

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CASTLEFORD REDHILL INFANT SCHOOL**

Airedale, Castleford

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 108233

Head teacher: Mrs P Howe

Reporting inspector: Miss WLR Hunter  
3277

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224292

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Queens Park Drive Airedale Castleford West Yorkshire
Postcode:	WF10 3JX
Telephone number:	01977 723 035
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr L Shaw
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Miss WLR Hunter (3277)	Registered inspector	Mathematics	How high are standards? The school's results and achievements.
		Design and technology	How well are pupils taught?
		Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
		Children in the foundation stage.	What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs S Bullerwell (12536)	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs M McLean (12631)	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Art and design	
		Music	
		Religious education	
		Equal opportunities	
Mr J Atkinson (18819)	Team inspector	English	
		History	
		Geography	
		Physical education	
		Special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Redhill Infant School is on the edge of a council estate where there are high levels of unemployment, social disadvantage and adult illiteracy. There is a nursery that has 39 children in the morning and 31 in the afternoon. Children transfer from this nursery three times a year into the reception classes in the main school. This term, there is one reception class of 17 children aged under five with a high number of boys (14 boys, 3 girls). There are 107 pupils (51 boys, 56 girls) aged between five and seven in the rest of the school. Over half of the pupils in the school are eligible for free school meals; this is high. Fifty three pupils and three children have been identified with special educational needs, including three pupils with statements of specific needs. Again, this is higher than average for the size of the school. There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. When children start in the nursery they have poor personal, social, mathematical and language skills and some children present emotional problems.

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

The school effectively promotes pupils' personal and social development. It is not as successful academically, mainly because pupils' limited literacy skills are a barrier to their learning in most subjects. Standards are low by the age of seven but match similar schools in the national tests. Teaching is good in some classes but not so good in others. The school is well led and managed by the head teacher and deputy head teacher who have a clear view of where and how improvements need to be made. It provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Pastoral support is very good. The school cares particularly well for pupils' personal needs and emotional well-being.
- The head teacher and deputy head are leading and managing the school well.
- The provision for cultural and multi-cultural development is excellent.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic, have positive attitudes and behave well.
- The early years (nursery and reception) give children a good start to their education.

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

- Standards in literacy are low and this has a knock-on effect on pupils' standards in other subjects.
- Most teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of assessment – this means that they do not accurately know what pupils can actually do.
- Lessons do not always take sufficient notice of what pupils can do or have done before. This affects the rate of their learning, especially the higher attainers.
- Some subject co-ordinators are not taking sufficient responsibility for monitoring and developing their subjects throughout the school.
- The school development plan is not precise enough.

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

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

The school was last inspected in November 1996 and was set seven issues to tackle. It has made satisfactory improvements since then although the pace of some developments has been quite slow. The management structure of the school has changed completely with the appointment of a new head teacher, deputy head teacher and a restructure of subject co-ordinator roles and responsibilities. Co-ordinators have started to take responsibility for their allocated subject areas but some have been more



effective than others in leading developments and promoting changes and improvements in the school. Some co-ordinators and senior managers have started to monitor the work of colleagues and the quality of teaching and learning, but others have not. The governing body was previously shared with another school but has now been replaced by a set of governors specific to this school. This governing body is still in its infancy but these governors are taking an active interest and are working well with the head teacher to get to know the school. Schemes of work have been produced for all subjects and have been subsequently linked to the nationally recommended schemes that were released last year. These now form a secure framework for the school's curriculum. The school has worked hard to improve child protection procedures and to improve the support for pupils with special educational needs. Both these areas have been tackled successfully and are now particularly effective. All health and safety issues have been dealt with. The school has a sound capacity to continue its improvement but this could be better. Improvement is not as rapid as it could be because a few longer serving members of staff do not share the governors' and head teacher's determination to change and develop the school at a faster pace.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

The school's performance in the tests for seven year olds is well below the national averages in English and mathematics. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science are also well below average. However, the school fares better when its results are compared to other schools with a similar level of free school meals. In this case, its performance was average in English, mathematics and science last year. The school's results dipped quite noticeably several years ago, following the last inspection, but have gradually improved to the current level although there is still room for further improvement. Mathematics results improved significantly in 1999 because the school introduced 'setting' arrangements but this stopped in 2000 and the results dipped again.

Standards could be higher. This is primarily because pupils have limited literacy skills and this affects their standards in all subjects. There is also a heavy skew to the lower levels in the tests because, although some pupils are capable of reaching higher standards, they are not challenged enough to do so. Girls perform much better than boys. The school has recognised this and is trying to counteract this imbalance.

Children have very limited language, mathematical and personal skills when they start in the nursery. Despite the good progress they make through the nursery and reception classes, children are still working below the levels expected for their age in all areas by the time they move into Year 1. By the age of seven, standards are still lower than expected for pupils' ages in English, mathematics and science, but

match what is expected in information and communication technology and religious education.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are interested and extremely keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and play well together at break and lunch times.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils of all ages mix well and have good relationships with each other.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory but this is an improvement since the last inspection where attendance was poor. The rate of unauthorised absence is high.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy being at school and are more than willing to learn. Their absence rates are high and are generally due to illness, holidays with family members or when they experience problems at home.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory but varies from class to class

*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.*

Thirty seven lessons were seen. Teaching was satisfactory in 48 per cent of these lessons, good in 41 per cent and very good in a further 3 per cent. Teaching was unsatisfactory in the remaining 8 per cent of lessons. Teaching is consistently good in the nursery and reception class and in one Year 2 class. Teaching is generally satisfactory elsewhere but is weaker in some classes than others. Some teachers are not taking advantage of the small class sizes they have to move individual pupils on at a fast enough pace.

Children are taught well in the nursery and reception classes. Teachers and support staff work very well together to stimulate children's interest and encourage them to develop basic language and personal skills. They expect the children to succeed and transmit their enthusiasm for learning into activities that challenge and motivate. As a result, children learn rapidly and begin to develop confidence in themselves.

In Years 1 and 2, English and mathematics are taught well in some classes but not in others. Most teachers do not plan work that matches the needs of all their pupils and do not use assessments effectively. A few teachers manage pupils' learning well through their personal knowledge, charisma and good questioning skills, but in other classes it usually means that the higher attaining pupils are not challenged as much as they should be. This slows the rate of pupils' learning and affects the development of their literacy and numeracy skills, especially in Year 1. Teachers have sound knowledge of the subjects and topics they teach and they manage pupils well to achieve high standards of behaviour. However, teachers sometimes keep pupils together as a class for too long during lessons. Although this

has the positive benefit that it helps pupils to develop good concentration and listening skills, it means that they do not get enough time to practice their other skills or to work together, or individually, on tasks that have been set for them. This has a knock-on effect on pupils' standards in Year 2 where they struggle to apply their subject knowledge in test situations.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum with a strong emphasis on the key areas of literacy, numeracy and personal development.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good for children under five – satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Children are identified at an early age and their needs are carefully diagnosed. The school puts a lot of effort into supporting pupils' personal and emotional needs that may affect their learning. There are good links with support agencies and committed support staff work with the children on a regular basis.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. There is a very effective programme of personal and social education that helps pupils to understand about issues such as health, drugs and citizenship. Provision for moral development is very good and underpins pupils' very good attitudes and good behaviour. Cultural and multi-cultural provision is excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good child protection arrangements and cares very well for pupils' personal and emotional well-being. The academic record keeping systems are meticulous but they are not used effectively to identify what pupils actually know or what they need to do next. These records do not give any useful information to help teachers plan their lessons to move pupils on in their learning.

The school has good links with parents and the local community. Most parents try hard to support their child's education in whatever way they can. They appreciate the way the school cares for their children. The school has a particularly strong personal and social curriculum that helps pupils to develop good inter-personal skills and strong relationships with each other. As a result, pupils are particularly knowledgeable about different faiths, cultures and religions, despite rarely coming into contact with people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher and deputy head teacher lead and manage the school well. Some subject co-ordinators are effective but others are not. A few longer serving members of staff are having difficulty coming to terms with the pace of change taking place in the school and are struggling to share an understanding of the need for continued developments.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has only been set up in its present form since January 2000. Governors are well informed and are working hard to support the school's development. They fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The head teacher, deputy head teacher and governors have a clear picture of how the school is performing and why. They have identified patterns and trends in performance and are adjusting the way the school works to tackle these. Too many staff have limited understanding of the standards that they should be aiming for and this means that their own assessments and evaluations are often inaccurate.
The strategic use of resources	Funding is used soundly to support the work of the school. Education support staff are used particularly well in the nursery but they are not always used to the same effect in other classes.

The school has a high level of staff for the number of pupils – this means that the class sizes are small. There is plenty of space including an effective computer suite. There are sufficient resources to support most subjects although science equipment is barely adequate. Governors consider how to get best value when they spend money but there has not been an external audit of the school's financial systems since 1995. The school development plan is too complex and does not give a precise enough indication of the school's main priorities or of how these link into the budget.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching is good and their children make good progress.</li> <li>The school works closely with them and keeps them informed. They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions.</li> <li>The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>Their children are expected to do their best and are being encouraged to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents on most, but not all, points. Parents are right to be complimentary about the way the school works with them and keeps them informed. They are also correct in their view that the school is well led and managed. Children are being encouraged to develop mature personal skills but are not always being challenged to do their best academically. Teaching is good in some classes but not in others. The school offers a good selection of visits and the range of extra-curricular activities is

perfectly reasonable.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 Pupils are not reaching the standards they should for their ages in most subjects by the time they leave the school. This is because they start school with very limited language, literacy and mathematical skills and, despite the progress they make, their literacy skills form a barrier to their learning and affect standards throughout the school.

2 Children make good progress through the nursery and reception classes and this develops their confidence and starts to build their basic skills. Nevertheless, they do not catch up from their low starting point and are still working below the levels expected for five year olds when they move into Year 1. Pupils continue to make reasonably steady progress through Years 1 and 2 but this depends on the class they are in. Pupils make better progress in Year 2. The teaching is better in some classes than others and this means that the pupils in these classes progress at a faster rate than others.

3 The school's results dipped quite noticeably several years ago following the last inspection but have gradually improved to the current level although there is still room for further improvement. Higher attaining pupils are not being challenged enough to reach the standards they should. This brings the school's overall test performance down and reflects the fact that most teachers are not planning work to stretch these pupils sufficiently to achieve their best. Boys are not performing as well as girls and this poses another concern for the school, especially in future years where there are many more boys than girls due to sit the tests.

4 Standards in reading and writing are well below average by the age of seven. This showed in last year's tests where pupils' performance was well below the national average in both reading and writing but matched those of pupils in similar schools. Although pupils start with low skills in these areas, they are not given enough chances to practice their writing, either in English or in other subjects. The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' reading by following a highly structured reading scheme, but this is sometimes followed too rigidly to allow pupils to learn and develop their reading skills at their own pace. This means that some higher attaining pupils are held back and do not achieve what they should. Pupils listen effectively but their speaking skills and their vocabulary are quite limited. This affects their ability to communicate ideas and to answer questions.

5 Standards in mathematics are below average by the age of seven. The school tried a new 'setting' arrangement in 1999 where pupils in Year 2 were re-organised into different classes for mathematics, based on their previous achievements. This appears to have had a big impact on raising the test performance in that year. However, following advice from outside the school, teachers have gone back to teaching pupils in their normal classes and the mathematics standards dipped again in 2000. Pupils' performance was well below the national average but matched those of pupils in similar schools. Pupils know how to carry out basic arithmetic calculations but they struggle when asked to apply this to solve unfamiliar problems.

6 Standards in science are also below average by the age of seven. This is due to several reasons but is mainly due to the effect of pupils' limited literacy skills. They do not use their writing skills sufficiently to record their ideas and results from investigations and struggle with technical scientific vocabulary. Because teachers recognise the problems that pupils have in expressing themselves, they sometimes spend too long discussing things with them and have a tendency to take too much control over practical investigations and direct the way that pupils record their work.

7 Standards are satisfactory in information and communication technology and religious education and match what is expected for seven year olds by the time pupils leave the school. Standards are also typical of what seven year olds should reach in the practical subjects of art and design, design and technology and physical education. However, in history and geography pupils' literacy skills hold them back, especially in presenting their written work, and this brings standards in these subjects down. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in music.

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

8 Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good. This area is a strength of the school and makes an important contribution to the standards that pupils achieve.

9 Pupils have very good attitudes and enjoy coming to school. They are interested in their work and are keen to learn. For instance, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of a new number game introduced by the teacher and tried really hard to do well and stop their numbers going 'into the dustbin'. Pupils are good at listening to each other and to their teachers. During lessons they concentrate well, even on the occasions teachers keep them sitting for too long before letting them get on with their work. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson, pupils sat on the carpet for nearly forty minutes while the teacher talked to them about not being able to use the sense of sight in the dark.

10 Pupils' behaviour is good. They respond well to teachers' use of praise and the consistent expectations of all staff. In the playground, pupils play together and happily share the newly introduced lunchtime games equipment. There is no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour and there have been no exclusions since the last inspection.

11 Pupils' personal development and relationships are also good. These are based on mutual trust, respect for others' feelings and a growing awareness of other cultures, which are promoted well during assemblies and religious education lessons. Children start to develop confidence at an early age in the nursery and they become more confident as they get older. For example, the youngest children are given responsibility to tidy away after themselves, while older pupils help to set up for assembly.

12 Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory. Although there has been an improvement since the last inspection, when it was poor, it is still below the national average. Attendance has increased gradually in each of the last three years but is still not at an acceptable level. Authorised absence is mainly for medical reasons and when parents take pupils on holiday during term time. Unauthorised absence is well above the national average and is due to pupils missing school when there are problems at home.

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

13 Teaching is consistently good in the nursery and reception class and in one Year 2 class. Teaching is generally satisfactory elsewhere but is weaker in some classes than others. This means that children make good progress through the nursery and reception classes but this slows down a bit in Year 1. The rate of pupils' progress in Year 2 depends on which class they are in.

14 Children under five are taught well. Teachers and support staff work very well together, especially in the nursery. They plan activities that stimulate children's interest and encourage them to develop basic language and personal skills. Staff expect the children to succeed and transmit their enthusiasm for learning into activities that challenge and motivate. For example, in one nursery session, some children baked choc-chip cookies with a parent while another group worked with a student to talk

about the texture and shape of feathers before making a collage. In the same lesson, nursery support staff taught some children how to handle Gerald (the rabbit) and showed others how to wash up their cooking utensils safely, while the teacher worked with a group of children to match shapes and colours. This high level of interaction with adults is important because most children have such low levels of personal, social and language skills when they start in the nursery. As a result, they make rapid progress, quickly gain confidence in themselves and begin to communicate and respond to the adults and with each other.

15 In Years 1 and 2, teaching is basically satisfactory but most teachers are not taking advantage of the small class sizes they have to move individual pupils on at a fast enough pace. This is particularly true for the higher attaining pupils. In many lessons, teachers have extra adult helpers in their class and this gives them an opportunity to really target and challenge individual pupils and groups with work that is closely matched to their needs. This does not happen often enough. These additional staff often sit for too long listening to the teacher talk to the whole class without making any real contribution to the lesson or to pupils' learning. When they do start working with the class, they tend to support the pupils with special educational needs. This is effective and means that these pupils make steady progress, but also means that the needs of the higher attaining pupils are often ignored. This is affecting the standards in the school.

16 English and mathematics are taught particularly well in one Year 2 class but are not taught as well in the other Year 2 classes or in Year 1. This explains why pupils' literacy and numeracy skills develop in a patchy way with good progress in some classes and only steady progress in others. In contrast to this, physical education is taught well throughout the school. Teachers are confident and enthusiastic about this subject and this shows in the way that they tackle their lessons. For example, in a Year 1 gymnastics lesson, the teacher used effective demonstrations to show pupils how to co-ordinate jumping, rolling and stretching movements on apparatus. Similarly, in Year 2 lessons, the teachers focused carefully on pupils' skills and helped them to create imaginative starting and finishing positions for their gymnastic routines. Most children have poor co-ordination skills when they start in the nursery and the good quality of teaching throughout the school makes sure that pupils are reaching the levels they should in physical education by the age of seven.

17 Most teachers do not plan work that matches the needs of all their pupils and do not use assessments effectively. A few teachers manage pupils' learning well through their personal knowledge, charisma and good questioning skills, but in other classes it usually means that the higher attaining pupils are not challenged as much as they should be. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, where the teaching was very good, the teacher deliberately targeted different groups of pupils with specific words to spell and different materials to read. She made good use of careful questions to make sure that each pupil had understood what they were doing and how they could improve. On the other hand, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, the teacher aimed the bulk of the lesson at the entire class which meant that some pupils struggled with the activity they were given and others found it too easy. This mis-match between what pupils can do and the work they are given by most teachers is due to confusion about what assessment really means. This slows the rate of pupils' learning and affects the development of their literacy and numeracy skills, especially in Year 1. Again, this is a factor that contributes to the low standards in the school.

18 Teachers have sound knowledge of the subjects and topics they teach and they manage pupils well to achieve high standards of behaviour. However, teachers sometimes keep pupils together as a class for too long during lessons. This happens most often in literacy and numeracy lessons where teachers allow their introduction to run on for too long before moving pupils into group work. This has a positive influence on pupils' listening skills but it also means that they do not get enough time to practice their other skills, such as writing or solving mathematical problems, and this again slows their progress. It



also has a knock-on effect on pupils' standards in Year 2 where they struggle because of their limited literacy skills.

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

19 The school's curriculum offers a broad and balanced range of experiences covering all subjects, including religious education. Since the last inspection, teachers have produced schemes of work for all subjects, and have recently adopted the national guidance to sit alongside these. This means that the curriculum now has a solid framework and that teachers' plans contain clear information about the activities to be offered to pupils. However, when teachers plan their actual lessons they are not sufficiently clear about what the pupils are expected to learn. This makes it difficult for them to assess whether pupils have been successful in their learning. What frequently happens, is that teachers evaluate what they have taught without paying sufficient attention to pupils' achievements.

20 The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes is well matched to their needs and covers all the areas of learning that they should experience at this age. Some children spend longer in the nursery than others because of when their birthday falls during the school year, while some children only get to spend a few months in the reception class before moving into Year 1. This does not appear to have an impact on their learning. The curriculum is planned carefully to make sure that the transfer from nursery to reception is smooth and effective regardless of the time of year and that children do not miss out on important experiences and activities before they transfer into Year 1.

21 The school rightly spends a high amount of curriculum time on teaching English and mathematics to tackle the issues of low standards in literacy and numeracy. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practice and use their literacy and numeracy skills in other lessons. For instance, pupils are not given enough chances to use their writing skills in science and geography. This means that their standards in these subjects are also affected. The school's organisation of time for physical education means that these lessons sometimes interrupt the teaching of other subjects, such as religious education and science. This affects the continuity of pupils' learning and ultimately affects the standards, especially in science.

22 The school has also recognised that pupils have particular personal and social needs and that many bring emotional problems to school with them. To tackle this, a very effective programme of personal and social education, that includes health education, has been put into place and is being developed further to include drugs awareness and citizenship. This provides pupils with plenty of experiences to develop their personal skills and to learn about issues that affect and influence their lives. It also makes a strong contribution to the positive relationships that pupils develop with each other and supports their very good attitudes to school and work. In addition, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and provision for cultural development is excellent. This is a strength of the school.

23 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very effective. In collective worship, pupils are given opportunities to sit silently and think about the theme of the assembly, such as "friendship". Teachers are alert to the need to provide for pupils' spiritual well-being and they do this in many subjects, but particularly through religious education and "circle time" activities, where pupils sit and talk about their thoughts. For example, pupils are often asked to sit in moments of stillness and to share their feelings and opinions. In religious education, pupils are taught about the beliefs, festivals, rituals and symbolism of three different faiths taught. They learn to respect the differences, and to have an awareness of the similarities, between religions. Teachers are good role models and encourage pupils to respect the views and opinions of others.

24 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school has a clear moral code based on the understanding that the school is a community with the need to respect each other and to care for

people and the school environment. Pupils are involved in preparing their own class rules; they know these well and learn to appreciate the difference between right and wrong. Teachers discuss and consider moral issues as they occur and encourage pupils to explain why some things are wrong.

25 Provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils are given roles of responsibility, such as taking registers to the office, and there is a high emphasis on personal development that helps to raise pupils' self-esteem. However, in too many lessons, teachers do not provide enough time for pupils to work together in groups or to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning. There is a strong sense of caring in the school and staff handle the emotional and behavioural problems of pupils very sensitively to make sure that they are not excluded from the school 'family'. Pupils' achievements, both in and out of school, are celebrated and they are taught that their disappointments are just as important to share. Pupils are encouraged to respond to the needs of others less fortunate than themselves through regular charity work.

26 Provision for pupils' cultural development is excellent. Staff have recognised the single cultural nature of the local area and realise that pupils rarely come into contact with people from different cultures or ethnic backgrounds. They work hard to make sure that pupils develop an awareness of the multi-ethnic nature of society. Pupils develop a very good awareness of their own cultural traditions through the geography curriculum, when they study their immediate locality, and through history when they learn about important events in the past. The school also makes very effective use of visits to places of worship for different religions and prominent displays to show pupils about the lifestyles and cultures of other people, both in this country and in other countries of the world. Teachers deliberately take time to make sure that pupils are very well prepared for life in a multi-cultural society.

27 The school has made improvements in its curriculum since the last inspection. For example, provision for pupils with special educational needs in the nursery and reception classes is now good. Children are identified at an early age and their needs are carefully diagnosed. Provision is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and is being extended to include counselling for pupils suffering extreme emotional difficulties. Similarly, the introduction of extra-curricular activities in music, information and communication technology, art and design and country dancing is also an area where improvements have taken place.

28 The school has effective links with the local community and takes full advantage of the local area to support its curriculum. For instance, pupils visit places of local interest to support their history, geography and science. Pupils in Year 2 also have the chance to take part in a residential visit and the good links with the local Junior school help to prepare them for their next stage of learning.

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

29 The health, safety and general welfare of pupils is given a high priority and the school cares very well for pupils' personal and emotional well-being. Since the last inspection there have been big improvements in these areas. Staff have had training on child protection issues. There is very good liaison with outside agencies and the procedures are now well understood by all staff. A governor now has responsibility for health and safety and keeps an eye on any issues within school. The health and safety issue identified in the nursery has been dealt with effectively.

30 The school has good procedures for promoting attendance and good behaviour and for deterring and dealing with bullying if it should occur. Attendance is closely monitored and the school is constantly striving to improve attendance levels since absence interrupts pupils' learning. Staff have clear and consistent expectations of good behaviour and the school's 'Golden Book' awards help to

motivate pupils to always do their best. In individual classrooms, teachers use imaginative ways to promote good behaviour and effort. For instance in the reception class children are encouraged to “make the flowers grow during the week”. The teacher sticks colourful flowers onto bare stalks on a display to praise the children when they behave well. Similarly, in a Year 1 classroom pupils have their names written on leaves of a tree and follow the motto, “we are sensible and do not let our leaves fall off the tree”. These different approaches make a positive contribution to raising pupils’ self esteem and confidence.

31 Pupils’ personal development is carefully monitored alongside the curricular programme of personal, social and health education, but pupils’ academic performance is not monitored to the same extent. The school’s academic record keeping systems are meticulous but they are not used effectively to identify what pupils actually know or what they need to do next. Teachers record what pupils have apparently covered in the curriculum but there are no systematic assessments to identify what pupils have understood. There are no examples of pupils’ work to assist teachers when moderating the levels of work that pupils achieve. This means that assessments of pupils’ attainments are sometimes inaccurate, for example in reading. These records do not give any useful information to help teachers plan their lessons to move pupils on in their learning. Pupils have individual targets set each half term to raise their achievement, but their individual records are not detailed enough to give a clear focus on what they need to do to improve. The current flaws in the school’s assessment systems and procedures mean that teachers cannot make effective use of assessments to support their planning. As a result, the learning needs of all groups within each class are not always met and insufficient focus is paid to areas of individual pupil weakness. This lack of understanding and use of assessment is affecting standards in the school.

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

32 Parents have very positive views of the school. They appreciate the stability and opportunities that the school gives their children.

33 The majority of parents feel well informed about what is currently happening in school and are happy to approach the school with any queries or concerns. Most parents have made a commitment to work in partnership with the school to raise their child’s achievement. However, a number of parents have difficulty supporting their child’s learning at home and appreciate the opportunity to come into school for 10 minutes each morning to work alongside their child and the teacher in the classroom. This system works well and strengthens the bond between home and school.

34 A few parents come into school regularly to help during lessons, make resources and run the school library. They make an effective contribution to the work of the school. There is also a strong parent and teacher association (Patchwork) that works hard to organise events and raise money to buy equipment for the pupils’ benefit. This has a positive impact on pupils’ education and the school environment.

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

35 The management structure of the school has changed completely since the last inspection with the appointment of a new head teacher, deputy head teacher and governing body. There has also been a restructure of subject co-ordinator roles and responsibilities.

36 The head teacher leads and manages the school well. She is working hard to raise standards and has a good understanding of where and why the school needs to improve. The head teacher and deputy head teacher work very well together and are an effective management team. They share a

clear view of what needs to be done in the school and are committed to carrying this through. However, some of the changes they are trying to make are not happening quickly enough. This is because some of the staff who have been at the school for a long time are struggling to come to terms with the pace of developments and do not share their sense of urgency to make changes.

37 The governing body used to be shared with another school. This changed in January and, since then, the new governors have been learning the roles and responsibilities they need to carry out. Governors are very supportive and meet their statutory responsibilities. They are well informed and are fully behind the developments that the head teacher wants to see in the school. However, although the school development plan is very comprehensive, they have recognised that it is too complex and does not give a clear enough picture of precisely where the school's key priorities lie and how they will be funded.

38 The head teacher, deputy head teacher and governors have a clear picture of how the school is performing and why. They have identified patterns and trends in performance and are adjusting the way the school works to tackle these. For example, they introduced a 'setting' arrangement in mathematics in 1999 and saw a big improvement in the test results in this subject. Having followed advice from outside the school, they reverted to a different teaching arrangement last year and saw a dip in performance and are therefore considering the re-introduction of setting this year. Similarly, the senior managers have recognised that boys are not performing as well as girls. They are also acutely aware that there is a big imbalance in the number of boys and girls in the current reception class and that this could have a huge impact on the school's performance in a couple of years when these pupils sit the national tests. Consequently, they are looking at ways to try to encourage boys to take a greater interest in their learning and to promote their attainment.

39 Co-ordinators have started to take responsibility for their allocated subject areas but some are effectively leading developments and promoting improvements in their subjects while others are not. For instance, the information and communication technology co-ordinator has put a lot of effort into supporting this subject since the introduction of the new computer suite. Similarly the religious education co-ordinator has developed clear guidance for colleagues. This is one of the reasons why standards in these subjects are reaching the levels they should be. In contrast, the science co-ordinator is unsure about the standards that pupils should be aiming for and the resources for science are barely adequate and badly organised. Similarly, there is no clear leadership in music or design and technology. These subjects are suffering from this and the standards in science are too low as a result.

40 The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection although the pace of some developments has been quite slow. It has a sound capacity to continue this improvement, but this could be better. A few longer serving members of staff do not share the governors' and head teacher's determination to change and move the school's development forward at a faster pace and this limits the pace of improvement.

41 Governors consider how to get best value when they spend money but there has not been an external audit of the school's financial systems since 1995. The school is a good size with spare classrooms and plenty of space. Specialist areas, such as the computer suite, enhance the teaching of the curriculum but other areas, such as the resource room, are badly organised. The building needs some repair but this is planned and budgeted for. Some education support staff are used particularly well, for example in the nursery, to provide support for groups of pupils in the computer suite, and to work with pupils with special educational needs. Others are not used as well as they could be because they have to sit for too long listening to teachers' introductions during some lessons. The school manages its resources soundly and gives satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

42 The school should now:

- (A) Raise standards by the age of seven and improve pupils' literacy skills by:
- Giving pupils more opportunities to develop their speaking skills.
  - Giving pupils more time to practice their writing skills in English.
  - Giving pupils more opportunities to write in other subjects.
  - Making sure that teachers' assessments of pupils' reading skills are accurate.
  - Making sure that reading materials are correctly matched to pupils' needs rather than simply following a list of books in a reading scheme.

(paragraphs 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 31, 57, 58, 59, 60, 64, 69, 76, 78 and 80)

- (B) Improve the rate of pupils' learning by making more effective use of assessments, by:
- Making sure that teachers understand the difference between assessment and recording.
  - Making sure that teachers assess and evaluate what pupils can (or cannot) do.
  - Making sure that teachers' assessments of pupils are accurate by matching them against the national levels set out in each subject.

(paragraphs 17, 31, 64, 68 and 73)

- (C) Improve the learning of higher attaining pupils by:
- Identifying precisely what teachers expect pupils to learn in their lessons.
  - Making sure that teachers plan activities that challenge higher attaining pupils more effectively.
  - Identifying opportunities to assess and evaluate whether pupils have learnt what was intended in each lesson or sequence of lessons.
  - Making use of the results of these assessments to help teachers to plan work that builds on what pupils already know.

(paragraphs 3, 5, 15, 17, 19, 31, 60, 64, 67 and 68)

- (D) Increase the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators by:
- Making sure that they all have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
  - Involving them in a systematic programme of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.
  - Holding them accountable for leading developments and initiating improvements in their subjects.

(paragraphs 36, 39, 40, 73, 77 and 88)

*The head teacher and chair of governors had already identified all these issues in the school.*

Other issues that should be considered by the school:

- Simplify the structure of the school development plan to make it more precise and to highlight the school's key priorities for improvement. (paragraph 37)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	52

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0%	3%	41%	48%	8%	0%	0%

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	35.5	124
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	84

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	53

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.8
National comparative data	0.5

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



***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	28	20	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	21	24
	Girls	17	17	16
	Total	35	38	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73% (71%)	79% (75%)	83% (77%)
	National	83% (82%)	84% (83%)	90% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	23	22
	Girls	16	15	15
	Total	34	38	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71% (77%)	79% (77%)	77% (80%)
	National	84% (82%)	88% (86%)	88% (87%)

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

***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	124
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	20.7

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	35.5

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.6
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999 – 2000
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	£
Total income	400,631
Total expenditure	372,141
Expenditure per pupil	2,127
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,860
Balance carried forward to next year	39,350

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	194
Number of questionnaires returned	71

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	30	1	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	33	0	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	40	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	41	4	4	4
The teaching is good.	76	21	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	31	4	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	20	0	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	30	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	54	38	3	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	61	31	1	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	35	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	33	13	6	10

## **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**

43 The nursery and reception classes give children a good start to their education. Children are assessed carefully and thoroughly to make sure that the work they are given builds on what they already know and this moves their learning on at a fast pace. The teaching is good and the curriculum is organised well to make sure that children do not miss out on anything because of the way they transfer into reception at three different times during the year. As a result, children make good progress in their learning throughout the foundation stage. They develop their confidence and start to build their basic skills. Nevertheless, they do not catch up from their low starting point and are still working below the levels expected for five year olds when they move into Year 1.

44 There is a strong focus on meeting children's personal, social and emotional needs as well as encouraging them to develop their communication, language and literature skills in the nursery. There is a big team of staff in the nursery and they have all been linked to individual children as their "key worker". This system works well. It means that each child knows who to turn to if they need help or reassurance and also provides parents with a good link to someone who has a clear idea of how their child is progressing. The staff work very well together and this is one of the reasons why the quality of education for the youngest children in the school is so good.

45 The nursery is well organised and is set out in an attractive way to offer stimulating experiences for the children. For example, the "animal corner" offers them the chance to get to know Gerald the rabbit, Bella the hamster and Tommy the budgie, and encourages them to learn to care for animals and to look after these pets when it is their turn. Quiet areas, including a small library and "listening corner" where children use taped stories, offer them plenty of opportunities to explore books and develop their interest in reading and early writing. Children have low communication, language and literacy skills. Most can make recognisable marks on paper although few can write or recognise letters with any confidence. They listen carefully to stories read by the teacher and other adults and are beginning to be interested in books, but do not talk much and many grunt or chatter in unrecognisable sounds.

46 Children also have low mathematical skills. They count reasonably confidently but have little understanding of what the numbers mean. Some children recognise shapes and colours but many do not have the language skills to describe what they see. Staff take every opportunity to encourage children to count and use mathematical language, for instance when counting out the cartons of milk for them to drink and when weighing flour in their baking.

47 Children learn to handle simple tools and equipment, such as scissors, by making models and collages. This work is linked well to other areas of interest, for example by talking about the feel and the shape of the different materials that they use. The nursery is well stocked with construction equipment for children to build their own models and with materials for them to experiment and practice their creative skills. For instance, children have used kitchen foil tubes and yoghurt pots to make "Blackpool Tower" and toilet rolls covered with fur to make "scary spiders". They begin to learn to recognise colours and shapes by printing patterns and drawing pictures using their imagination. Children make good use of information and communication technology in their work and develop satisfactory skills. For example, a group of older nursery children went into the school's computer suite with the teacher to learn how to use a simple drawing package to create their own pictures.

48 A particularly effective feature of the nursery is the way that parents help on a regular basis to

allow children to cook. This works very well and helps children to develop their personal and social skills with other adults. The children thoroughly enjoy this work, especially when their choc-chip cookies taste so delicious! This work is always planned carefully to encourage children to use their counting skills and to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world around them, for instance when talking about how the different kitchen utensils work and the changes that will take place as their ingredients bake.

49 Children in the nursery get plenty of chances to take part in imaginative play both indoors and outside. For example, they pretend to be staff and customers in the “card shop” area and have a “home corner” where they can act out family roles. The outdoor activities are carefully structured to provide experiences in different areas, such as creative role-play (washing clothes for example), physical development by climbing and balancing on large equipment, and horticulture by planting and looking after flowers. These experiences support the development of children’s physical and social skills.

50 The curriculum in the reception class builds well on children’s previous experiences in the nursery. Careful assessments let the teacher know what each child can do and where they need help to move on. The teaching is good and this means that children continue the good progress they start in nursery. However, despite this, they do not manage to make up the gaps in their knowledge and skills sufficiently well to be able to reach the levels expected for five year olds. Standards are below the levels set out in the early learning goals for five year olds by the time children are ready to move into Year 1.

51 In reception, children start to follow a slightly more structured programme of language, literacy and mathematical work. They are brought together as a class while the teacher explains the different activities to be tackled and this gives them a good opportunity to listen. Children then work on their activities at different times during the day, often with help and support from adults. For example, in one lesson the whole class sat attentively listening to a story read from a big book by the teacher then talked about “farm” words that came up in the story. They showed good levels of interest and concentration and were beginning to recognise words that had a particular meaning to the theme of the book. Children start to develop a sound mathematical vocabulary, using words such as “flat” and “round” when describing different shapes that they have made using play dough.

52 Children’s knowledge and understanding of the world develops in the reception class through a range of activities that encourage them to pay attention and show interest in what is happening around them. For example, children begin to learn the names for different parts of their bodies and can put these parts together using a simple computer program to make a recognisable human shape. They have used magnifying glasses to examine their own hands and are aware of the importance of healthy food. This is developed well through role-play activities in the “healthy café”. Children explore how different things work before making models using construction kits and recycled materials. Children begin to take an interest in the changes that take place at different times of the year and develop a sense of time by talking about things that have happened to them in the past. Children make good use of information and communication technology to support their learning. For example, they put simple pictures and words together to illustrate their ideas on fireworks and use a computer to produce a graph of the eye colours in the class.

53 In reception, children continue to develop their physical skills through imaginary play but this is supplemented by structured physical education lessons. For example, in one lesson children recognised some of the changes to their bodies and felt their heart beat faster after exercise. They made different shapes (spiky, tall, flat, round and thin) and knew the difference between “stretching” and “curling” movements.

54 Children are given plenty of creative opportunities to develop their manipulative skills. For example, printing wallpaper for their café, using hard fruit and vegetables, and weaving place mats. They recognise basic colours and choose materials to make “happy” and “sad” paper plate clowns, using pasta, string and wool. Children learn a range of songs and begin to sing them from memory and move in time to music when singing action rhymes.

55 Children in the reception class follow the school’s religious education curriculum and this contributes to their personal, social and emotional needs. They begin to be aware that the purpose of harvest festivals is to thank God for food and are beginning to understand that some people celebrate harvest time in different ways. For example, they have learnt that Jewish people celebrate the harvest by building a Sukkah in their gardens.

56 The school has maintained its strength in the early years since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is still good and children are continue to get a high quality of education.

## **ENGLISH**

57 Standards in English dropped sharply following the last inspection but have picked up again in recent years with the introduction of the literacy hour. Despite this improvement, standards of speaking and listening, reading and writing are still all well below what is expected of seven year olds. Girls are performing much better than boys and this is particularly obvious in reading. Pupils with special educational needs make steady progress but higher attaining pupils are not attaining as well as they should.

58 Standards are not high enough for several reasons. When children start in the nursery they have very limited speaking skills and a number of them have specific speech difficulties. Despite the good progress they make in the nursery and reception classes and the steady progress through Years 1 and 2, their limited language and literacy skills never catch up for their age. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills or to practice their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum such as science, history and religious education. The assessments of pupils’ progress in reading are often inaccurate and teachers tend to rely too heavily on the commercial reading scheme.

59 Pupils develop good listening skills but their speaking skills lag behind. For instance, in Year 1 few pupils answer questions and they tend to respond in only one or two words. They are rarely encouraged to develop more sophisticated replies. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to express their feelings, voice opinions or describe events. This causes them to lack confidence when trying to communicate and limits their attempts to put forward and justify a point of view. In other subjects, pupils’ speaking skills are not extended enough with subject specific or technical language. On the other hand, pupils’ listening skills develop well. This is mainly because they spend a lot of time sitting listening to their teachers during lessons. They are very attentive and show considerable interest in the stories that are read to them during literacy lessons.

60 The school places a particular emphasis on developing and improving standards of reading. It uses a highly structured reading scheme. This approach works to a certain extent because pupils learn the sounds that different combinations of letters make, but they still struggle to break down words that are new to them. Higher attaining pupils read well. They enjoy books, visit the library regularly and are confident and fluent when reading aloud. However, they are often kept on the reading scheme when this is not necessary and this limits their choice of reading material and restricts the development of their vocabulary. At the same time, other pupils need more time to consolidate their reading skills before they are moved onto the next stage of the reading scheme. The average and below average readers are struggling to make sufficient progress and have insufficient understanding of what they have read. This

is because they are often reading books that are too difficult for them since teachers' assessments of their reading skills are not accurate enough. Pupils with special educational needs make slightly better progress in reading because they receive additional adult support.

61 Although their writing skills are weak, most pupils make sound progress in developing their handwriting and spelling. They know when to use capital letters and full stops and how to sequence a story. They are given experience of writing for a range of audiences during literacy lessons. For example Year 1 pupils recorded their news and wrote in a very structured way when describing "A place I visited", while Year 2 pupils re-wrote the fairy tale "Cinderella" and showed a good understanding of planning and sequencing events. However their writing skills are not used sufficiently in other subjects. For example, pupils do not write about what they think might happen in their science experiments and they tend to use pictures to record their ideas in history and geography.

62 Teaching in English is satisfactory but is better in some classes than others. It is particularly good in one Year 2 class but some unsatisfactory teaching was seen in Year 1. Teaching is also better during the part of the literacy lesson where teachers work with the whole class to read and share ideas. As a result, pupils respond and behave well. They pay good attention and are interested in the books they share. However, there are times when this whole class work goes on for too long and this means that there is not enough time in the rest of the lesson for pupils to practise their reading and writing skills in small groups. This affects standards in reading and writing but it has the positive benefit of giving pupils the chance to develop good listening skills.

63 Pupils are generally very well behaved and co-operate well but they find it difficult to work independently and need to be encouraged to try to develop their own ideas. Where there is good teaching, work is matched carefully to the pupils' different needs, resources are interesting and stimulating, and the teacher uses skilful questioning to make sure that all pupils contribute to the lesson. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the teacher fired rapid questions at individual pupils to get their explanations of the difference between fiction and non-fiction, to get definitions of "title", "author" and "publisher" and to get a description of how to use the contents page in a book. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, all pupils are set the same activity (regardless of what they can actually do) and the teacher's questioning is too superficial to involve them all in the lesson. This means that some pupils find the work too difficult while others find it too easy. As a result pupils' learning slows down.

64 Assessment in English was identified as an issue in the last inspection. It is still a significant weakness in the school's English provision and this is contributing to the low standards in the subject. At the moment, teachers focus on recording what pupils have covered in their English work rather than assessing what pupils can actually do and then identifying what they need to do to improve. This is most noticeable in reading where teachers' assessments are not clear enough with the result that many pupils are placed on a stage of reading that does not match their ability. There is insufficient attention paid to assessing pupils' work against national standards and the co-ordinator has not, as yet, developed examples of pupils' work to help teachers compare their own judgements. Despite the introduction of the literacy hour, English is not being led or managed with sufficient drive by the co-ordinator to impact sufficiently on pupils' standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

65 Standards in mathematics are below average. The school improved its standards quite noticeably in 1999 by re-organising Year 2 pupils into different classes for mathematics, based on their previous achievements. However, following advice from outside the school, teachers went back to teaching pupils in their usual classes last year. At the same time, mathematics standards dipped and the school's performance in the national tests suffered. The school is considering the re-introduction of its

‘setting’ arrangement for the current Year 2 pupils in a bid to raise standards again.

66 Teachers put a heavy focus on mental and oral work with their classes. This helps pupils make steady progress in developing their numeracy skills and contributes well to their listening skills. However, some teachers spend too long on the oral activities at the start of their lessons and this means that pupils do not get enough time to practice their written mathematical work or to apply their skills to solve problems. This is one reason why standards are low. Pupils know how to carry out basic arithmetic calculations but they struggle when asked to apply this to solve unfamiliar problems. Pupils’ limited literacy skills hamper their learning when they find it difficult to read instructions but they are not getting enough practice in some classes, particularly in Year 1. Also, the school is not yet making enough use of information and communication technology to support pupils’ learning in mathematics.

67 Teaching in mathematics is satisfactory but varies from class to class. Some teachers are not challenging the higher attaining pupils well enough and this is another reason why standards are low. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils were asked to sequence a group of numbers and were given a square with numbers up to 100 to help them. The higher attaining group were perfectly capable of identifying numbers that came “before” and “after” a given number or that were “greater than” or “less than” a number. They had good mathematical vocabulary and found the task so easy that they finished very quickly then lost interest. A similar situation happened in a Year 1 lesson where all pupils were given the same basic task to complete (estimating the number of objects drawn on a worksheet) and the higher attaining group rushed through their work and started to colour in their sheets. In these lessons, most pupils made steady progress but the pace of learning for the higher attainers was too slow. On the other hand, teaching is particularly good in the Year 2 class taught by the mathematics co-ordinator. In this class, the teacher challenges all pupils to do their best and captures their interest and imagination. For example, in one lesson pupils practised their sequencing of numbers to 20 then 50 by playing a game where they competed against each other. The teacher used bright and imaginative resources that held pupils’ attention. As a result, pupils responded well and they all made good progress in their learning.

68 The school has made some improvements in mathematics since the last inspection. For example assessment systems are now in place, although these are not being used as well as they could be, and the leadership and management of mathematics are now good. The deputy head teacher is the co-ordinator for mathematics and is fully committed to raising standards. She is monitoring the work of colleagues effectively and, having recognised the lack of excitement in some of the teaching, has taught sample lessons to show colleagues how mathematics can be interesting and fun as well as challenging. However, the issue of challenging the higher attaining pupils still remains and is one of the main reasons why the school’s standards are still too low.

## **SCIENCE**

69 Standards in science are below average. Pupils’ limited literacy skills affect the way they record their work in science and pupils do not use computers often enough to support the presentation of their results. In most classes, teachers put an emphasis on oral work by talking to pupils and asking for their suggestions. This helps pupils’ listening skills but does not always develop their scientific knowledge or understanding well enough and results in a slower rate of learning for those pupils reluctant to take part in discussions.

70 Pupils make steady progress in learning simple scientific facts. For example, they know that living things need food, water, air and light to grow. They sort materials into groups and know how a basic electric circuit works. However, they usually use drawings to present their work and do not develop an understanding of the need to write about their ideas. Some teachers tend to take too much control of practical experiments and the recording of results. Although this helps pupils to carry out



practical investigations successfully, it limits their standards by dictating what they will do and how they will present their findings.

71 Teaching in science is satisfactory but varies from class to class. Teachers have a secure knowledge of science but their lesson plans are often very brief and do not pay sufficient attention to what, or how, pupils are expected to learn. In some classes, this does not have an impact because the teachers know precisely what they are trying to achieve. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson where the teacher made effective use of pupils' recent learning in mathematics to support their accurate measurement when testing to see how far different toy vehicles could travel. In other classes, the lack of focus in teachers' planning can result in unsatisfactory teaching. For example, in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher talked to pupils for nearly 40 minutes about light and dark without a sufficiently clear understanding of what she wanted them to learn. As a result, the discussion went off at a tangent, the lesson became fragmented and the scientific element became unclear.

72 Teachers sometimes spend too long talking to pupils. They use good questioning skills to recap on previous work, but the pace of pupils' learning slows if they do not become fully involved in discussions. One of the reasons for this situation is that science lessons are sometimes interrupted because of time-tabling arrangements for physical education or the afternoon break. When this happens it affects the quality of teaching and learning. Lessons lose pace because teachers either "fill in time" waiting for the bell to ring or they spend the second part of the lesson recapping on what took place before the break. This arrangement for science does not help pupils' learning or contribute to high standards. Nevertheless, pupils are interested in science and behave well in lessons. For example, the pupils in Year 2 were thoroughly engrossed in their practical activity and enjoyed the lesson.

73 The leadership, management and co-ordination of science is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is unsure about the standards pupils achieve, and there has been little progress since the last inspection. For example, the development of portfolios of pupils' work was identified in the previous inspection but still remains as an area for development in the school's present annual review. Resources are barely adequate – they are old and poorly organised. Assessment was also identified as a weakness in the last inspection. Today, this remains an issue because teachers are still tending to record the work that is covered rather than assessing pupils' learning. As a result, lessons are not always planned sufficiently well to build on pupils' previous achievement. This means that higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough and, again, this influences the standards in this subject.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

74 Only one art and design lesson was seen but evidence was available from teachers' planning and displays of pupils' work. Standards are satisfactory and pupils make steady progress in art and design. They are given suitable opportunities to develop their skills and work with a range of materials and tools. Teaching and learning is satisfactory although the planning for lessons is brief and seldom indicates which skills are to be learnt. In the lesson seen pupils were managed very well, although there were repeated reminders for them to work quietly. This gave no opportunity for pupils to discuss their work, evaluate it or make improvements.

75 Since the last inspection, art and design has maintained its good links to other subjects of the curriculum. For example, some pupils have made clay divas and rangoli patterns linked to their work about the Hindu festival of Divali in religious education. Other pupils have made a collage of materials, which they had sorted and grouped in their science topic. Pupils have also used a variety of materials to make a '2000 piece' collage of Jesus to celebrate the Millennium. The range and selection of resources are still good although some are now in need of renewal and replacement. The leadership and management of the subject are good and this helps to maintain the position of the subject in the school's

curriculum. The co-ordinator has started to monitor and support the work of colleagues and is developing the use of information and communication technology to support art and design.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

76 No design and technology lessons were seen but evidence was available from pupils' work, classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. Pupils make satisfactory progress in building simple models and learning how moving parts work. For example, Year 1 pupils make model vehicles from Lego linked to their science topic of "movement" while Year 2 pupils look at how wheels and axles are put together. However, there was very little evidence of design other than a few examples where pupils had made basic drawings of their models. Pupils reach satisfactory standards in the practical part of this subject but their limited literacy skills affect their design and the evaluation of their work.

77 The design and technology curriculum has improved since the last inspection. The school is now using the nationally recommended scheme of work as a framework to link design and technology activities into topics and work on other subjects. This provides a sound basis for pupils to develop their skills in a systematic way. Pupils are also given specific topics to tackle, such as re-designing the playground and outside garden areas of the school. However, resources are not as good as mentioned in the last inspection. There are few hand tools available which means that there is a tendency for pupils to work in a limited range of materials. The subject is not being led or managed with any drive or enthusiasm and this shows in the pace of developments. The co-ordinator has only recently started to introduce assessment and collect together examples of pupils' work to illustrate their learning, despite this being identified in the last inspection as an area for improvement.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

78 No geography lessons were seen but evidence was available from pupils' work, classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their geographical skills and knowledge of places, the local area, journeys and maps. However, pupils' limited literacy skills affect their ability to present and record their work in geography and this brings standards down. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use and develop their writing skills when recording their work.

79 The use of educational visits has improved since the last inspection. For instance, Year 1 pupils have carried out surveys on the types of houses, shops and other buildings close to the school and Year 2 pupils have visited Hornsea to compare the differences in the goods sold in shops at the seaside with shops in their own locality.

## **HISTORY**

80 No history lessons were seen but evidence was available from pupils' work, classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their historical knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils in Year 1 understand the difference between past and present and old and new by recognising and comparing toys and means of transport that were used in the past with those used today. This is developed in Year 2 when pupils look at objects from Victorian times and compare how schools were different then to their own today. However, pupils' limited literacy skills affect their ability to present and record their work in history and this brings standards down.

81 The history curriculum is supported by good displays, including photographs and collections of artefacts, and visits to places of local interest. For instance, pupils have visited Clarke Hall and taken

part in role-play activities to experience life as a Seventeenth century child and carry out the chores that were expected of children in that era. History appears to have maintained its position in the curriculum since the last inspection, but it does not make sufficient contribution to the development of pupils' basic literacy skills.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

82 The school has maintained satisfactory standards in information and communication technology since the last inspection. It has made huge improvements in the range and quality of resources available by the development of a computer suite in which pupils now have skills-based lessons. This has strengthened the school's provision and means that all pupils now get regular access to computers.

83 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. As a result, pupils develop their basic skills systematically in most areas of the subject. At present, staff are more confident with word processing and simple graphics packages than they are with other aspects of information and communication technology, such as handling information and using controllable toys. This shows in the range and breadth of the work that pupils are experiencing. For example, Year 2 pupils know the basic features of a word processing package and can enter and edit text for themselves. They produce poems, stories, letters and instructions and can insert clip art and digital photographs that they have taken. But, they have limited knowledge and understanding of how information can be stored and presented in different ways or of how to control a floor robot to carry out a simple sequence of movements. The school is aware of this and has additional training booked for staff in the near future to fill the gaps in their knowledge.

84 Pupils are given time-tabled taught lessons to develop their skills but they also get the chance to use these skills to support their work at other times. This is particularly true of literacy. Skills-based lessons are taught by the class teachers but the school employs a support assistant to work in the computer suite with groups of pupils at times when the rest of their class are working on literacy activities. This is effective and helps pupils to use and apply their information and communication technology skills to their work. However, there is still not enough use of information and communication technology in subjects, such as science and mathematics, and this affects pupils' standards in these subjects.

85 The co-ordinator is leading and managing the subject effectively and therefore the pace of development and change is good. She is continuing to develop her own expertise through training and is putting together samples of work to illustrate standards for colleagues. The introduction of an extra-curricular computer club for Year 2 pupils provides additional opportunities for pupils to practice their skills and explore how new technology can help them.

## **MUSIC**

86 There was too little evidence to judge standards in music. No music lessons were seen but pupils sang in assembly and played recorders in an extra-curricular club. Pupils sing with appropriate diction and rhythm, and most have an awareness of pitch. For example, in a class assembly Year 2 pupils sang well. They maintained two parts, singing unaccompanied. However, pupils' previous work shows little opportunity for pupils to use pictures and diagrams to record their own compositions, which they could then practice and improve.

87 The school had adopted the recent national guidance for music but there are no teachers in the school with musical expertise. The school compensates for this effectively by employing a music specialist on a regular basis to support the teaching of music in Year 2. The head teacher has very

recently begun an extra-curricular recorder club for pupils in Year 2; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are well taught and learn how to handle the recorder correctly. They are very enthusiastic and were particularly proud of their achievement when they played “London’s Burning” using two notes.

88 Music has maintained its position in the curriculum since the last inspection, but the co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. There is no monitoring taking place and the co-ordinator has a superficial overview of what is actually happening in the school. Information and communication technology is not being used effectively to support the music curriculum.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

89 The quality of teaching and learning in physical education has improved since the last inspection. Lessons are now very clearly focused on skill development and pupils have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the effects of physical activity on their bodies and related health and safety issues. As a result, pupils make steady progress and reach satisfactory standards.

90 Teaching in physical education is good. Teachers are confident and enthusiastic, have good organisational and management skills and have positive relationships with the pupils. As a result, pupils are motivated to do well. They enjoy their lessons and respond well to instruction. They follow routines systematically and persevere to practise new skills and techniques. For example, Year 2 pupils concentrated really hard as they tried to link a series of gymnastic movements and design imaginative starting and finishing balances. They acted maturely and responsibly as they put the apparatus away at the end of the lesson. Teachers make effective use of the time available to encourage pupils to work collaboratively and understand the importance of evaluating their work. For instance in a Year 1 gymnastics lesson, the teacher asked individual pupils to demonstrate their stretching and pulling movements to illustrate the skills being learnt for the rest of the class.

91 Physical education has a higher profile in the school since the last inspection. A generous amount of time is allocated to this subject. This has a positive benefit by providing regular opportunities for pupils’ physical development although the organisation of some lessons affects the continuity of their learning in other subjects, particularly science and religious education. The school has good indoor accommodation and resources for physical education and these also contribute well to pupils’ learning.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

92 The school has maintained satisfactory standards in religious education since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but it is better in some classes than others. For example, two classes in Year 2 have religious education lessons interrupted because of time-tabling for physical education. This can affect the quality and continuity of pupils’ learning. By the time pupils have dressed after their physical education lesson, there is sometimes insufficient time left for them to complete the work that has been planned. This was particularly noticeable in one lessons when the pace of the lesson slowed because the teacher was ‘filling in’ time until the end of the lesson.

93 Teachers’ planning for individual lessons is very brief. Teachers have good subject knowledge and usually overcome the shortfalls in their planning but their teaching is not always focused as sharply as it could be. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, the objective was for pupils to understand the significance of the Hindu story about the god Ganesha, but the teacher did not ask appropriate questions to develop pupils’ understanding. Despite this, religious education is planned well to promote pupils’ spiritual development. For example, pupils are given plenty of opportunities to sit in moments of stillness and are encouraged to share their personal feelings. This works well and supports their personal

development as well as broadening their knowledge and understanding of different points of view and beliefs. For instance, pupils are developing an awareness of some important similarities between religions such as holy books, places of worship, and festivals. However, teachers sometimes spend too long talking to pupils during their lessons with the result that pupils do not get enough chances to use and develop their writing skills in religious education.

94 The co-ordinator is leading and managing the subject well and therefore the pace of development is good. She has developed effective guidance for teachers and this supports the quality of teaching and learning. The school has improved its range of resources since the last inspection by borrowing artefacts from the local education authority's loan service and by broadening its range of educational visits. For example, pupils visit a Christian church, Jewish synagogue and a Hindu Mandir. This supports their learning very well and makes an excellent contribution to their multi-cultural development.