fit in quickly to the life of the school.
55. Financial management and budgetary control are good. The Headteacher and Governors review the needs of the school carefully before agreeing on their decisions. Benchmarks against other schools are used to gain a clear picture of the school's performance and outside agencies are consulted to ensure that best value is achieved. Priorities are organised well in the school improvement plan. Funding is used wisely and any changes that are made are given good resources and have an impact on standards, for example, the provision of the information and communication technology suite. There is efficient budgetary control exercised by the Finance Committee who receive regular updates on spending. Grants are all used effectively for their specific purpose. For example, the targeting of resources towards pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, enables these pupils to make good progress. Efficient day-to-day running of the school enables teachers to get on with the essential job of helping pupils to learn.

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

56. The headteacher, staff and governors should now:
- a) Improve teaching and learning in the nursery by:
- Identifying exactly what children are expected to learn when planning activities
  - Intervening quickly when children are not communicating and taking every opportunity to encourage them to express their ideas.
- (Paragraphs 14, 18, 24, 57, 58, 59, 61 and 64)
- b) Continue the drive to raise standards in English by;
- Teachers using the guided reading sessions more purposefully to improve pupils' reading comprehension.
- (Paragraphs 5, 21 and 69)

- c) Continue the drive to raise standards in mathematics by;
- Teachers making better use of resources, such as white boards and number fans, to help pupils with their mental calculations.
  - Teachers introducing a wider range of mathematical vocabulary in their lessons.
- (Paragraphs 6, 22, 76, 81 and 83)
- d) Improve the attendance of the small number persistent absentees and those pupils who are away on family holidays for long periods by
- Re evaluating procedures to find out why they do not work for approximately eight per cent of the pupils and finding new ways to influence those families.
- (Paragraphs 15 and 38)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|                                                                      |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Number of lessons observed                                           | 71 |
| 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 |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number     | 2         | 9         | 29   | 27           | 2              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 3         | 13        | 42   | 39           | 3              | 0    | 0         |

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

### Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll                                           | Nursery | YR– Y6 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)      | 23      | 260    |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 0       | 122    |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs                                           | Nursery | YR– Y6 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 0       | 6      |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 20      | 124    |

| English as an additional language                       | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 125          |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year                                       | No of pupils |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 31           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 28           |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 5.7 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 3.2 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|
|                                                                                        | 2001 | 17   | 20    | 37    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 9       | 10      | 12          |
|                                             | Girls    | 17      | 18      | 16          |
|                                             | Total    | 26      | 28      | 28          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 70 (69) | 76 (67) | 76 (78)     |
|                                             | National | 84 (83) | 86 (84) | 91 (90)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 10      | 8           | 9       |
|                                             | Girls    | 13      | 9           | 13      |
|                                             | Total    | 23      | 17          | 22      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 62 (62) | 46 (73)     | 60 (64) |
|                                             | National | 85 (84) | 89 (86)     | 89 (88) |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|
|                                                                                        | 2001 | 10   | 13    | 23    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 5       | 6           | 10      |
|                                             | Girls    | 3       | 3           | 8       |
|                                             | Total    | 8       | 9           | 18      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 35 (37) | 39 (40)     | 78 (60) |
|                                             | National | 75 (75) | 71 (72)     | 87 (85) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 4       | 6           | 8       |
|                                             | Girls    | 2       | 5           | 9       |
|                                             | Total    | 6       | 11          | 17      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 26 (13) | 47 (20)     | 73 (30) |
|                                             | National | 72 (70) | 74 (72)     | 82 (79) |

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 0            |
| Black – African heritage        | 0            |
| Black – other                   | 0            |
| Indian                          | 0            |
| Pakistani                       | 70           |
| Bangladeshi                     | 0            |
| Chinese                         | 0            |
| White                           | 128          |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 5            |

*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                        | 9            | 2         |
| 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) | 14.3 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 21   |
| Average class size                       | 26.3 |

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

|                                         |     |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 16  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 372 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

|                                            |         |
|--------------------------------------------|---------|
| Financial year                             | 2001    |
|                                            | £       |
| Total income                               | 584,368 |
| Total expenditure                          | 582,716 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2,268   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 37,083  |

### **Recruitment of teachers**

|                                                                                                                |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years                                               | 8 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years                                           | 7 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)                                                                    | 1 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)                           | 0 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 260 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 14  |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|                                                                                    | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.                                                             | 79             | 21            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.                                        | 50             | 43            | 7                | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.                                                   | 57             | 36            | 0                | 0                 | 7          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 14             | 43            | 29               | 7                 | 7          |
| The teaching is good.                                                              | 71             | 21            | 0                | 0                 | 7          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 57             | 36            | 0                | 0                 | 7          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 79             | 21            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 86             | 7             | 0                | 0                 | 7          |
| The school works closely with parents.                                             | 36             | 50            | 7                | 7                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.                                                | 36             | 57            | 7                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 71             | 29            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 29             | 50            | 14               | 7                 | 0          |

*Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100*

## **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**

57. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is sound overall. It is good in the reception class and has a positive effect on their learning and progress. There are weaknesses in the nursery where there is a lack of purposeful activities on some occasions. Learning objectives, which are directly related to the national scheme of Early Learning Goals, are not clearly identified. Children's attainment on entry into the nursery is very low.
58. The proportion of children entering the nursery from families where English is an additional language is increasing and is now approximately 50 per cent. The teaching of children learning English as an additional language is good in the reception class and lesson planning takes full account of their specific needs. However, this is less evident in the nursery. In the nursery and in the reception class, children are encouraged to work together and talk about the tasks they are completing. There is an emphasis on practical activities and skilled bilingual assistants carefully intervene when a child does not fully understand the teacher's explanation. In the reception class, very good use is made of the children's first language to help them gain vocabulary. Often the English equivalent word is introduced to help the children to build up their vocabulary in the additional language.
57. Many of the children from English speaking backgrounds also have a limited vocabulary. Many have a poor knowledge of letters, virtually no writing skills and little understanding of number. Their progress is slow in the nursery but they begin to achieve well in the reception class. Very few children are on course to achieve the expected learning goals in language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world or mathematics. However, in the areas of creative and physical development, although below average, more children reach the required standards. Standards in personal and social development are also closer to the expected levels. These findings reflect those of the previous report. Some children in the reception class have been identified as having special educational needs, including a statemented child. All make good progress. All children in the nursery are placed on the register indicating the general concern for their levels of development.
58. Most children make good progress in personal and social development, as a result of good teaching and adults working together successfully. Teachers and support staff are very caring, supportive and encouraging, for instance in praising children's achievements. They are good role models and listen with genuine interest to what children say. This promotes children's self esteem and fosters the development of good relationships with adults and with each other. Almost all children settle quickly and happily to daily routines. There is greater challenge in the reception class where children are encouraged to take responsibility for the equipment they are using. These children are capable of changing water at the painting table. They complete this task

sensibly with the minimum of disruption. Children share equipment well, although few are able to play collaboratively. Most children in both classes show a good ability to become involved in the activity of their choice and remain on task for prolonged periods. Snack time makes a good contribution to children's personal and social development. There is a relaxed atmosphere and children are beginning to talk to each other about their work in school.

59. There are weaknesses in the teaching of language and literacy in the nursery, which prevents children from achieving as well as they should. Not enough activities are provided to encourage children to enter into conversation with each other and with adults. Children are sometimes left on their own for too long and many of the children are not able to communicate with each other. Often role-play activities are too complex to draw the children into the conversation, which becomes dominated by the adults. Other opportunities to develop role-play are not taken up, for instance opportunities to introduce a 'petrol station' to extend role-play into the outdoor play area are not taken even although the play equipment is available and some children do 'fill up their motor cars and bicycles with petrol'. Children throughout the Foundation Stage have sound opportunities to make marks and develop their emergent writing skills.
60. In the reception class, children actively build on their existing knowledge of using books. They know how to hold their book in the correct position and turn the pages. Most pupils realise that the illustrations carry meaning and many children identify a story line. A few children are beginning to understand that the printed words carry meaning. They are developing a basic sight vocabulary. Good teaching in the reception class results in the children achieving well. The teacher has skilfully adapted literacy hour techniques and has identified an interesting range of tasks to ensure that all children are challenged and engaged in the activities. In one lesson, for example, some children were developing their handwriting skills, other children were painting an illustration from the big book, whilst a third group were introduced to the key words of the story that had been read to the class. All children in the Foundation Stage enjoy listening to stories. Many children are beginning to form letters correctly and to write their names.
61. Valuable mathematical experiences are provided and many children make good progress in their learning. Children in the nursery demonstrate a basic understanding of the value of number symbols up to five, with some more able children recognising numbers up to eight. They are beginning to apply this knowledge to everyday problem solving but opportunities to purchase items in the 'shop' and handle change are not fully developed. Children in the nursery have a sound mathematical knowledge of two-dimensional shape and they are able to paint a shape from memory. However, their use of mathematical language such as 'more than', 'less than' is very limited. The development of activities involving shape is continued in the reception class where the teacher has adapted a numeracy hour approach. In the reception class teaching is good and much is expected of the children. For example, when they play a shape game, the teacher challenges them to tell the class



the correct name of the shape in a sentence and talk about the number of sides and corners. There is a very good understanding of how young children learn mathematics. Learning support assistants are deployed well to work with groups of children to create portraits by arranging two-dimensional shapes. All children in the Foundation Stage sing mathematical counting songs with enthusiasm. These activities reinforce their number sequencing skills and introduce some early subtraction skills.

62. Satisfactory teaching in developing knowledge and understanding of the world helps children to achieve steadily in the nursery. For example, adults encourage them to roll out clay and, in an activity later in the week; children are given opportunities to use cutting tools to create clay tiles, which they decorate with mark making implements. Children become familiar with the computer keyboard and use the mouse with increasing control to manipulate programmes. They produce patterns by lifting items to drag them to the chosen position on their pattern. Other children create three-dimensional imaginary maps, which include roads, bridges, railway lines and junctions, using constructional materials. Very good teaching in the reception class helps the children to make good progress. They participate in games where they use their sense of touch to identify everyday objects and materials. Adults challenge children to talk about how these objects feel. This helps them to develop their speaking skills.
63. Good provision in creative development helps children make good progress. In the nursery, adults work with children to mix paint and create abstract patterns. They use glues to join paper and card as they create pictures of model vehicles. Some more advanced pupils are able to create three-dimensional models. Many children enjoy the challenge of construction kits and work hard to create their own three-dimensional patterns. Reception children mix paint expertly to create patterns using different colours. They respond eagerly to the teacher's introduction and are enthralled by the range of autumnal colours they discover in the leaves that the teacher introduces. Some opportunities to give children time to browse in books that include scenes by famous artists are not developed. All children learn the words of new songs and sing them tunefully.
64. Provision for children's physical development is sound and they attain standards that are typical for children of their age. However, there are weaknesses in the teaching. The outdoor play area is not sufficiently developed and pupils are not challenged to use their imagination. Although the adults work hard in this area, particularly in developing children's throwing and catching skills, there is no order to these activities. Consequently children are often left to play individually riding their bicycles or playing on the climbing frame without purpose. Currently the outdoor play area does not support other areas of learning. Children in the reception class enjoy their physical education lessons, however the objectives of the lesson, to obey instructions and to move quickly to different parts of the room, does not require them to move in different ways.

## ENGLISH

65. Although still below those of similar schools in reading and writing and in speaking by the time that pupils reach the age of eleven, standards have improved steadily from a very low point at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' listening skills have improved at a good rate. Pupils now listen well to their teachers and to each other. This improvement raises standards across several subjects. In Key Stage 1, standards in reading have improved to match those of similar schools and standards in writing are higher.
66. The current Year 6 pupils are still attaining very low standards. The Year 6 class has a larger number of pupils with special educational needs and the year group, as a whole, has not benefited from good teaching in the past. Teaching of English is now good and as a result, pupils lower down the school, in Years 3, 4 and 5, are reaching higher standards. Boys and girls are attaining equally well whereas at the time of the previous inspection, a high proportion of girls underachieved.
67. Standards have improved because of the drive of the head teacher, the expertise of the Local Education Authority and the efforts of the subject leader. Together they have successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy and regularly checked the quality of the teaching and its impact on pupils' achievements. National test results have been rigorously analysed at both key stages and weaker areas, such as writing in both key stages, have been effectively targeted. Pupils' progress towards their targets in reading and writing is carefully assessed. These measures are lifting standards. Writing has improved faster and more successfully than reading because the whole school has rightly channelled its' attention and energy towards this area.
68. The majority of Year 1 and 2 pupils achieve well in speaking, given their additional language difficulties and the very low speaking and listening skills that many pupils have when they enter school. Year 1 pupils learn effectively about the meanings, patterns and rhythms of words through stories. However, few Year 2 pupils speak in complete sentences. For example, one pupil, when talking about her lost pet said, 'It jumped out its cage.' Knowing this, teachers use the start and ends of lessons to broaden pupils' speaking skills and help them to extend the broken sentences they would otherwise use. Where teaching is good, teachers ask specific questions to encourage pupils to use joining words to extend their sentences, for example, 'My pets are special to me because they comfort me.' Teachers make good use of puppets and pictures to encourage reluctant speakers to take part in discussions. This high level of support ensures that all pupils receive good opportunities to extend their use of language. Year 6 pupils are very well challenged and respond immediately because the teacher requires them to explain their ideas in detail. This accelerates the rate of achievement.
69. Pupils achieve steadily in reading in both key stages, given their low starting points. The level of reading and the challenge of the tasks are closely

matched to pupils' different learning needs. All pupils enjoy shared reading sessions. Teachers and support assistants spend uninterrupted time together with other groups working on reading activities. This improved picture is a result of the effective teaching in English lessons and across other subjects. Pupils now achieve more in their knowledge of letter sounds, words and sentences. In Years 1, 2, 3 and 4, the extensive work on words sounds in the shared sessions is very fruitful. Pupils gain competence and a greater understanding of the world around them because teachers explain new word meanings clearly. The school now needs to develop and improve the guided reading group sessions throughout the school. Although pupils are competent in blending letter sounds to make words, they struggle to understand the meaning of what they read. They require more help to know how to look for clues before they can read in greater depth.

70. In Year 3 and 4, small groups of pupils who are reading just below the average levels are effectively targeted. This boosts their reading skills to bring them up to average. Where teaching is outstanding, as in Year 6, the teacher expertly draws out pupils' understanding of poetry. For example, after discussing poetry at some depth, one pupil wrote, 'Paradise is when, after the storm, all the animals and people feel relaxed.' More able pupils draw out complex meanings from a Shakespeare's 'King Lear' and use terms such as simile and personification to explain it. However, the majority of Key Stage 2 pupils' have limited capacity to find information for themselves because they are still hindered by limited skills in reading for understanding. This is now a school priority. Most Year 6 pupils know how to use the library to find a book and they understand how to locate a particular topic within the book. However, only a small number of pupils are able to go beyond this point to sift and organise the information. The new technology including the computer projection screen considerably enhances pupils' reading skills, and is a significant improvement factor. This ranges from very basic sentence ordering, using cut and paste tools in Year 4 to searching the Internet for poems in Year 6.
71. At both key stages, the good teaching of writing in several subjects is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Teachers support pupils in their attempts to write using very effective methods. For example, teachers and pupils read a text together and then re-write a similar piece, using either the same or a different format. This approach clearly shows pupils how to write instructions, reports, lists and stories. In Year 2, for example, pupils organise a story in a circle of pictures. When the first draft is finished the teacher demonstrates what to do next and says, 'When I look at it tomorrow, I might want to add bits in.' This is a key point in showing pupils how to go about writing and how to write for different reasons. The emphasis on spelling and letter sounds supports them well as they write. This firm and consistent approach including catch-up groups, gives pupils added steps so they achieve more. Support staff help pupils to sustain their writing by drawing on pupils' existing skills and encourage them to have a go at new ones. As a result, Key Stage 2 pupils achieve well. Each class has a writing code that guides them as they compose. All pupils have writing targets and these are

stepped up, when achieved. More work needs to be done at Key Stage 1 on improving the teaching of basic sentences so that more pupils are able to use capital letters and full stops more accurately. Also, in Key Stage 2, pupils need to be shown how to connect sections of their writing together, using words such as, 'however', 'therefore', and 'as a result of'. Lack of consistency in teaching handwriting in the past has resulted in weaknesses in pupils' presentational skills.

72. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers manage lessons very well and pupils work efficiently. For example, Year 6 pupils are given one minute to get their work organized, and they do. Distractions to learning are rare because they are dealt with by clear, positive signals from the teacher. Teachers have good knowledge of English but more significantly, they know how to teach it well. Year 2 and 6 teachers have very good expertise and ensure that all pupils are highly involved in the lesson. Pupils' knowledge and skills are extended and there is a good level of challenge. Teachers' pose questions in a series of steps and this helps pupils to think logically. Lesson planning is very effective in providing for the very wide range of pupils' learning needs and gives them every chance to improve quickly. Where teaching is outstanding, teachers are ambitious and enthusiastic. Pupils pick this up and respond confidently to new learning.
73. The school makes effective use of additional staff and finding time to support pupils with English as an additional language. Support staff are time tabled to be with these pupils to ensure that specific teaching is provided at the most crucial times, in literacy lessons for example. Teachers go out of their way to ensure that these pupils are able to understand and contribute to the lessons. Pictures and signs are used well to open the channels of communication. This allows them to take an active part in lessons and also helps teachers to assess how well they are learning. For example, a new pupil with no English at all, was able to take an active part in the lesson because the teacher drew a picture of a smile and gave a 'thumbs up' to help the pupil to communicate that he understood the message.
74. Pupils with special educational needs are never left to struggle on their own. Teachers and support staff question them to make them think and reassure them that they are on the right track but never resort to simply telling them the answer. Such approaches enable pupils with specific language and learning needs to make good progress. Teachers work hard to help pupils to behave independently. As a result, pupils continually check over their work to see if they can make improvements.

## MATHEMATICS

75. Pupils enter school with very low attainment. By the time they leave, at the age of eleven, they achieve standards that are well below the national average but match those of similar schools. However, this is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were very low. Taking into account the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs, the incidence of English as an additional language and the high turnover of pupils, results are encouraging. The school's own end of year assessments show that pupils are attaining higher standards, particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5, which suggests that standards are set to rise substantially in the coming years.
76. There are a number of reasons for this improvement. The national numeracy strategy has been successfully implemented throughout the school. Staff have received training and are familiar with the new recommendations. The subject leader is very effective and has worked well to improve the standards. For example, results of tests are now carefully analysed to see where the pupils could achieve better. Targets for each class, for each term, are set and these are displayed in the classrooms. Another factor is that teaching has improved and there is now good teaching particularly in Year 2 and in many of the Key Stage 2 classes. Although pupils' skills are improving, many pupils struggle to understand and use mathematical language correctly. This limits their capacity to understand the task or the question on a written test.
77. Pupils achieve at a satisfactory rate in Key Stage 1 but good progress is made in Year 2. In this class, the teacher sets challenging tasks for the all pupils, including the more able ones and those who need help with their learning. For example, when pupils investigated solid shapes they worked with good concentration and application at their own level. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a sound understanding of basic number skills, such as counting and ordering numbers. They recognise halves and quarters and use the correct mathematical names for common shapes such as square, circle and rectangle.
78. Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2. This better achievement reflects the stronger teaching, particularly in Years 4 and 6. In Year 6, pupils are all actively involved in the lesson throughout. Work is always matched to the abilities of all pupils and every pupil is helped to understand the theme of the lesson. The precise match of work provided is consistent in the junior classes. This gives pupils confidence to complete the tasks and achieve well. By the end of the junior key stage, pupils can add and subtract large numbers accurately and have knowledge of the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages.
79. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in developing their basic number skills in relation to their abilities. Learning assistants work alongside them in lessons to help them to understand new ideas and to check that they are working accurately.

80. Pupils who have English as an additional language initially find mathematical terms confusing. However, once the new vocabulary has been explained they work accurately and make good progress. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, for example, the good support provided enabled these pupils to understand fractions. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls throughout the school.
81. Although there are many positive features, the mental part at the beginning of the lessons could be improved. Teachers more often concentrate on number and seldom introduce different aspects of mathematics, such as measurement and shape into the discussions. As a result, pupils do not have enough opportunities to listen to and use mathematical terms. Occasionally teachers do not make enough use of resources, such as number fans, digit cards or whiteboards to help pupils to visualise the number problem. On occasions, pupils are questioned individually for too long and this restricts opportunities for all pupils to improve their quick recall of number facts. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to use a wider range of mathematical terms by introducing units of measurement, but this is not always the case in all classes. The end of the lesson discussion session is used well by most teachers to assess what has been learnt or found difficult during the lesson. This helps teachers to build effectively over time on what pupils know and understand.
82. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers know and manage their pupils well and have formed good relationships with them. This motivates pupils to work hard. Teachers constantly try to raise the pupils' self-esteem by praising them. For example in Year 3, the teacher said, 'You are brilliant, I can't catch you out at all!' when she was questioning the children. Teachers plan the lessons well and this is a strong feature of the teaching. Lessons usually move along at a good pace but occasionally particularly in Year 1 and the Year 1/2 class the pace slows when pupils sit on the carpet for too long listening to the teacher or wait for individual children to answer a question. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ask challenging, open-ended questions to consolidate pupils' understanding.
83. Information and communication technology is increasingly being used to support the learning in mathematics. For example, in a Year 1/2 class a computer program was used to improve pupils' knowledge of buying articles from a shop. There are occasions where pupils are required to measure in design and technology and draw graphs in science. However these opportunities are limited and this holds back the development of pupils' mathematical vocabulary.

## **SCIENCE**

84. Standards are well below average, largely because many pupils do not have good background knowledge. However, there have been marked

improvements in the areas of weakness identified at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are now given far more responsibility for planning and developing their own investigations. They now use planning sheets well to make predictions, analyse the evidence and draw conclusions. Much of the work is practical. This helps pupils to understand new learning and improve their skills and pupils achieve well in the practical aspects of science. Pupils of all levels of ability are challenged and, as a result, significantly more are reaching higher standards. Assessment indicates that standards are likely to be similar this year but will rise in succeeding years. Leadership in the subject is strong and provides clear direction through rigorous analysis of teaching and learning. As a result teachers' confidence is increasing and they have greater knowledge of the subject.

85. By the age of seven, the level of pupils' work is well below average. However, standards are rising because work is now systematically planned to extend the learning of pupils of all abilities. All areas of the subject are covered well. There is a strong emphasis on applying skills of investigation to extend pupils' thinking. Standards of teaching are especially strong at the end of both key stages. In these classes, the teachers have very high expectations of their pupils. They challenge them to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills on a regular basis. There is also a strong emphasis on extending the pupils' language, using precise scientific terms. In Year 6, pupils are grouped according to their ability for two terms. This arrangement enables work to be even better targeted to the learning needs of pupils in each set. Computers are being increasingly well used in the subject, though the school recognises that this needs to be extended still further. Measures needed to improve standards are now largely in place. However, there has not yet been sufficient time for the initiatives to have their full impact on pupil results in the annual national tests.
86. In the knowledge and understanding areas of science, pupils achieve steadily through both key stages. Those with special educational needs receive well-targeted support, enabling them to make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, with experienced, skilful support given wherever appropriate. A strong feature of the classroom support is the emphasis given to asking the right question, rather than simply providing an answer. Pupils' achievement is most marked in Years 2 and 6. They are given open-ended challenges that offer practical opportunities to apply their understanding. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, they sorted a wide range of materials into different groups of their own choice. They explained how they had arranged them into their categories, such as rough, smooth, wood, not wood, natural and man-made. Because the teacher avoided telling pupils the answers, they were able to develop their work at their individual levels. In Year 6, the teacher uses marking well to extend pupils' thinking. A comment in one book asked a pupil studying forces to consider the extra effect of 'friction', as wheels are pushed along the ground. This extended the pupil's thinking to new levels. In other lessons seen, work was not undertaken at the same pace and teachers did not have such high expectations of all their pupils. Consequently progress was not as marked.

87. Teaching is good and never less than satisfactory. Lessons are well planned with work set at three levels of difficulty. Planning is undertaken across year groups, for example teachers in Years 3 and 4 plan together. The sharing of ideas and enables experienced staff to help the less experienced. However, occasional examples were seen of similar challenges being set, when the older class was not given significantly more difficult work. Teachers invariably begin each lesson with clear details about what the pupils are going to learn. This establishes the goals to be achieved. The positive control of pupil behaviour is now a feature of school life. Classroom support teachers and assistants play a key role in this. They are well briefed and work in very close co-operation with the class teachers. They accept responsibilities confidently and free teachers to use their skills to the full. They also play their part in maintaining the good levels of assessment in the subject, particularly for those pupils with special needs or with English as an additional language. There are regular tests at the end of each half-termly unit when records are updated on every pupil. However, pupils are not given sufficient detail of what they need to do to reach the next level in the subject. Pupils enjoy science and the subject increasingly offers them opportunities to achieve and to raise their self-esteem.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

88. Standards are above average. This is an improvement since the last inspection because the school has re-designed the programme of work to eliminate any previous weaknesses. Pupils in Year 6 are very skilled in handling small paintbrushes, mixing tones and shades and selecting drawing tools such as pencils from the high quality resources. As a result, drawings are sensitive and detailed, reflecting the good teaching and the build up of observational skills they have gained further down the school. There are good opportunities to use three-dimensional work, using materials such as card and clay. Teachers make good use of the work of a range of artists to draw out style and technique. They are good at enabling pupils to look into the details in pictures, examine the effect and reflect on their feelings. This is a strength of the subject because it encourages pupils to relate the work of these artists to their own lives. It extends their understanding of the world and fine-tunes the way they translate such detail into their own work. It is too soon to judge the impact of the subject leader because he is newly appointed.
89. Pupils achieve well through Key Stages 1 and 2. In Year 3/4, pupils improve their observational drawing by sketching the statues in the town centre. Teachers value their initial efforts, which leads to confident and sophisticated shading and use of line, higher up the school. Pupils study people in action, still life and a range of design. As a result, they are able to draw some very intricate designs and make good use of their sketchbooks. In Year 3, pupils revisit their drawings of different chairs to improve them by examining the design, the materials used and who sits in them. This helps them to design a chair for 'Cinderella' or 'the Prince' in the story they are reading together.



90. Teaching is good. Teachers are particularly effective in encouraging pupils to scrutinise their own work and that of others. This leads to improving it by sharing ideas, with the teacher's guidance. There continues to be a good balance between the teaching of skills and exploration of techniques. This approach adds to the steps on which pupils' climb to refine their skills in art. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are very well integrated into the lessons and achieve well, given their learning needs. In response to lessons about the artist Monet, one pupil was inspired to buy her own illustrated book to use in lessons. Pupils who are talented in art are recognised and given further support. This raises their attainment. Increasingly, art is used to support new pupils to communicate, especially if they speak very little English. This helps them to integrate quickly because the shared experience of a picture brings smiles and a common understanding between teacher and pupils. The use of new technology in art is very effective. Year 6 pupils compose 'Still Life' pictures of fruit bowls with perspective and precision using drawing tools. This increases both skills in communication technology and design but more significantly, leads pupils' well into their next stages of learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

91. Standards are average and are much improved since the last inspection. More time is now allocated to the subject and regular opportunities are provided for pupils to design and evaluate their work. Subject leadership has been effective in raising standards by guiding, supporting and monitoring the work of teachers. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are given good support in lessons. New and unfamiliar words are explained to help them to understand the task ahead. This enables them to make good progress.
92. Pupils achieve steadily in Key Stage 1. At an early stage, they learn to draw simple sketches to show what their intended model will look like, from the side and from below. They gain a secure understanding of the properties of different materials by experimenting with card, wood and fabrics. They learn to evaluate their work, for example, by explaining how their puppets could be more lifelike. However, insufficient experience of using construction kits, in previous years, holds back their learning and this is not compensated for enough in their current design projects. For example, pupils find difficulty in visualising how parts can be fastened together to create movement, such as wheels turning on an axle. The important stage of using construction kits to investigate moving parts is sometimes missed out.
93. Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2. They soon learn that the design of a successful product is related to the needs of the consumer, such as in using bright colours to catch the buyer's eye. Once pupils are clear about the task, they produce detailed plans to help with the making. For example, they draw accurate sketches, label the parts, list the materials needed and write carefully sequenced instructions. They sometimes use the computer to experiment with different designs. Examples of models made, such as toys

with moving parts based on rotating cams, indicate that by Year 6 pupils have learnt to cut, shape and join materials together accurately. Finished pieces of work are extensively evaluated and the lessons learnt are incorporated into future designs.

94. Teaching is satisfactory. However, there is some good teaching in Key Stage 2. Teachers understand most of the elements of the subject well and ensure that pupils are clear about the work they are expected to do. Teachers are imaginative in stimulating pupils' thinking. They use resources well to widen pupils' understanding of the possibilities. For example, in Year 1 and 2, teachers showed pupils an interesting collection of different toy vehicles. By asking searching questions about each model, pupils were able to understand, for example, why the shape of an ambulance was different from the shape of a bus. Lessons are well prepared and teachers are effective in helping pupils to organise their design ideas. In Year 4, for example, the teacher wrote down pupils' suggestions about the important features of designing packaging for a tube of toothpaste. This helped pupils to think ahead and take account of the size, the strength and the appearance of their packaging.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

95. Standards at the end of both key stages are below those seen in most schools. However, most pupils achieve steadily in relation to the very limited knowledge of different places they have when they begin school. Many older pupils still lack the background knowledge and skills that are required for their later studies. Since the last inspection, the work to be covered in each year group has been carefully sequenced. This now provides a solid framework around which teachers can base their planning and their assessments. A good feature is the emphasis given to class visits to places of interest. Local visits give younger pupils opportunities to discover facts about their own environment. Visits further afield enable pupils to contrast their own surroundings with very different places. This is successfully widening their geographical experience.
96. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from small group support in lessons. They have good opportunities to ask and answer questions and this helps them to make good progress. Teachers make a point of explaining any new words and ideas to pupils with English as an additional language. This ensures that they understand the lesson and are able to achieve well. The evidence in lessons and pupils' books shows that they are achieving better than they used to. In lessons, three levels of activities are provided to match pupils' different learning needs pupils. This ensures that all pupils are suitably challenged and able to learn new skills. For example, when conducting a traffic survey in Years 1 and 2, pupils make charts and graphs to show the vehicles using roads around the school. Others, in addition, study how parking is controlled. Extended tasks are given to those who can analyse why roads are busier at specific times. Through such studies, pupils gain new insights into their daily surroundings. Foundations are now well laid at this

early stage. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have not developed a similar grasp of the wider world. There has been an improvement in the use of globes, maps and atlases, enabling them to identify major countries. Good use of them is made in studies of current affairs in Years 5 and 6. In discussions, pupils show an understanding of some international events but only a limited grasp of environmental issues.

97. Teaching is satisfactory and improving because of effective monitoring. The annual report, produced by the subject leader, gives a thorough overview of the subject. The school rightly targeted increasing the use of computers for geography and this has started to be developed. For example, pupils extend their map-reading skills well on the 'Crystal Rainforest' program. The new scheme of work is being well developed and tests at the end of each unit enable teachers to identify areas of weakness in the pupils' learning as well as in their own teaching. The school is very honest in making these judgements and consistently addresses them.

## **HISTORY**

98. Pupils achieve steadily, and better than they did at the time of the last inspection. However, many pupils do not have good background knowledge and standards are below average. There is now a much stronger emphasis on developing their historical skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Pupils of average and below average levels of attainment make the best progress. The learning of the more able pupils is not always sufficiently extended. A strong feature of the subject is the good leadership that provides teachers with accurate assessments of areas that need to be improved. Visits also make a very strong impact. Pupils learn well through these memorable, first hand experiences
99. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know sufficient of The Great Fire of London to enable them to produce their own imaginative accounts. One pupil's story begins, 'The wind blew and the fire spread on and on along Pudding Lane.' Writing skills learnt in English are well utilised in history. A feature of pupils' books is that it is all their own work. They learn about Florence Nightingale and sequence various events in her life. Following a school visit, good contrasts are drawn between life at the seaside now and in the past.
100. Pupils in Years 3/4 were set the task of finding out about Boudica. In Year 3, pictures were used as the stimulus from which pupils made various deductions that she was either a heroine or an instigator of war. In Year 4, pupils were given insufficient support to research information about Boudica, when the teacher was helping the other half of the class to use computers. In Years 5 and 6, there is a good focus on the use of time lines. These enable pupils to understand how times change.
101. Teaching is satisfactory. Planning is good and ensures that pupils acquire the important historical skills. Assessment in the subject is also good, with tests completed at the end of each unit and all pupils graded in line with their

response. The objectives for each lesson are well established to ensure that pupils are well aware of what they are learning. Pupils enjoy the work, especially on those occasions when they undertake research, such as their biographies of John Lennon. However, interviews with pupils indicate that in the past there has not been a background of good learning in the subject. They do know of some of the key events but are not clear about their causes or outcomes. Increasingly, videos and computers are being used to add interest and to provide research opportunities. The school now analyses its performance and uses the results well to sharpen the planning. Areas of improvement, such as greater challenge for the more able pupils, have been correctly identified and are being tackled systematically.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

102. Standards are in line with those expected nationally. Most pupils attain the levels expected at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. This is because of systematic teaching of specific skills in using computer programs and functions. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be too low and pupils made poor progress. Since then, major changes have had a strong impact on pupils' achievements. A computer suite has been provided and all pupils receive well-planned lessons each week. The curriculum is now better organised to provide increasingly challenging experiences for all pupils. The subject leader has been central to raising standards. She has good expertise and has led staff training. In addition, a specialist teacher, working in the school on a temporary basis, ensures that teachers and pupils are guided in the new technologies. As a result, teachers are now confident in handling the subject. The progress pupils make is even more praiseworthy because very few of them have access to computers at home.
103. Pupils are well motivated, behave sensibly and responsibly and show much enjoyment when they use computers. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils confidently use a wide range of programs. They know how to make screen changes and how to control different functions using the mouse and the keyboard. For example, in a Year 1/2 class, pupils directed the movement of the arrow on the screen by using the mouse correctly. They understand how to give instructions to operate a programmable toy to perform different functions. For example, Year 2 pupils were able to give the programmable toy a sequence of instructions and predict where it would finish.
104. As pupils progress through Key Stage 2, their skills continue to improve. They understand and use the correct terms as they talk about what they are learning. For example, when the Year 6 pupils were using and producing spreadsheets, they could explain what cells, columns and formulas were. They are beginning to understand how to use and produce spreadsheets to help solve numeracy problems. Pupils know how to access the Internet to locate information that helps them in their work in other subjects. Their word

processing skills are developing well and pupils can change the font to alter the style of text before printing off their work.

105. Teaching is good and very good in Year 2. Teachers use their good knowledge to focus on specific skills. If any problems occur with the computers they are able to remedy them quickly. Lessons are planned effectively and the learning targets for the lesson are discussed with the pupils. Teachers question pupils well to assess their understanding. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Lessons are always well organised and have sufficient challenge to motivate the children to work hard and remain interested in the tasks.

## MUSIC

106. Standards are average. A programme of work for every class has been provided since the last inspection, which includes opportunities for pupils to use computers and keyboards. Their learning is suitably assessed at regular intervals. This ensures that pupils are able to build on what they have learnt in previous years. As a result, they now make better progress in lessons, particularly in the areas of listening to music and composing. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to sing or to play instruments in whole school events, such as assemblies. Consequently, when pupils do sing, there is a lack of pride in performing and this was the case at the time of the last inspection. The subject leader works in the nursery and does not know what is happening in the main school. This limits her effectiveness in eliminating weaknesses and raising standards.
107. In lessons, pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve steadily. Pupils listen to stories and choose instruments to represent the different characters. They learn to recognise short and long sounds and record patterns of sound using dots. They listen to different pieces of music, such as 'Vivaldi's Seasons,' and give their impressions of how the music makes them feel.
108. Pupils achieve steadily in lessons in Key Stage 2. They use five notes from the pentatonic scale to rearrange into simple compositions and record these using symbols, such as spirals and waves to create loud and soft, long and short effects. Pupils know the names of instruments, one or two famous composers and can explain the difference between different types of music such as classical, jazz and opera. Many pupils do not have good listening skills. They find it difficult to detect changes in pitch and tempo but teachers are aware of this and guide their listening well.
109. Teaching is satisfactory and there are some good lessons. In Year 4, for example, the teacher uses cue cards effectively to teach pupils how songs are made up of different elements. The cards prompt pupils to think about the rhythm, the melody, the tempo and the how the lyrics rhyme. Knowing these facts enables pupils to learn songs quickly and to appreciate their unique character. Pupils with special educational needs are often given extra support from learning assistants. This helps them to gain confidence and to make good progress in their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language are helped to understand musical terms and encouraged to share their cultural songs and rhymes. This sensitive support ensures that they too make good progress. Teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 are currently receiving a boost from a visiting drama group. The tutors are skilled musicians who are developing pupils' understanding of how to improve their singing by adopting the correct posture and learning to breathe properly to hold the notes. Pupils enjoy these sessions and are making significant strides in learning how to compose, practise and prepare for their performance of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

110. Standards are typical of those found in most primary schools and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve steadily. Satisfactory subject leadership has ensured that standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
111. Pupils undertake swimming lessons in Year 6. In 2001, 81 per cent of children were able to swim the national standard of 25 metres. Although this is still not high enough, the school has allocated extra funding to ensure that swimming lessons continue for the Year 6 pupils. Pupils are gaining confidence in the water and a third of them are strong swimmers at this early stage of the school year.
112. Pupils show good control of their bodies and have a good awareness of space. For example, they can stop and change direction without bumping into each other. Year 4 pupils show good control when jumping and landing. In Year 3, pupils show control when travelling over benches and mats. Pupils throughout the school understand the effect that exercise has on their bodies and are aware of the importance of warming up prior to beginning skill practises.
113. Teaching is satisfactory and good in Year 4. Lessons are well planned with varied activities to improve pupils' skills. Teachers manage the pupils well and the pupils respond by behaving well and taking part enthusiastically in the lessons. Occasionally the pace of the lesson slows when pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher or waiting to begin a movement on a piece of apparatus. This was seen in a Year 3 lesson when four children out of each group were standing around waiting to begin an activity. In some lessons pupils are not given the opportunity to evaluate their own work, because the teacher does this for them. Teachers are suitably dressed for teaching the subjects and pay close attention to safe working practices.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

114. Standards match the levels expected in the syllabus provided for Rotherham schools at the ages of seven and eleven. The picture is similar to one presented in the last inspection report. The subject is very effectively led. Teachers benefit from very clear guidance on what to teach and how to assess pupils' learning. The teaching is closely monitored to ensure that important elements, such as educational visits to the Mosque and Synagogue, are provided. However, some of the suggestions built into the school's programme of work are not always followed. This results in the teaching methods occasionally being too narrow with fewer opportunities for pupils to take part in role-play and to examine religious artefacts than the subject leader would prefer. In many other respects, religious education plays a central and important part on the life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to compare the principles and beliefs of different religions and to understand the similarities and differences between them. This makes a significant

contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual awareness and to the climate of racial harmony that pervades the school.

115. Pupils achieve steadily in Key Stage 1. They understand the special meaning of religious events, such as Easter and Eid, and that believers talk to God/Allah in their prayers. Much of the pupils' learning is rooted in their own, and their classmates, experiences. For example, when pupils hear about the miracles of Jesus, they reflect on and share the special moments in their own lives when friends and family members have recovered from illness. These exchanges play an important part in pupils' widening understanding of religious ideas and enable them not only to learn about religion, but also to learn from it.
116. The pupils' steady rate of learning continues through Key Stage 2. The subject is very effectively used to help pupils to come to terms with their life experiences. For example, when reflecting on the loss of loved pet, one pupil wrote, 'He came home in a box. I stroked him one last time and then we buried him in a blanket. I will never forget that day.' There are many valuable opportunities for pupils to explore relationships and learn to understand and respect others. For example, they imagine what they would like to be in a future life and reflect on what makes a good friend. These activities successfully raise pupils' self esteem, help them to make moral decisions and shape their behaviour.
117. Pupils with special educational needs benefit considerably from the good support they receive and from the opportunities to discuss how people feel and think. This successfully increases their self-confidence and helps them to make good progress.
118. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress. Almost all of these pupils are from Muslim families. Teachers encourage them to share their faith experiences and explain their beliefs. This also helps other pupils to develop both respect and understanding of cultural diversity.
119. Teaching is satisfactory and often good. Sensitive teaching of Christianity and Islam binds the school together and helps pupils to understand that God and Allah represent the believers' reverence for a higher being. Visits to special places of worship are a key ingredient of the teaching. The visits are carefully planned. Some time before the visit, pupils decide and agree upon what they hope to learn. Their ideas often form the basis of a questionnaire, which the Priest, Rabbi or the Imam subsequently provides the answers to. Such approaches sharpen pupils' observations and help them to listen carefully to what is said. Following the visit, teachers discuss the answers collected and this helps pupils to think and to write down their experiences clearly. Stories, such as 'Jesus curing the man who could not walk', are often used to good effect. Teachers are careful to explain the meaning of new words such as 'paralysed' and ask probing questioning to make pupils think and to assess their level of understanding. Occasionally, teachers read or



talk for too long. When this happens, pupils become restless and the message in the story is lost.