

INSPECTION REPORT

KNAYTON CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Knayton, Thirsk

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121506

Headteacher: Mrs C Potter

Reporting inspector: A C Davies
3639

Dates of inspection: 4-7th December 2000

Inspection number: 224387

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Church of England (Voluntary Controlled)
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stockton Road Knayton Thirsk North Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO7 4AN
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Harrison
Date of previous inspection:	December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
A C Davies (3639)	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		Information and Communication Technology	How high are standards? Children's attitudes, behaviour, values and personal development
		Art and Design	How well are children taught?
		Design and Technology	How well is the school led and managed?
		Physical Education	
		The Foundation Stage of Learning	
J Garland (9214)	Lay inspector		How well the school cares for its children?
			How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
D New (22761)	Team inspector	Mathematics	How high are standards? The school's results and children's achievements.
		Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to children?
		Geography	
		History	
		Music	
		Religious Education	
		Special Educational Needs	
		Equal Opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Knayton is a small primary school admitting children aged between 4 and 11. There are 95 children on roll, many of whom are transported to school from the outlying villages. The school is set in a rural area on the outskirts of Thirsk. The area immediately around the school is relatively affluent and many local children attend independent schools. The school serves a more mixed community, which is reflected in the number of children entitled to free schools meals being greater than expected for the area. The percentage of children on the special educational needs register is about average. One child has English as an additional language. When children start school the majority display personal and academic skills that are better than expected for their age, although this does vary greatly from year to year. In each year the range of children's abilities is very wide.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school where the many strengths outweigh the few minor weaknesses. Children of all abilities achieve well in reading, writing, science, information and communication technology and the creative arts. In mathematics the standards attained tend to be more variable but children none-the-less achieve appropriately. There is a significant amount of good and very good teaching evident, which is having a positive impact on the way children learn and the standards they attain. There is a strong sense of everyone working together to continue to raise standards. Despite children of different ages being in one class there is clarity about the way work is organised to take account of the needs of children of different ability. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The standard of children's written work is good, they write for a range of purposes and children use their writing effectively in other subjects.
- Standards are good for information and communication technology (ICT) with teachers looking for many opportunities to use these skills to support work in other subjects.
- There is good provision for children in their first year at school, which helps them gain confidence in their personal and academic skills.
- Good attention to the creative arts has helped children achieve well in music, art, poetry, dance and drama.
- All teachers are very aware of the needs of all children within the mixed age classes and tasks are organised effectively to take account of children's differing abilities.
- The headteacher is providing effective leadership and ensuring that there is a strong sense of teamwork amongst the staff.

What could be improved

There are no major issues for the school to look at but the following issues are the most important points for the school to consider:

- The school's existing target-setting arrangements could be further developed to include specific literacy and numeracy learning objectives for groups of children in each class.
- Daily plans should make it clear what children are expected to learn and understand as well as what activities are planned.
- The anti-social behaviour of a small group of children outside lessons is detracting from the positive image that the school is working hard to establish.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1996 and it has made good progress since that time. Standards have improved with particularly good work now evident in writing; an area identified as

requiring some improvement, and information and communication technology; which has improved even further since the previous inspection. There is far more teaching of an excellent or very good quality now happening. The leadership and management of the school have dealt very effectively with the many new national initiatives that have occurred in the past few years. Other issues identified as requiring some attention at the time of the last inspection have been dealt with appropriately. The curriculum has been reorganised to give an appropriate amount of time to all subjects, which has helped to provide very well for the creative arts. There is also much more effective teaching happening to meet the needs of children of different ages in the same class.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	B	B	n/a
mathematics	E	D	D	n/a
science	C	C	A	n/a

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Due to the relatively small cohorts of children who take the national tests at the age of 7 and 11 it is important that test results are looked at with some caution. However, standards have been above the national average for 11-year-olds in English for the past two years. This is due to children achieving well in writing and using writing productively in other subjects. Standards in reading have been good for several years, but it is improvements in writing that have had the greatest impact on overall standards in English. In mathematics, there is greater variation seen in the results over the past few years. The school has several very able mathematicians who achieve well. However, there are one or two children in almost in each year group who have learning difficulties and they struggle to attain the expected level for their age. The recent changes in teaching methods promoted by the National Numeracy Strategy and a review of the resources used for number work has led to more appropriate support being provided for lower attainers. This has helped to raise the attainment of children in mathematics. The present Year 6 is attaining at levels better than expected for their age in both English and mathematics. The school has set appropriate but challenging targets for literacy and numeracy through to year 2002. Standards in information and communication technology are very good and good in music.

The test results for 7-year-olds reflect the good standards attained in writing, being well above average for the past four years. Standards in reading are also above average although the 2000 cohort did not attain as well as previous years due to a number of children with identified learning difficulties. In mathematics, results have been well above average for the past few years. The present Year 2 is attaining at levels that are better than expected for their age in both English and mathematics.

When children start school they display personal and academic skills that are better than those expected for their age. However, each group has a very wide range of ability. There are many eloquent children who have very good communication skills but there are also a few children who have learning difficulties. Throughout the reception class children of different ability achieve well. The school copes very well with the more able children resulting in a large percentage at the age of 7 and

11 attaining well in the national tests. There is also good support for children who have learning difficulties ensuring that they achieve well as they move through the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most children are enthusiastic about school and take a great pride in their work. There is a great contrast between the way many older children show very good enthusiasm when working together on activities, like designing ICT books for younger children, and when a small number display indifference when not directly supervised by adults.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. The vast majority of children behave very well and settle to their tasks quickly. However, there is a small group of children whose behaviour does give the school concern. This group's behaviour is appropriate in lessons but once outside direct supervision they display anti-social tendencies.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. The reading and computer partnership between younger and older children reveals that older children take on responsibility with great maturity.
Attendance	Good. Levels of attendance are above average and children arrive in good time to start lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Very 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 excellent in 6 per cent of lessons, very good in 23 per cent, good in 48 per cent and satisfactory in 23 per cent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The vast majority of the teaching is having a powerful impact on the children's learning. In writing and information and communication technology, for example, the teachers' good personal knowledge is helping to deepen the children's understanding of poetry and helping them to use the computer to present work in more interesting and mature ways. This is particularly evident in Class 3 (Years 3 and 4) and in Class 4 (Years 5 and 6). All teachers handle the mixed age classes very well. This is because there is a focus on providing a range of tasks for children of different ability. This is helping children learn at the pace that is appropriate for their stage of development. The teaching of literacy is particularly good and there is good use of reading and writing in other subjects. The teaching of mathematics has been a problem in the past but a review of the resources used has helped the staff to feel more secure about providing appropriate challenges for all children, especially the lower attainers. The teaching of music, throughout the school, is particularly effective and contributes towards children having very good provision for the creative arts. The teaching in the reception class is consistently good. This helps children have a good start to their education. The exciting and interesting way the teacher links the teaching of basic skills to topics that capture the children's interest is making it easier for children to learn.

The school has successfully introduced a target-setting system, which is helping children gain a greater understanding of their own learning. However, the targets are not always linked to specific learning

objectives in literacy and numeracy. The plans for individual lessons do not always make it clear what children are expected to learn and understand.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school has worked hard to provide children with a full range of learning experiences. There is good focus on music, art, drama, poetry and dance, which makes the provision for the creative arts very effective. There is very effective use of information and communication technology in other subjects.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Good. Children with special education needs are identified early and are well supported. The small steps they require to make to improve are well set out in individual plans. There is good support from a range of agencies and teachers are very aware of their needs when planning lessons.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The range of opportunities for older children to work with younger children in reading and computer work is helping older children to be more mature. Music, art and poetry help to give children a sense of belonging to a special community. All children know right from wrong although a small group frequently do not want to comply with the school's reasonable code of conduct.
How well the school cares for its children	The school has developed appropriate systems for assessing children and checking on the progress they make. The information from the assessments is beginning to be used to help recognise areas where children could be achieving better results. Child protection procedures are adequate although no one has yet been trained to take account of the new national legislation that has been recently introduced.

Parents are working in all classes. The school has taken advantage of the full range of skills that different parents have to develop projects, such as, the school garden, reading and mathematical games. In the main, parents are very appreciative of the way the school helps them understand about their children's progress although some would like more detailed information.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. There is a strong commitment to working together as a team amongst the staff. The teaching headteacher is determined that children are provided with every opportunity to achieve well. She is highly organised and gives much attention to seeking ways of continually improving the provision for all children.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The knowledgeable governors have appropriate committees in place to enable them to work efficiently. They have a good understanding about the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Test results are carefully analysed and used as a springboard to consider areas where improvements can be made. There are formal and informal ways in place for checking on how good the teaching is. These systems work well and help teachers to recognise their

	professional development needs.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The senior management team and governors give careful consideration to using funds to focus on raising standards. One example is the way they have prioritised retaining a four-class system in school. This is not just helping to raise children's achievement but does so in the most economical way possible.

The school is set in a delightful area and the building is modern and reasonably spacious. One classroom is situated outside the main building but this does not detract from the overall quality of the learning environment created within the school. There are more than adequate resources for literacy, numeracy, science, information and communication technology, music and art. The staffing is slightly generous for a school of this size but this is due to governors making sensible arrangements to keep four classes.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way in which the school helps children to become mature and responsible. • The fact that children enjoy coming to school. • The commitment of individual teachers. • The attempt made to ensure that children still have a full range of subjects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities provided for children after school. • Greater continuity in children's homework. • Better information about the progress that their children are making.

The parents have accurately identified many of the positive features that help to make this a good school. The range of additional activities available for children outside school is adequate for a school of this size and the homework arrangements are in line with, or better than, most other schools. Annual reports to parents are very informative and provide specific information about what children need to do next in order to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 According to the national tests for 11 year-olds standards have steadily improved over recent years although there are significant variations in mathematics. When considering the children's attainment it is important to be aware of the very small number who take the national tests at 7 and 11. In 2000 only ten children took the test and comparison with prior attainment is somewhat inaccurate as a number of children leave for private schools in Years 3 and 4.
- 2 In English, there has been a constant improvement over the past four years, which has seen standards improve from being in line with the national average in 1997 to being above the national average in 2000. When compared with similar schools standards are average. Children achieving well in writing and use their writing skills successfully in other areas of the curriculum. Standards in reading have been good for several years but it is the school's success in developing the children's writing that has had the greatest impact on standards. Children currently in Year 6 are attaining levels better than expected for their age.
- 3 Over the last four years standards in mathematics have fluctuated. In 1997 the school was attaining standards that were well above the national average. However, the following year standards plummeted to being well below. This is mainly due to the small cohorts taking the national tests each year resulting in comparisons being inaccurate. In 1999 and 2000 standards have risen slightly to below the national average. In comparison with similar schools standards were well below average in 2000. Even when recognising that the school contends with small cohorts and a significant number of children moving to independent schools at the beginning of the upper school, this does not explain fully why standards in mathematics should be so much lower than in English. However, the school recognised that standards were not high enough and has taken appropriate action. They carefully analysed all tests results and have introduced supplementary materials to improve the children's number work. There is clear evidence that this is having a good effect on standards and the current Year 6 children are attaining standards better than expected for their age.
- 4 The same fluctuations noted in mathematics is seen in science results, where standards were above the national average in 1997, fell to being in line with the average in 1998 and 1999 and rose sharply to well above the national average in 2000. When compared to similar schools the school's 2000 results are above average.
- 5 In 2000 the 11-year-old girls performed better than the boys in English and mathematics but taken over four years, in English, mathematics and science the boys performed better than the girls and exceeded the national average for their age group.
- 6 The school has met the literacy and numeracy targets set for 2000. It has set realistic targets for the years 2001 and 2002 and following re-evaluation has increased the target for mathematics in line with the improved performance of children presently in Year 6.
- 7 The national tests result in reading, writing and mathematics for 7 year-olds have been well above, above or in line with national averages for the past few years. The results have been extremely good for writing and show an improving trend for mathematics. The writing and

mathematics results for 2000 are above average compared to similar schools. In reading however the 2000 tests results are well below average compared to similar schools.

- 8 In English there has been a drop in reading standards in the 2000 test results, falling to being in line with the national average compared to being well above in the previous two years. However, all children attained the expected level for their age but fewer went on to attain above this level. This situation was expected as the school had recognised that the cohort had fewer more able children. However, standards in writing have been consistently well above the national average since 1997 and remain so in the most recent test in 2000. The majority of children are very articulate and have a wide vocabulary, which is reflected in their written work throughout the curriculum.
- 9 Similarly test results for 7-year-olds in mathematics shows significant fluctuation. In 1997 standards were in line with the national average and fell to being below in 1998. However, in 1999 standards rose to being well above and remained so for the 2000 test. This is due to the greater percentage of children attaining the higher levels. The present children in Year 2 are attaining at levels above that expected for their age group.
- 10 Standards of attainment in science for children aged 7 have been in line with the national average for the past few years. Results of the teacher assessments in 2000 show that the children are attaining standards above that expected for their age and the children currently in Year 2 maintain this improvement.
- 11 Children throughout the school are developing skills in information and communication technology that are above that expected for their age. The teachers have good subject knowledge and are adept at providing a wide range of opportunities for children to use their skills in most subjects of the curriculum. The school also provides many experiences for the children to develop their creative arts. For example, the quality of the teaching provided by the music teacher and visiting musicians is having a very good impact on standards in music.
- 12 When children start school they display skills in communication, language and literature and mathematics that are above that expected for their age. However, each group has a very wide ability range, which the school manages well through the provision of work suited to the needs of all children. There is good provision for the youngest children resulting in them exceeding the learning goals expected for each area of learning by the time they start Year 1.
- 13 Children with learning difficulties, including those identified with special education needs, are achieving well throughout the school. The size of the school enables staff to be aware of the needs of all the children. Constant discussion takes place to ensure that they receive the best provision. Regular meetings with parents and review of individual education plans together with support from outside agencies wherever appropriate, ensure that these children make good progress in their learning.
- 14 The progress made by the more able children is also good with work usually planned to provide challenge for those who are capable of higher achievement. However, there are times in Year 1 and 2 when opportunities are missed and children are not presented with work that challenges them. The school has successfully introduced a target-setting system, which is helping children to gain a greater understanding of their own learning. However, the targets are not specific enough and do not always ensure that the children make the small steps needed to improve.

- 15 Planning has improved since the previous inspection and the school now uses a whole school two-year planning cycle, which ensures that there is continuity and progression through all subjects. This has helped to raise standards and to ensure that more able children and children who are not as bright as achieving as well as can be expected.
- 16 The identified areas for improvement in the previous inspection have been addressed with improved standards and good work particularly evident in writing.

Children's attitudes, values and personal development

- 17 There is a distinct difference between the attitudes shown by the majority of children in lessons and those displayed by a significant few outside the classroom. In lessons the vast majority of children show positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic about the activities they are engaged with. This is seen at its best when a group of Year 5 and 6 children are working together to create books for younger children. During this session children have to deal with frustrations when ideas do not work out first time. Yet they remain focused on the activity and are prepared to try new ideas to overcome initial difficulties. When presenting their work to the rest of the school during assembly it is clear for all to see that they are particularly proud of their results.
- 18 In contrast to this there are times when children do not display mature attitudes when away from the direct supervision of adults. This is seen at its worst during a wet playtime when a group of older boys behave badly even though they have been given the privilege of playing table tennis. There is also a small undercurrent during assemblies when the same group tend to show disinterest unless directly involved in what is happening.
- 19 The same display of disinterest or immaturity is not seen in the dining hall when all older children take their responsibilities seriously. They show that they can conduct themselves appropriately when looking after younger children. They set good examples and this results in dinner times being very civilised with children of different ages being able to talk and to interact very positively. They are also responsible for setting good examples when it comes to good table manners. It is pleasing to report that the vast majority of children are polite, well mannered and courteous.
- 20 In lessons, the behaviour of children to be satisfactory due to the expert handling of the teachers. In three out of the four classes there are children who have the potential to be disruptive. In the vast majority of lessons they do not distract others. The exception is that a few children in Class 2 (Years 1 and 2) show little interest when the teacher is working with the whole class. In all other lessons the teachers keep the pace of the lessons brisk and the children respond positively. In Class 3 (Years 3 and 4) the teacher employs very effective methods to help with keeping children interested and positive. As a result of children being appropriately engaged in their lessons the teachers are able to help children to develop their creativity. As a consequence the creative arts are very effectively taught and children's learning is aided by the richness of the activities they are engaged in. This keeps levels of enthusiasm high. There have been no exclusions in the past few years.
- 21 There have been isolated incidents of bullying which the school has dealt with appropriately. However, the school is aware that it needs to be very vigilant in ensuring that a few children do not dominate certain playground situations or pick on individuals. The school has done everything that can be reasonably expected to deal with these situations but continues to monitor the situation very closely. The sad fact is that a small group of children are aware of

the impact of their actions on others and whilst they display remorse for a short time it does not necessarily prevent situations from reoccurring. It is important to emphasise however that the vast majority of children are caring and friendly towards each other.

- 22 Amongst the most pleasing events in the school are the reading and computer partnerships that exist between the youngest and oldest children. There is a delightful time at the end of each Thursday when children from Class 1 (reception) and Class 2 (Year 1) link with children from Class 4 (Years 5 and 6) to share stories and computer activities. There is a strong bond formed between the children. In one case a child who has emotional difficulties has a reward 'quality time' with the older child at the end of the week. This arrangement gives the older children a sense of responsibility and at the same time younger children benefit from the positive image of reading and computers presented by the older children.
- 23 Children are provided with appropriate opportunities to take responsibility for their learning in classrooms and for their actions outside the classroom. In the vast majority of cases this results in children being able to sustain good working habits either alone or as a member of a small group. This is seen in design and technology lessons when individuals are able to work for prolonged periods on models or during information and communication technology lessons when two or three children work purposefully together to create books or a piece of writing. The small groups of instrumentalists who often play at the beginning of assemblies are able to organise themselves appropriately and display mature attitudes when playing.
- 24 The previous report did not refer to any anti-social tendencies by groups of children. The school accepts that there has been a change in the school's intake since that time and this has caused the difference. The inspection team agree that there are children who need to be handled carefully in nearly all classes. This, therefore, does not reflect a deterioration in behaviour but that the difficulties posed by a significant few did not exist at the time of the previous inspection.
- 25 Attendance rates are above average. Children are punctual with the only concern arising when on a very few occasions the bus arrives late. Lessons start on time and children are keen to come to school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 26 The teaching is good and has a very positive impact on the children's learning. It is particularly effective with children aged 7 to 11, despite these two classes containing a few children who do not settle easily to work. In the reception class the teaching is consistently helping children to learn new skills and achieve well. The teaching is very effective for information and communication technology and for music. All teachers handle the mixed age classes very well. This is because there is a focus on providing a range of tasks for children of different ability. Overall, teaching is excellent in 6 per cent of lessons; very good in 23 per cent; good in 48 per cent and satisfactory in 23 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is significantly better than the position reported at the time of the previous inspection with far more teaching of high quality now evident.
- 27 In the reception class the very knowledgeable teacher is very secure in her understanding of the new curriculum guidance for children aged up to five. She is able to assess the children's needs and plans for them accordingly. There is good attention given to teaching the basic skills of reading and writing. This is seen when the teacher uses many interesting and stimulating

ideas to help children recognise the letter 'r'. The children think of the activities as 'fun' games but there is learning happening none-the-less. As children move on from the whole-class activity to group work very careful consideration is given to the needs of each group and appropriate support provided.

- 28 The teacher of these young children gives a great deal of thought into linking events which are outside children's everyday experience with something that they can directly relate to. For example, she successfully links Mary's preparation for the birth of Jesus to the preparations made by an expectant mother today, by getting a pregnant parent to talk to the children. There is particularly good attention given to creative aspects with children being encouraged to consider using a range of different materials when decorating the figures set out around the crib. During a numeracy lesson the children excitedly learn to count and order numbers as they work with a resource known as the 'disappearing lady'. The teacher intervenes appropriately to re-inforce learning points such as, estimating how many balls are required to fill her shopping bag. The learning is taking place in a very creative and interesting way, which helps to stimulate children's imagination.
- 29 One of the major strengths of the teaching of these young children is the way in which the teacher knows each child and can assess their learning effectively so that appropriate preparation can be made for the next stage of their education. There is a positive relationship established which encourages children to work hard, give of their best and take pride in their achievements.
- 30 In Class 2, which is made up of children from Years 1 and 2, two teachers share the teaching. The quality of teaching for the children in this key stage (5 to 7 year olds) is good overall, with a prominent amount of good teaching evident. At its best, the teacher uses every opportunity for children to explain things, extending their speaking and listening skills. During a geography lesson, for example, the children are encouraged to close their eyes and describe a feature they see on the way to school. Later when children are examining 'man-made' as opposed to 'natural' features, the more able children are able to extend their thinking by recognising that whilst a road can be described as 'man-made' the materials used for its construction include natural materials.
- 31 Both teachers are very effective in dealing with the needs of all children in this mixed age class. This is a particular strength of the teaching. For example, during a lesson on the life cycle of a butterfly the teacher uses very good visual resources to help all children understand about the stages of development. This is followed by different tasks set according to age and ability, which is aimed at helping children record what they have learned. In this lesson the teacher is very clear about what she wants the children to learn and the activities are organised accordingly. However, this is not as consistent in each lesson. There are occasions when the planning does not make it clear what it is the children are expected to learn. It is therefore difficult for the teacher to assess how effective her lesson has been. This is most noticeable during literacy and numeracy lessons with this age group.
- 32 There is also a contrast in the way the two teachers manage the group. In some cases the teacher is struggling to gain everybody's attention during the whole class session. For example, during the reading of 'The Frightened Owl' a small group of children are not paying full attention to the text and this results in the reading being rather laboured. The teacher has only a limited number of strategies to deal with the inattention. Although the children involved work appropriately in the tasks that follow later, their inattentiveness during the whole class session does result in some time being lost. In contrast another teacher working with the same group

uses appropriate strategies to keep children focused. For example, during a religious education lesson the same group of children give a great deal of thought to the type of gifts that the Three Kings brought to Jesus. The children come up with very good ideas. One child reflects, 'They were very precious gifts, gifts for a new king.' The teacher's working relationship with the group is effective and enables her to make demands on them both in terms of their academic and behavioural responses.

- 33 The quality of teaching for the 7 to 11 age range is very good overall. The children in this age range are taught in two classes (Class 3 and 4). The teaching in both of these classes is at least good, frequently rising to very good and occasionally outstanding.
- 34 One of the outstanding features of the teaching is the way in which teachers are able to improve children's basic literacy skills and involve information and communication technology effectively in this work. In Class 3 (Years 3 and 4), for example, the teacher's initial questioning helps to consolidate what children already know. She then successfully moves on their learning by introducing two new terms, 'prefix' and 'antonym'. In the work that follows she uses a system of 'demonstrating' as she develops an idea related to 'imperative verbs' by creating a recipe' for a 'Cracking Christmas'. During the session, her own confidence in dealing with potentially difficult subject is apparent. A combination of direct teaching and using strategies, such as, deliberately leaving out some punctuation is helping the children to improve their literacy skills. In Class 4, (Years 5 and 6), the teacher very effectively works with children on extending their information and communication technology skills by getting children to write short stories for younger children. During this lesson the children show that they have a full range of ICT skills available to them. The quality of the work is very impressive with children being able to use the program's capability to the full in getting text to flash on and off the screen in different ways. This type of exercise is very well developing the children's creative skills. Each of the books produced has different attributes, which shows that the children have a good understanding of the program's capability.
- 35 As with the younger children the teachers work effectively with mixed age classes. The challenge provided for children of different ability and age is particularly good. This is very evident in mathematics and English lessons in both classes. However, the same attention to providing appropriate challenge is seen in lessons such as design and technology, physical education and art. In these lessons although the task may be the same for all children the teacher expertly works with individuals or groups to 'move on' the challenge. For example, during a physical education lesson with Class 3, the introduction of a piece of tissue paper to simulate the falling of snow helps the more able movers to improve their initial sequences. Similarly, during a design and technology lesson with Class 4 focussing on moving cars, the teacher intervenes appropriately to suggest ideas that the children are able to develop at their own level. There is no evidence of lack of challenge for more able children, which was seen at the time of the previous inspection.
- 36 All the teachers working with these older children have very good strategies for dealing with potentially difficult children. For example, in Class 3 the teacher quietly and unobtrusively intervenes when one child shows signs of distracting others and suggests he quietly removes himself from the group, count to 20 and then returns. In Class 4 there are a number of children who do not find settling for prolonged periods easy. However, the very demanding pace of lessons is one strategy used by the teacher to ensure that children have little time to distract others or engage in activities that are not related to their work.

- 37 The teaching of mathematics has improved over the past few years. The school acknowledged that prior to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy there were difficulties related to supporting the average and less able children. Changes that have occurred over the past two years have seen improvement in this area. A review of resources used as well as teaching methodology adopted has meant that children are now appropriately challenged. The inspection team confirms that this is the case with teaching often being at a good level. This is reflected in the standards attained with the present Year 6 group who are attaining standards beyond the level expected for its age. However, there are times when there is a lack of appropriate challenge for more able children in Class 2.
- 38 The teaching of music is a particular strength as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. The specialist teacher who works with each class is able to make learning interesting and fun for this subject. This has resulted in many children deciding to learn to play a musical instrument and in taking up the many opportunities that exist for them to have additional tuition. The teachers own subject knowledge is so good that it makes it easy for her to get children highly motivated and to move on their learning.
- 39 The school has successfully introduced an individual target-setting system, which is helping children gain a greater understanding of their own learning. These are beginning to have a positive impact on children's writing but are still at an early stage of implementation. These could be further developed to give more specific attention to literacy and numeracy objectives for groups of children in each class.
- 40 Children with special educational needs are well provided for. The children with difficulties are identified at an early stage and appropriate arrangements are made to help meet their needs. The teachers' planning reflects the small steps that they require to make in order to improve. The school uses support from a range of agencies effectively. The overall impact on children with special education needs' learning is good. They achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school.

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

- 41 The school provides a good curriculum, which is broad and balanced and meets the interest, aptitudes and needs of children, including those with special educational needs. It is particularly good in providing opportunities for children to develop their creative skills through art, poetry, drama and particularly music. Younger children in the foundation stage of learning also receive a good curriculum. The planning aims to support, foster and promote the children's development in all areas of learning throughout the foundation stage. All statutory requirements are met.
- 42 The school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy in an effective way that helps to raise the children's attainment. The impact of the National Numeracy Strategy is also having a positive effect on raising standards for children throughout the school. The school has rightly identified a need for further resources that provide support in number work, particularly for the less able children. The impact of the National Numeracy Strategy, together with the additional resources, is beginning to have a good impact on raising the attainment of children by the time they are 11.
- 43 Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed. The introduction of an extra class has resulted in the reduction in both the age range and the number of children in each class.

This ensures that the needs of all children are better met. All policies have been reviewed and further updated and where appropriate national guidelines have been adopted. The development of whole school curriculum planning over a two-year cycle also ensures that there is appropriate coverage of all subjects, which in turn guarantees progression in children's learning.

- 44 The personal, health and social education programme provide good guidance for children in the understanding of drugs misuse and sex education. Children in Years 5 and 6 are taught about managing relationships and taking care of themselves. This aspect of the curriculum has a particularly positive effect in helping those children who have behaviour difficulties.
- 45 The provision for children with special educational needs is good. Early identification of needs enable the teachers to write individual education plans that aim to provide the small steps required to help these children make progress. The school works closely with parents and with outside agencies when appropriate. Review meetings take place regularly and there is good liaison when children transfer to other schools.
- 46 The range of extra curricular activities offered throughout the school year are good considering the size of the school. Sporting activities include ski lessons, netball and football training. The good musical provision provides a range of opportunities for children to perform in the orchestra or choir at various times of the year. Plans are in hand to start a computer club and a French club next term. The school also makes effective use of the immediate community and there are good examples of village studies being carried out as well as using local people to talk about historical aspects of local life.
- 47 Provision for the development of the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and maintains the standard reported at the time of the previous inspection. The size of the school helps to promote opportunities to develop a community where each child is valued. All members of staff provide good role models by showing respect for the individual and displays around school reflect the importance staff place on children's work.
- 48 Provision for children' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is fostered through assemblies and the programme for religious education. However, there is a significant minority of children who sometimes show a lack of interest and respect and spoil the reflective atmosphere of assemblies. All teachers take every opportunity of promoting spirituality within lessons. This was seen in a science lesson with younger children where they were learning about the life cycle of a butterfly. Children in the foundation stage of learning also display wonder at the small size of a jacket for a newborn baby. This was cleverly linked by the teacher to the preparation for the birth of Jesus. Through science children are encouraged to appreciate the wonders of the natural world and by listening to music they experience a range of emotions.
- 49 The school makes good provision for children's moral development. There are clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour in the school's code of conduct and children know the difference between right and wrong. The vast majority of children take responsibility for their own actions and older children talk about setting a good example for younger children with many working as partners in reading and computer sessions. However, a few children still behave inappropriately outside the direct supervision of teachers. Most teachers are competent in using a variety of strategies to manage these children and when involved in activities where they can take initiative and show responsibility they behave well.

- 50 Provision for the development of the children's social skills is good. The majority of children display good manners to adults and are sociable to each other during group work within class, in the playground and in the dining hall. The playing of team games during physical education develops the children's sense of fair play and promotes their team spirit. A number of children benefit from learning to play an instrument and feel proud to play for others during assemblies. The children also work well together when practising for a major production. A concert performed by the peripatetic music group is open to all members of the school and the local community. Older children take part in a residential visit to Beverley Park Outdoor Pursuit Centre. The children are also encouraged to consider the needs of others and often raise funds for local and national charities.
- 51 The provision for children's cultural development is good. Many opportunities are provided for the children to study their own culture. The local environment enables them to study features of rural life and compare facilities with towns and the city of York. In a major study of an Indian village the children discussed the difference of life styles and the expectations of children to contribute to the family income. They also visit places within the locality and further afield to enhance their historical knowledge. History days in school enable all to participate in taking roles, listening to music and eating the food of the times. Music lessons give the children a wide knowledge of their own music and that of other cultures. They have had experience of Indian and Irish music and have performed Indian dances. In art they study a variety of painters and discuss the range of techniques and styles that artists use.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 52 The school is a secure place for children, where they feel at ease and enjoy the benefits of a small community. Relationships are strengthened by various means; for instance children eat together in mixed aged groups at lunchtimes in a pleasant atmosphere. Another example sees younger children delight in their contact with older ones in the reading partnerships. All these elements provide a family atmosphere and strengthen relationships across the school. Children are given a good start in school with a caring, stimulating environment, which enables them to settle very quickly and enjoy their day.
- 53 Teachers know their children well and chart their progress closely. The school has recently introduced nationally approved tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 in addition to the statutory national tests in Years 2 and 6. It also uses other standardised spelling tests and information from all these tests enables the school to analyse strengths and weaknesses in greater depth. The school has started to introduce target-setting procedures for groups of children. These are helping children have greater understanding about their own learning. However, they are not as yet securely linked to specific literacy and numeracy objectives for each class. They do make a contribution to the school being able to appropriately check on the children's academic progress.
- 54 Behaviour management usually works well, and children are clear about how they earn merit marks. There is patient and consistent management of children in the reception class, for instance, which result in a happy and secure introduction to school. However, there is one cohort of older children who need to be better involved in school life, for example in assemblies where sometimes inattention and giggling contrasts with the responsible attitudes of other younger and older children. The school deals effectively with issues relating to good attendance and this results in children arriving in good time to start the day.

- 55 Children with special educational needs are well integrated into school life though some with behaviour difficulties find it easier to fit in when there are positive steps taken by the school to involve them with activities. For example, the school's recent introduction of play partners in the playground has given many older children a role at break times and helps to prevent friction and minimise the risk of bullying.
- 56 Child protection arrangements are in place, though training needs to be kept up to date. The school has good health and safety provision. The staff, however, express concern about the arrangements for children who use bicycles to ride to school. The bicycles are parked in a safe place but there are difficulties in ensuring that children who cycle are not adding to the traffic congestion that occurs when children are leaving school. The inspection team did not witness this at first hand because very few children cycle to school in the winter months. However, it is something that the governors need to monitor during the spring and summer months.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 57 Parents are very positive about the school, and are pleased to be involved in consultations about new initiatives. A few would like better information about their children's progress. Reports give good information about personal and academic development and inform parents about what their children need to do to improve their work and how they can help them.
- 58 Parents are working in all classes. The school has taken advantage of the full range of skills that different parents have to develop projects, such as, the school garden, reading and mathematical games. Parents praised the music provision at school and many take up the offer of instrumental tuition, which adds to the rich musical experience at the school.
- 59 The school is very aware that regular informal contact with parents can be difficult since many children arrive at school by bus from outlying districts. As a result it produces good and detailed curriculum information sheets for each class, and there are regular evenings focused on a particular subject where parents can get to grips with what their children will be learning. These have been well attended and the ICT presentation was particularly well received.
- 60 Parents said that they felt very welcome in school and are contacted quickly if any problems arise. Parents are consulted about whether they wish their children to attend part-time at the beginning of their reception year and several take up the offer. Parents who had suffered a bereavement praised the school highly for its reaction and the support it gave to their children.
- 61 The school works closely with the 'Friends Association', who provides valuable support and feedback, and also fundraise for various projects. Parents play their part by reading regularly with their children from their earliest years, and help them with homework, though some said they would like more formal homework in Year 6 to prepare them for secondary school. However, the inspectors' view is that the school's homework provision is at least in line with most other schools.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 62 The school is well led, which was the position reported at the time of the previous inspection. This can be seen by the way all staff work effectively as a team to ensure that the children

are appropriately provided for. This includes having a firm commitment to raising standards and to ensure that the needs of children of all abilities are catered for. However, the present set of school aims does not make explicit mention of striving for high standards as being an important priority. This oversight is not reflected in the staff's attitudes or in the way the children are working to improve the quality of their work.

- 63 The headteacher's style is well suited to this relatively small school. She has a close relationship with all staff but this does not prevent her when necessary from making difficult decisions. Over the past few years the school, like all others, has had to take on board many new national initiatives. Careful planning has ensured that this has been done effectively. In literacy the changes made to the way of working has been very effective in ensuring that standards in writing have remained high. However, in numeracy there were problems, which required the headteacher to demonstrate strong leadership. The staff felt that they were working to capacity to provide appropriately for all children in mathematics. However, it was clear that standards were not high enough. All staff agreed the changes that took place after appropriate consultation and involvement from external advisers.
- 64 The school has very good procedures in place to check on the standards that are being attained by all children. The school has the added difficulty of dealing with small cohorts at any given time. This has resulted in the school needing to develop carefully structured tracking systems, which help to assess the progress of all children. The system has proved to be very effective in focussing on the school's strengths and weaknesses. Test results are carefully analysed and used as a springboard to consider areas where improvements can be made. The analysis also takes account of the rate of progress of each child and compares the expected progress made against the actual progress that has taken place. Many of these systems have been developed since the time of the previous inspection and reflect the changes that have occurred nationally since that time.
- 65 The system in place is being developed to include individual and group target-setting. The school already has whole school curricular targets, which are successful in helping to raise standards. The next stage is to develop group targets so that children are even better informed about what they need to do next to improve their work. This system is at an early stage of development and is presently focussed on writing. The early indications are that they are successful in helping children improve their work and the school is now keen to develop targets in other areas of the curriculum.
- 66 Teaching and learning are regularly checked through both an informal and formal system. This is an improvement from the position noted at the time of the previous inspection. The school's Local Education Authority's advisor is central to the formal system that is in place. The headteacher has a heavy teaching commitment and is therefore very reliant on the help provided by an external advisor. However, this is not the only system in place to check on the quality of teaching and learning. The staff all have opportunities of observing each other teach. This system has been in place for some time and is helping staff to share good practice. It also being used to enable key members of staff to have an overview of the way the subject they are managing is being taught. The monitoring of literacy and numeracy has naturally been high priority but there has also been a focus on information and communication technology as well as the more creative aspects of the curriculum. A regular programme of classroom observation is in place and one that the staff welcome as a helpful part of their professional development. Teachers have an opportunity of talking about their area of strength and to consider any future development needs. Any future professional need is supported through the school's professional development fund.

- 67 The school development plan is appropriately prioritised. The staff recognise that there has been some difficulty in meeting all the requirements outlined in the national initiatives over the past few years. The changes to the non-core subjects, outlined in the new National Curriculum, have been phased in with minimal discussion at the moment. However, there is a sensible timetable outlined to enable extended staff discussions to take place in the near future. Priorities outlined in the present school development plan have appropriately focused on target-setting arrangements, to enable the staff to continue the work they have started in this area.
- 68 The management of children with special educational needs is good. The headteacher takes the co-ordinator role and she ensures that systems are established at an early stage to support these children. The good progress made by the children is testament to the good management that exists. Children's progress is reviewed regularly and parents are fully involved at each stage of the reviews.
- 69 The governors have appropriate committees in place to help them work efficiently and to meet their statutory requirements. This is a position that has been maintained since the previous inspection. There are several new governors and they are at a stage of developing their role so as to have greater impact on the work of the school. At present they have limited opportunities to be involved in future development planning. However, they are fully aware of the need to understand more about the way the school is performing and have already taken steps to use national data more effectively so as to recognise the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- 70 The accommodation has recently been improved to include a new library. This has helped the school's accommodation, reported as being attractive and appropriate at the time of the previous inspection, to be even better. This is despite having one classroom based outside the main building. There is also a good level of resourcing for all subjects, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. The increase in the use of computers has been one notable improvement as is the improvement in resources available for art. The school has been able to finance the retention of the reception class as one small group, making this a four-class school. Therefore staffing levels are better than seen in most schools. The school's links with a local teachers' training institution has helped the school to enjoy additional support from trainee teachers. The arrangements for the support of these young students are very good. This helps the school and the individuals' involved gain a great deal from the association.
- 71 The school makes very effective use of additional grants to help improve the quality of education for its children. This is seen in the way information and communication technology is resourced. There is also very effective use made of money to help with the professional development needs of staff. All staff have been involved in specific training related to literacy and numeracy and all have also gained from the training available for information and communication technology. The school is quick to take advantage of professional development arrangements organised by the Local Education Authority as is seen by the training provided for the special educational needs co-ordinator.
- 72 The headteacher and governors are very aware of the need to link spending decisions to raising standards. The purchase of new resources for mathematics was done after much consideration was given to the likely impact on standards. The initial assessments made at the time of purchase are proving to be accurate with clear evidence that the school's standards are raising. Another major decision made by the governors has resulted in the four-class system being in place. This was done with careful consideration given to its potential impact on standards. The initial analysis suggests that this decision has helped all staff to focus on the

needs of children in their care because each teacher has a narrower age group to deal with. The school continues to enjoy the support available from a part-time bursar and this is helping the school make appropriate plans for future budgeting arrangements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 73 Although there are no major weaknesses the school needs to deal with the following issues in order to maintain the good position it enjoys at presently. The governors, headteacher and staff need to:

Continue to develop the individual target-setting arrangements by:

- Putting specific emphasis on literacy and numeracy objectives;
 - Sharing the targets with the children and make them a prominent part of the lessons;
 - Ensuring that the teachers' marking makes explicit mention of these targets.
- (Paragraphs 39, 53, 65, 113 and 118)

Ensure that all daily plans have are clear about what the learning intentions are.

(Paragraphs 31, 112, 118 and 123)

Continue to consider ways of reducing anti-social behaviour and attitudes outside the classroom by:

- Using outside support to help with individuals who are causing concern;
- Clarifying the reward and sanctions system that are in place for any issue that arise outside the classroom or direct supervision of staff.

(Paragraphs 17-24; 32, 36, 49, 111 and 112)

- 74 As well as these issues the following less pressing matters need to be dealt with in the fullness of time.

- Child protection training; (Paragraphs 56)
- Safety issues related to children who cycle to school; (Paragraph 56)
- Review the school aims to give more emphasis to raising standards. (Paragraphs 62)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	57

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	23	48	23	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		95
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		nil
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		16

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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	7	5	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	100 (100)	100 (95)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	5	4	5
	Total	12	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	92 (86)	100 (86)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	5	5	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	4	5
	Girls	5	2	5
	Total	10	6	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (71)	60 (57)	100 (86)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	4	5
	Girls	5	2	5
	Total	9	6	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (64)	60 (62)	100 (62)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	79
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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)	4.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.1
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	206,647
Total expenditure	209,302
Expenditure per pupil	2,203
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,792
Balance carried forward to next year	9.137

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

69%

Number of questionnaires sent out	94
Number of questionnaires returned	65

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	34	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	32	62	3	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	60	11	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	49	15	5	2
The teaching is good.	35	55	3	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	51	17	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	37	11	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	49	9	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	55	12	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	34	48	11	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	57	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	45	25	14	5

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

- 75 The governors and senior managers have made the decision to retain four classes in the school. This has helped to ensure that the children currently in the reception class are taught as one group. This decision has been taken so as to give the young children in the school every chance to establish good working habits and to be supported in their pre-reading and pre-writing. This is working well with these children making good progress in each of the six areas of learning.
- 76 The full-time teacher working with this age group is very experienced and has already addressed the planning and organisation required by the new curriculum for the foundation stage of learning. Assessment information has already been adjusted to take account of the goals identified for each of the six areas of learning. The present reception group has 18 children, which includes one child who requires one-to-one support.
- 77 The baseline assessments for this age group show that children's attainment on entry is very wide but above average overall. It also varies considerably across each age group. For example, the children currently in Year 2 had very limited skills when they started school compared with the children currently in Year 1 who had skill levels better than expected for their age. The school has recently started to repeat the baseline assessments at the end of the reception year so as to build up a profile showing the amount of progress made by each child. This system is to be extended to take on board the guidance outlined as part of the recently produced national framework for children in nursery and reception classes.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- 78 The majority of children start school with personal skills better than those expected for their age. During their time in the reception class they make good progress in this area of learning and are exceeding the identified learning goals anticipated for children at the end of their reception year.
- 79 Very good emphasis is placed on this aspect of children's learning. Many opportunities are organised to enable children to work together and to show independence. During whole-class discussions there is a great deal of patience demonstrated by the rest of the group when one child very enthusiastically explains about setting up a feeder system for birds in his garden. His lengthy explanation is met with questions from the rest of the group and both the individual child and the rest of the children gain a great deal from the impromptu discussion. In another situation the rest of the class, already half way through a music and movement session in the hall, are not in the least bit intimidated when one child, who has emotional difficulties, bursts into the lesson. The calmness shown by the group is testament to the way in which the teacher works with the group.
- 80 Another part of their personal development is built around the efforts made by the school to involve these young children with older children. Firstly, through the reading partnership that has been set up, secondly, through the computer partnership and thirdly, through playtime buddies. Each of these is helping the younger children to settle into school life and giving them a role model to look up to. This system is working well with one child in particular, who despite emotional difficulties, has formed a very productive relationship with an older child.

- 81 The children are learning to act responsibly through the direction given to them. The quality of teaching is good for this area of learning and the teacher is able to influence the way the children settle into school life and play a responsible role. The warmth of the relationship that exists between adults and children helps enormously in this respect.

Communication, Language and Literacy

- 82 There are many articulate children in the reception class. A significant number of children are confident when speaking to a large audience and are prepared to offer opinions in these situations, as is seen in assemblies. However, this is not the case with all children. There are a few who tend to be reluctant to speak out in public, even within their own classroom. However, the teacher and other adults working with this age group are expert at ensuring that all children are fully involved in whole-class situations. The majority of children are able to communicate at levels that are advanced for their age when they first start school. They have some experience of books and are familiar with holding pens or pencils with many being able to write their names.
- 83 During their time in the reception class all children, irrespective of ability make good progress. They achieve well and the vast majority exceed the learning goals anticipated for this area by the time they move to Year 1. There is very good emphasis given to children's speaking and listening skills. For example, during a lesson which focused on Christmas, the teacher successfully linked the preparations made by Mary for the birth of Jesus to the preparations made by an expectant mother today. A parent who was expecting a baby talked to the children about her preparations. The quality of the children's questioning is advanced for their age and they listen attentively for prolonged periods.
- 84 Very good attention is given to pre-reading. Many children are already reading the introductory books to the reading scheme used by the school. There is much emphasis given to teaching children the initial sounds of words. This is seen when children listen to a taped story and have to remember all the words that they hear which start with the letter 'r'. The session is introduced as a 'fun' activity and this helps to stimulate interest amongst the children and to keep their attention. There is good use made of small 'white boards' which children use to record letters and words. They use these to write the letter 'r' and then can rub out their efforts and use the board to record small words, such as 'rat'. This is helping them to form their letters correctly and helps to give the teacher instant information about children who require additional support.
- 85 The good teaching is again having a positive impact on the children's learning in this area. The children are learning to explain things in an articulate manner and beginning to write the letters of the alphabet correctly as well beginning to read. This is due to careful preparations and the effective deployment of adults by the class teacher.

Mathematics

- 86 As with other areas of learning the majority of children are on course to exceed the learning goals anticipated for their age by the time they start Year 1. This represents good progress throughout the reception class for children of all abilities. Most children are able to order numbers to 20 and can count successfully well beyond this. During one lesson, most children are able to place numbers in order on a washing line and the more able can work out the double of a single digit number. They sing counting rhymes and songs, participate in role-play

and during the first part of the lesson use the number line to recognise numerals. Many strategies are used by the teacher to promote the children's learning in an enjoyable way. The introduction of money and the value of coins are promoted successfully by children using a given amount to visit the 'shop' for Christmas goodies.

- 87 Good teaching is again responsible for effective learning. The teacher is continually challenging children and providing interesting and stimulating activities for the children. For example, puppets are used to help with counting activities and good use is made of the outdoor mathematics trail to develop certain ideas. In another lesson the children were engrossed with the 'disappearing lady' but at the same time were learning about using numbers in different contexts.
- 88 The teacher knows the children well and is able to ask different questions, during mental and oral mathematics that is challenging for individuals. There are also good links with information and communication technology in this area of learning. The children are familiar with a range of computer programs and use them independently. During the inspection two programs were being used very well by different groups of children. One was aimed at recognising numbers between 1 and 10 and the other was helping children to represent information in the form of block graphs. There is a great deal of attention given to helping children develop an appropriate mathematical vocabulary. All adults working with these young children have been appropriately briefed about the language to be introduced and they are careful to use the correct mathematical terms.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- 89 Many children start in the reception class with a good general knowledge. During their first year at school they build on this good position and by the time they start Year 1 the vast majority are in line to exceed the learning goal anticipated for their age. The children's learning is aided by the stimulating and interesting activities that are planned for them through the good teaching they receive.
- 90 There is very effective science work happening. For example, a group of children are able to listen to pre-recorded tape of different sounds and they have to listen carefully to work out what they are listening to. Children have also written their own book, which records the experiences of a walk they took. The book makes reference to several natural features that appear in the immediate environment. The children have many opportunities to grow a range of plants and seeds. There is genuine awe and wonder as children at the beginning of one lesson look at the progress that has been made by their plants. One or two children are able to talk to the rest of the class about plants they are growing in their own gardens at home. The birds that visit the school playground fascinate the children. All children learn about the need to look after these small creatures and they prepare special bird feeders as part of their work. They use the opportunity to learn about setting up fair tests, for example, they use different mixtures in the bird feeders in an attempt to work out which would prove to be the most popular.
- 91 Children are introduced to a range of activities, which require them to use information and communication technology. There is a computer in the play area so that children can use the word processing program as part of their play. In mathematics, there is a range of programs used to help with sorting, counting and representing data in different forms. Good use is also made of the 'talking books' programs to stimulate interest in reading. All these programs help

the children to become very familiar with using the computer and the vast majority can use the computers showing very good levels of independence.

- 92 The children are able to compare their toys with toys that were used by their grandparents and their parents. There is a good range of resources available to enable the children to do this. The majority of children are able to focus on the differences in the materials used for the toys and the different mechanical functions of the toys.

Physical Development

- 93 The children are very confident in this area of learning. They are particularly adept at linking their physical movements to music. This is a prominent feature of the physical development work and is aided by the daily session they have in the hall. During the work in the hall the children are able to demonstrate a range of movements that take account of the way they travel and the way they curl, stretch and balance. They are very aware of moving through high and low positions. The main reason for their proficiency is the learning that has taken place over a period of time. During a physical education lesson, for example, the teacher was quick to help children improve their individual movement by using demonstration and evaluation of the work of some individuals. She stimulates the children's interest by using the story of the 'Nutcracker Suite'. The children respond very well to this and two or three children show very good sequences that are well in advance of that expected for their age.
- 94 The majority of children are well on course to exceed the learning goal expected by the time they start Year 1. Although many children start in the reception with advanced physical skills they none-the-less make good progress and are confident in a whole range of activities associated with physical development.
- 95 When it comes to using scissors, pens, painting brushes and using the keyboard on the computer the vast majority of children show advanced skills for their age. The teacher uses as many opportunities as possible to link the stories that children are listening to activities requiring children to use their physical skills. The making of bread after listening to the story of the 'Little Red Hen' is one such example. Good teaching in this area helps the children's learning to move on and therefore leads to children achieving well.

Creative Development

- 96 The children make good progress in this area of their learning. Effective teaching is again responsible for moving on children's learning. By the time they start Year 1 the majority of children are exceeding the goals outlined for this area of learning.
- 97 The good quality of music provision enjoyed by the school starts with these young children. The children experience a weekly, formal music lesson taught by the school's specialist music teacher. This is helping children understand about high and low sounds and most are able to use an instrument like a xylophone to complete a simple tune. The teacher involved is expert enough to ensure that the session is a 'fun' one which sees many activities taught through a series of games. However, she does not lose the point of teaching specific techniques and this helps the children when they attempt to create their own music.
- 98 In art, children are provided with many opportunities to explore different textures. This is seen when children are looking at the textures they can use when completing characters that are set around the crib in the nativity display in the classroom. Painting on display also shows that children have been taught about mixing colour appropriately and are able to apply these skills when working on creative aspects of painting.
- 99 The play environment in the classroom allows children many opportunities to take on different roles. This is in addition to the many opportunities provided for them to extend their communication and numeracy skills. For example, the play environment is linked to actual experiences that the children have enjoyed together, such as the visit to the butterfly museum.

The play area became the butterfly world and children were able to play different roles. Similarly, the play area has been a hospital and a dinosaur museum in the past.

- 100 The teacher is very clear about what she wants the play environment to do in terms of developing specific skills. In this way she resources these areas very effectively and enables the children to gain a great deal from the experience. The quality of planning and preparation for this area of learning together with expert provision for music is helping the children's learning to move on at a pace. The teaching is therefore good and making a positive impact on children's creative achievement and accomplishments.

In conclusion

- 101 The school as a whole has recognised the importance of giving children a firm start to their school life and have responded by enabling this relatively small group to work as a single year group. The benefits are evident in that the children are making good progress, which sees them exceed the learning goals in each area of learning. The parents are very involved in the work of this class. There are several parents who provide volunteer support to the teacher. These parents are very well briefed and make a good contribution to the learning that is taking place.
- 102 The system also allows children who have special educational needs to be very well supported early on in their educational lives. This is helping the quality of their learning as they move through the rest of the school. The children's response is also a positive feature of the way the classes are organised. Children are very enthusiastic about learning and enjoy coming to school – a point noted by parents at the pre-inspection meeting and in the questionnaires returned before the inspection.

ENGLISH

- 103 Standards have been steadily improving with the national test for 11-year-olds showing that the school's results have been above the national average for the past two years. In 2000 all the children attained the expected level for their age. However, the percentage of children who attained the higher levels was below the national average. Only 10 children sat the national test for 11-year-olds in 2000 and the analysis of results needs to be looked at cautiously. A four-year profile of the results for 11-year-olds shows that boys have performed as well as girls, which differs from the national picture of girls performing better than boys. The present Year 6 group is also performing at levels that are better than those expected for their age.
- 104 The national test results for 7-year-olds shows that all children attained the expected level for their age in both reading and writing. This is an improvement from previous years in terms of children attaining the expected level for their age but fewer children attained the higher levels in reading in 2000 than in 1999 and 1998. This does not suggest that standards are falling but is a reflection of the small cohort in each year group. There is every indication that the present Year 1 and 2 groups have a number of children who are attaining well in advance of their age. In reading, the analysis of the past four years' results for 7-year-olds shows that girls are attaining much better than boys and by a margin that exceeds the national difference. This is not as evident in writing although girls perform marginally better than boys.
- 105 The reflection on the difference in the results of boys and girls at the ages of 7 and 11 is interesting. It would seem that girls are doing particularly well in reading from a very early age with the gap gradually closing by the time children are 11. The school is aware of the variation

and did try to look at the range of books used with younger children in the recent past. However, the school's evaluations have not arrived at a significant reason for the difference. The inspection team's analyses could not give a clear indication as to why the variations exist but is aware that the school is checking on the situation and keeping it under review.

- 106 Children who are very able and those with special educational needs achieve well in Classes 3 and 4 (Years 3 to 6). This is because very careful consideration is given to planning for their individual needs and good support is provided for them during lessons. The achievement of children is satisfactory in Class 2 (Years 1 and 2). The same level of support for groups of different ability is apparent but the lack of appropriate management of a few children is detracting from the progress that they make.
- 107 Standards in speaking and listening are very good. Children are able to use a full range of vocabulary when explaining themselves in lessons. For example, an explanation given by a Year 6 child about the difference between an autobiography and a diary was extremely well thought out and very eloquently put. Young children in Class 2 (Years 1 and 2) are able to build on the good start they have been given in the reception class. They contribute easily in discussions, either related to the story that they are reading or to aspects of other work. Their range of vocabulary is good as is their use of grammar when they answers or ask questions. Older children are able to discuss issues for prolonged periods. In a Class 4 (Years 5 and 6) lesson on a poem written by Ted Hughes the children make many excellent links between the poem they are listening to and others they have heard in the past. Children are attentive listeners although one or two are a little impatient to get on with their tasks in Class 2. They are able to comprehend what is said to them and are very skilled at developing ideas put forward by others in their group. Older children use terms like 'genre' and 'epic' when describing different forms of writing. Overall, children achieve well resulting in the quality of speaking and listening being very good by the time they are 11 years of age.
- 108 Standards in reading are good with the majority of children currently in Year 2 and Year 6 reading at levels beyond that expected for their age.. Children throughout the school take an active interest in reading and can name a range of authors they have studied. Older children can name non-white authors they have read and provide explanations as to why they enjoyed or disliked their style. More able children currently in Year 2 have read the novels of J K Rowling and are already 'Harry Potter' fans. Children between the ages of 5 and 7 make satisfactory progress in their reading. Although the majority are confident readers and can talk about favourite books with great enthusiasm there is some indifference shown by children during reading sessions. This results in some more able readers not achieving as well as they could. The children who are not as able are progressing at a satisfactory rate. However, the support provided by classroom assistants is not always well directed during lessons. There are very good levels of support provided at home for the majority of children in this age range. Older children in Classes 3 and 4 make good progress and achieve well. This results in standards being good at the age of 11 and the national test results reflect this. Children are growing in confidence in their ability to use information books productively to help them in their studies. This is a prominent feature of many other lessons. Children develop likes and dislikes for particular style of authors and show a growing awareness of the way poets are able to capture the readers' interest and emotions by using different styles and by being able to be economical with their words. This has led to many children in this age group becoming very interested in writing their own poems.
- 109 Standards in writing are good and this shows good improvement in recent years and since the previous inspection. The rate of improvement seen has been much greater than that seen

nationally. Children in Years 1 and 2 make good progress. More able children are very clear and precise when sequencing their writing. They show that they can use some interesting vocabulary, such as 'enormous' and 'rustling', which enhances the overall quality of their writing. They understand punctuation well and write in full sentences using capital letters and full stops. The more able children use speech marks correctly. There are good examples of all children of this age writing in other subjects. For example, many wrote interesting pieces entitled 'What I know about a Muslim family' in religious education and wrote about their local area in geography. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress with appropriate support provided for them. This helped all children to attain the expected level for their age in the national test for 7-year-olds in 2000. Older children in the 7 to 11 age range make good progress in their writing and achieve well. In Class 3 (Years 3 and 4) children are provided with many opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Their writing holds the reader's interest because the content of their work is interesting and carefully thought through. Their punctuation is good and grammatical terms are accurate. However, the standards of spelling do not match the rest of their written work. By the time children reach Class 4 (Years 5 and 6) there is evidence that the content of children's writing has improved still further and there is very good use of imagery by many children. A large number are very interested in using poetry as a way of explaining their thoughts. An example of one children continuing with W H Auden's poem 'Twelve Songs' sees the writer demonstrating empathy with the original poet when he writes:

'Let the traffic stop, fade, die-down,
Let the people walk down the old, dusty town
The plants have disappeared, my garden is dead,
My only memory is in my head.'

The writing serves as an example of children's understanding of the structure used by the poet as well as being able to maintain the theme. In another example a more able writer shows confidence in using language when she writes, '...his curls swaying in the slight breeze.' As with younger writers the children's spelling does not match the quality of other written work and it is something that the school is working on to try and address.

- 110 Good use is made of information and communication technology to help with children's English work. Word processing skills are very prominent as is the use of 'talking books' to stimulate interest in reading. In one Class 4 lesson a group of children are able to use word processing to good effect in recording what they believe is fact or opinion when considering the autobiography of Michael Aspel. The use of the computer to help children create their own books sees children having to use more advanced skills to support their work. There is also good use of the internet to support research in other subjects. This requires children to use their reading skills in a productive way.
- 111 Children's learning is aided by the good, and sometimes very good, teaching in Classes 3 and 4. In both classes teachers use texts effectively to engage children. There is particularly good subject knowledge demonstrated by the teacher in Class 4 when considering a piece of text and trying to get the children to focus on fact and opinion. She is able to challenge the children to think about the issue being looked at and the majority of children have to think deeply. In another lesson with the same class the children are improving their understanding of the structure used in poetry by considering a poem written by Ted Hughes. During this lesson, the teacher successfully introduces new terminology and thinking at the right pace so that the children's interest and motivation is maintained. Following the initial introduction there is very good management of children demonstrated by the teacher as she seeks ideas from them. The majority of the children find this demanding but all participate well. When she moves away from the whole-class part of the lesson she ensures that there is appropriate support provided

for groups requiring further assistance. In Class 3 there is very effective use of 'demonstration' by the teacher to help children to develop their own pieces of writing based on recipes. This takes into consideration the work on imperative verbs that the class has been working on recently. The way she develops her own recipe allows children to participate in her thinking. She deliberately thinks out aloud thereby helping children to develop appropriate composition skills. She also deliberately misses out punctuation and makes the odd grammatical error to see if children are alert. By doing so it gives her good opportunities to make telling teaching points. The very good teaching noted with this age group helps children of all abilities achieve well. There is very good attention to the needs of different age groups and children of different ability in both classes. The quality of learning is aided by the good attitudes that children show in lessons. The majority enthusiastically work independently and take pride in their work. The development of 'proof reading partners' is one example of children being able to work together effectively during literacy lessons. The maturity with which children conduct themselves during reading partnerships with young children is very impressive. The behaviour is satisfactory overall with one or two children needing to be carefully managed otherwise they are prone to show anti-social tendencies.

- 112 The teaching and learning in Class 2 (Years 1 and 2) is not of the same quality although many positive features are seen. It is satisfactory overall but some aspects are weaker than others. Good use is made of a range of activities that help to stimulate children's interest and there is particularly good use of tasks aimed at children of different ability during the group work part of the literacy hour. However, the teacher's management of children during the whole class part of the lesson is sometimes lacking a range of strategies to be effective with one or two children who are easily distracted. This inability to engage the one or two children during whole class sessions is reducing the impact of the teacher's good preparation. For example, the use of 'yes/no' cards with the phonic dice is helping to keep children's interest high. Once into the group work there is a good range of activities prepared to meet the needs of children of differing ability. The planning in this class does not make it clear what the learning intentions are and this is inhibiting the teacher's ability to use the plenary effectively to check on how much learning has occurred. The majority of this age group is keen to learn and are enthusiastic about the work they do. However, a few children are difficult to manage, which results on occasions in the teacher being distracted.
- 113 There is good management and leadership of the subject. The co-ordinator has completed a very detailed analysis of the attainment of children for the past few years and has identified issues such as the performance of young boys in reading and spelling being not as good as other aspects of writing. She has successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy to the staff and has done so in such a way that it is looked at as a positive development. She has started to produce useful tracking systems to help staff keep appropriate records of children's progress. She has also been central to the developments that have occurred in target setting. She recognises the need to continue with this work. She has also created potentially good systems for tracking children's progress in speaking and listening. These have not been shared with the staff as yet but will provide a very useful framework when introduced to the school. The resources are good with the new library making a very positive contribution to developing children's research skills.

MATHEMATICS

- 114 The national tests for 11-year-olds reveal that the school has had problems in ensuring that the children's standards are in line with the national average for the past few years. In 2000, for

example, the school's performance in mathematics was below average, which was also the case in 1999. When compared to similar schools the results are well below average in 2000. However, this shows an improving picture compared to 1998 with more children now attaining the expected level for their age. The results have to be seen in the context of very small numbers taking the tests and that a significant number of children move to independent schools in Years 3 and 4. However, the school recognised that standards were not high enough. Following a close examination of test results and analysis of areas of weakness, the staff have introduced further material to promote the children's learning of number. There has been emphasis placed on ensuring that lower ability children are better supported and this has resulted in an improvement in the performance of these children. This is beginning to have a positive impact on standards as is noted by the work of the present Year 6 who are attaining above the national level of expectation and making satisfactory progress. Boys' performance is better than girls, which is not the case nationally. There are no obvious reasons for this difference.

- 115 The national tests for 7-year-olds reveal that standards have been well above average in both 1999 and 2000. This is mainly due to the large percentage of children who attain above the level expected for their age. When compared to similar schools, the 2000 results are above average. Girls and boys perform at approximately the same level, which is in line with the national picture. On the face of it there may seem to have been a slight fall in standards between the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, this is not the case as many more able children leave the school in Years 3 and 4 to continue their education in independent schools.
- 116 The children in the reception class are given a firm base on which teachers can build as children progress through the school. As the children move into Class 2 (Year 1 and 2) the teacher ensures that work is planned for the varying abilities of the children although at times the level of work lacks challenge for the more able. Overall, the children in this class achieve appropriately, with good support available for the less able. Children carry out many practical activities to promote learning. The majority of children can organise data into tables and diagrams and more able children use this to respond to questions. Older children are beginning to classify objects and shapes according to given criteria. The teacher of Class 3 (Year 3 and 4) is very good at encouraging the children to respond quickly during mental calculations. Work is planned to enable all children to perform to the best of their ability. Very strong teaching enables the children to understand the ideas that are being introduced and practical activities reinforce this. Older children concentrate on solving problems and begin to understand how to choose which method and equipment to use. The more able children are capable of completing multi-step operations. The regular practice of multiplication facts is improving the children's ability to respond rapidly to questions about doubling and halving and they understand that division is the inverse of multiplication. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are used effectively to reinforce the children's knowledge.
- 117 Work throughout the school is planned to enable all children, including those with special educational needs to make at least satisfactory progress. The children generally respond well during lessons and show particular enjoyment during the mental mathematics session. The majority of children listen attentively to the teacher during the introduction of lessons. They settle well to tasks and can work independently or with a partner and most try to do their best. Work is usually presented in a tidy fashion and equipment is used carefully.
- 118 Teaching is satisfactory In Class 2 (5 to 7 age range) and good teaching in Classes 3 and 4 (7 to 11 age range). Since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and a re-evaluation of the resources used in the school the quality of teaching for mathematics has

improved. The teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy to plan their work and this provides a good basis for progression and continuity throughout the school. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and are competently teaching the basic skills. Although most teachers are conscientious in planning work that is suited to the needs of the children, there is sometimes a lack of specific learning objectives for the lesson. These are not always shared with the children and therefore they have limited self-knowledge of their learning. Most lessons move at a good pace and the majority of teachers are confident when dealing with inappropriate behaviour. However, at times children that are not completely focused on the task are not identified. Assessment of the children's work is carried out as a whole staff through analysis of national and optional tests and this is used satisfactorily to plan for work in areas that need development. Teachers give targets to children for improvement verbally and sometimes through the marking of work but this is not linked sufficiently to the National Curriculum levels. There is a good balance of work across all aspects of mathematics, and teachers have a clear understanding of the importance of directed questioning and the need for children to explain their reasoning.

- 119 Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has attended appropriate training, together with colleagues to identify what needs to be done in order to raise attainment. All staff are committed to raising standards, particularly with the older children. Monitoring of teaching has been carried out and will continue in order to help to raise awareness of where improvements need to be made. The analysis of the statutory tests identified the need for improvement in number work and the introduction of further resources for this area has had a good effect on the children's learning. The school uses information and communication technology well in this subject and this is also having a positive effect on children's attainment. Resources are good and all statutory requirements are met.

SCIENCE

- 120 The 2000 national test results for 11-year-olds are very good with children attaining well above the national average and above average when compared to schools of a similar nature. In 1999, the national test results were in line with the national average. This shows an improved picture compared to the previous inspection, when results were average in relation to the national tests. Children currently in Year 6 achieve standards of work that are above that expected for their age. The majority of 7-year-olds attain the standards expected for their age according to the 2000 teacher assessments with 92 per cent this expected level. This is above the national average. However, a disappointing 8 per cent attained the higher level, which was below the national average. The current Year 2 group is working at levels above that expected for their age.
- 121 Younger children in the reception class are introduced to simple exploration through good questioning. They look closely at growing plants and collect seeds and discover what is needed to encourage healthy growth. This applies to themselves as well as plants and the teacher successfully introduced a healthy eating topic to the whole school. As they progress into Class 2 (Years 1/2) this topic is developed at a deeper level. The children successfully use the school surroundings to identify the places where plants thrive and they also look for animals in the local environment. They competently reproduce the growing conditions in the classroom and use mustard and cress to identify what happens if a plant is deprived of water and light. The teacher uses a wide variety of resources to help the children trace the life-cycle of a butterfly. The story of 'Caterpillar', set the scene and good questioning by the teacher enables the children to learn and use the correct names for the different stages, for example, 'pupa' and

'chrysalis'. The children understand that butterflies lay their eggs on particular plants and this is the food that the caterpillars eat when they are hatched. Children of all abilities are achieving well in Class 2.

- 122 In Class 3 (Year 3 and 4) the children use a wide variety of materials in order to identify the thermal insulation qualities. This includes a wet-suit and, linked with a diagram, the children can identify clearly how a layer of trapped air helps to keep the diver warm. Their thinking is developed further by examining what features of cotton make it suitable for summer wear in hot countries. The children enjoy the investigative element of this subject and much fruitful conversation and discussing takes place during lessons. In Class 4 (Year 5 and 6) the children study how sound is made. Groups of children are set tasks and then report back to the class. Variations in tonal scale, created by tapping or blowing across the neck of a water filled bottle helped them to understand that sound is made by the vibration of air. Displays around the school celebrate work that the children do in this subject. The high quality of the work provided in Classes 3 and 4 ensure that all children achieve well and attain high standards.
- 123 The school uses the scheme of work recommended within the national guidelines published in 2000. This provides a sound basis for the teachers' planning and because the children have good attitudes to their work, their learning is enhanced. The range of activities provided for mixed ability group work ensures that children with special educational needs are well supported by their classmates or by an adult. Children are asked to measure and record their work in a variety of ways, which helps to develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills. Teaching is good throughout the school with the range of very activities provided for children of all abilities helping children achieve well and moving on their learning. Teachers set demanding tasks and expect children to find out information for themselves using the procedures that they have learned in previous lessons. The work on thermal insulation is one such example. The planning is satisfactory overall but it is not always clearly set out what it is children are expected to learn in each lesson. However, the longer term planning does ensure that children are experiencing new learning by building on what they have been taught before. There is also very careful consideration given to the needs of children of different ability in the mixed age classes. The teachers provide a good balance of practical and theoretical work for the children and there are ample opportunities for children to work independently, in groups and as a whole class.
- 124 Management and leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Work is collected and analysed once a year by the whole staff to discuss standards and any areas that need development. There is no whole school strategy for assessing the progress of children but most teachers carry out their own assessment at the end of each unit of work and this is used to inform the report to parents at the end of the year. A regular audit of resources takes place and materials are renewed as necessary. The school is particularly successful in using information and communication technology to support this subject and children compile charts and graphs to record data. Children's learning is also enhanced by a number of visits to places of interest such as Eureka and Butterfly World. The outdoor facilities that surround the school are good and include a garden and pond.

ART AND DESIGN

- 125 Although it was only possible to observe one art lesson being taught the display of children's work indicates that the standard of art work is good in the school. This reflects the position indicated at the time of the previous inspection.

- 126 From an early age the children are able to use paint effectively with good examples of children mixing paint to reach desired colours. Very effective use is made of a range of artists from different cultures and backgrounds to inspire children's own work. Children in Year 5 and 6 , for example, followed up a visit from a group of Indian dancers by looking at Indian art. The end result is very pleasing with children showing good use of movement and colour in their interpretation of Indian dancing. The work that led to the end product showed that children had explored how to get the most impact from the movement of figures. They drew figures and tried to look at the effect they would achieve by changing the position of the limbs.
- 127 There is much work generated on the computer. The school tends to use a program that the children are familiar with from an early age. In Class 2 (Year 1 and 2) the children are able to combine their understanding of the work of William Morris with computer-generated designs of their own. This works well with some very mature patterns created.
- 128 The teachers are confident in teaching this subject. Good links are made with other subjects and careful consideration is given to buying appropriate resources to enable large scale work to take place alongside individual work. The school has improved its curriculum plan so as to take full account of the new national guidelines. The school is rightly putting emphasis on developing children's skills in a progressive manner and this is working well in ensuring that children's work shows greater maturity, as they get older.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 129 As with art there is limited work available at this time of year to help make firm overall judgements about the quality of work taking place in design and technology. Only work from older children was available for scrutiny and therefore judgements relate to the 7 to 11 age group. The one lesson that was seen gave a clear indication that children are used to working in a way that helps to develop their designing and making skills. The work completed by Year 6 children is of high quality, beyond that expected for children of their age.
- 130 Discussions with teachers and children confirm that children use the planning and designing phases appropriately when undertaking work in this subject. Children understand how important these phases are in ensuring that their model works as effectively as they would wish. During the work seen in Class 4 (Years 5 and 6) the children had diagrams that they used to make a moving toy. Their designs are imaginative and they have given careful thought to the equipment that they need to use in order to transform their designs into models. The lesson seen was the third in a series of six and the models were in an advanced stage of development. They showed that children could use a range of tools such as a saw and drill effectively and safely. They also indicate that children are able to pursue their own idea because no two models were similar. The children had used a range of resistant and non-resistant materials, such as wood, modroc, wire and paper. One of the most pleasing aspects of the work is the evaluations that are being made. These reveal that children have been thinking about their models and are coming up with good suggestions to improve their original ideas. Children have good attitudes to their work and are able to work together well. They also are patient enough to wait if they want to use a piece of equipment, which is already in use.
- 131 The teaching is having a positive impact on the children's learning. In the first instance the children are very familiar with different aspects of the subject, such as, designing, planning, making and evaluating. This has had to be taught to them at some stage so that by the time they are in Class 4 (Years 5 and 6) they use the four stages effectively. Similarly, there is a

good range of resources provided for the children in order for them to consider which material is most appropriate for their model. There is also evidence that children have been taught specific skills such as sawing, drilling or applying modroc. This has been successful because older children are able to carry out these skills independently. During the lesson observed there was good organisation and effective management of children. Both contributed to improved learning and gave sufficient evidence to support the judgement that teaching is good overall.

- 132 The school uses the national guidelines for designing its design and technology curriculum. There is satisfactory management of the subject, which has ensured that many good things are happening. This is despite limited time being available for the subject to be given prominence for whole staff professional development. The range of resources is good with good accessibility to them enabling children to be able to make choices about the materials they want to use for their own models. There are good links with information and communication technology as was seen when Class 4 used the computer to design posters.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

- 133 No lessons were observed in history during the inspection but from a scrutiny of children's work and the teacher's planning, attainment is judged to be at the level expected for the ages of the children. Work is planned over a two-year cycle using the national guidelines and one major geography and history topic is planned each term.
- 134 The work contained in the children's books was limited but demonstrated the importance teachers place on encouraging the children to understand the reasons for happenings in the past. For example, topic folders on the Romans and Celts helped children understand the reason why countries invade others and how this still has an impact on our lives today. The children are encouraged to write up historical information independently and the use of literacy skills is good in this subject. A variety of ways is used to report their findings including lists, sequencing events and menus for a Roman feast. The children also use their mathematical skills in understanding time lines. Other subjects are also used to enhance the children's learning. Through art they represent mosaic pictures and draw the costumes worn by Roman soldiers. The school also provides opportunities for the children to experience living in the past by having a Victorian day at school where all dress in costume, taste food and listen to music of the time. Visits to places of historical interest within the local area and further afield have a good impact on the children's learning.
- 135 Children's attainment in geography is in line with that expected for their age. The local environment contains a wealth of opportunities for the school to use to enhance the children's learning in this subject. Younger children identify the jobs that adults have in the area and choose a favourite aspect to write about. They produce a simple map of Borrowby showing fields, streets, farms, car park and make an appropriate key. From a large-scale map of the area, they can identify exactly where they live. Using tape they mark every child's home and discover where most of them live and who has the furthest to travel to school. Mathematical skills are used in making a bar chart of how they travel to school. Children in Class 2 (Year 1 and 2) develop this topic at a deeper level and can place the main villages and towns on a map. Following a visit to Borrowby the children distinguished between man-made and natural features. Older children study the world climate and discuss how the weather can determine the activities of people. In Class 3 (Year 3 and 4) children are encouraged to write a postcard to themselves with these features in their writing. This was a good idea but the learning

objectives were not shared clearly and therefore few of the children managed to write about the climate but rather concentrated on the activities.

- 136 The quality of teaching is satisfactory with teachers planning work that is suited to the needs of the children, including those with special educational needs. Teachers use the environment well and provide a wide range of resources to help the children in their personal research. Carefully thought-out topics motivate the children. For example, a topic entitled 'Map Detectives' covers work on compass points, scale bars and using four figure co-ordinates. The children enjoy the subject and show good attitudes and behaviour during lessons. They work well in groups and can co-operate when seeking information.
- 137 The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The whole staff evaluate the planning and scrutinise children's work at least once a year to ensure that they are covering the syllabus and that standards are satisfactory. Resources for both subjects are good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 138 There has been a very noticeable improvement in this area of children's work since the previous inspection. The previous inspection indicated that children's standards were good but when taking account of the rapid growth in this area since that time the school has done very well to improve in the way that it has. Older children's information technology skills are advanced and they are using the computer to generate some very interesting and challenging work.
- 139 The school puts much emphasis on children using the computers from a very young age. This means that when children enter Year 1 they have good information technology skills and use the 'mouse' and 'keyboard' well. Teachers in Class 2 (Years 1 and 2) ensure that children are provided with opportunities to continue this good work and there is much consolidation given to developing their skill levels. Standards are in line with that expected for their age by the time children are 7 but have improved to be well beyond the level expected for their age by the time they are 11. The children aged between 5 and 7 achieve appropriately but the older children between the ages of 7 and 11 achieve very well. This is due to the rapid progress made by all abilities as they move through Classes 3 and 4.
- 140 There are many opportunities taken to use information and communication technology to support work in different subjects. For example, in mathematics several programs are used to help children with number work, interpreting data and setting out information in different ways. There are times when children work on commercially produced programs but there are also opportunities for them to develop their own ideas. In geography, for example, Class 3 has used a program to set out routes on various maps. In science, the same group present the results of their experiments in data form. The children's skills are helped by such things as the very good guide that is displayed taking children through the 'cut/paste and copy' sequence.
- 141 In Class 4 the children are using advanced skills to create exciting books aimed at young children. The class has been using a special program, which helps them present the writing and illustrations in different ways. Sometimes the print explodes onto the screen at other times it rotates. They have also used a digital camera effectively so that they can use photographs as part of their books. The overall effect is most impressive with children being very clear about what they want to achieve and setting out to create it. In the same class the children are able to use word processing effectively to aid their writing. Children know how to use the 'spell

check' program and can present their work in a variety of ways. They are also able to design their own posters and can present work such as the life cycle of a butterfly in interesting ways. They use 'clip art' appropriately to enhance the quality of their presentations.

- 142 The quality of teaching in Classes 3 and 4 (Years 3 to 6) is very good. The teachers have excellent knowledge of the subject and use this knowledge effectively to challenge children. The effective management of children and very good classroom organisation is also aiding the quality of the work being produced. Children's learning is benefiting from the quality of the teaching. The children can put forward suggestions and the teacher is able to help them work towards their desired outcomes. Sometimes this involves introducing new ideas and skills. This is seen when a group want to introduce music to their presentation. The teacher assessed the situation and felt that the children were at the right stage to have this new skill introduced to them. The work taking place in Class 4 is used as a springboard for helping children to consider the needs of very young children. The forming of computer partnerships is a very interesting and exciting initiative that is working well. This is helping the children to have very positive attitudes to learning in information and communication technology and is also helping them to become more responsible. The way children work together is also helping them to develop good co-operation skills and to value the work of each other.
- 143 The co-ordinator is very clear about the way forward for the subject and there is an effective plan in place to ensure this will happen. There is good leadership demonstrated with all staff working together to improve their own skills and then ensuring that information and communication technology is used effectively to support work in other subjects. The school is well resourced but uses the resources to good effect in ensuring that children's skills are improved and developed.

MUSIC

- 144 The school achieves very well in this subject and children attain standards that are above that expected for their age. They benefit from the expertise of a specialist teacher who takes all music lessons throughout the school and, together with visiting music teachers, ensures that children make good progress in this subject.
- 145 Children in the reception class can follow a simple score exercise of high and low notes. The teacher introduces the xylophone and demonstrates how to use this correctly. The children have a good respect for the instruments and treat them carefully. They enjoy playing instruments and the teacher who encourages them to follow the 'magic wand' baton to help them keep time makes the lesson enjoyable. The high expectations of the teacher are rewarded by the children working hard to play the tune all the way through. The child playing the xylophone discovers the sound continues until he places a hand on the note.
- 146 During a lesson on composition with Class 2 (Year 1 and 2) children the teacher motivated the children by asking for ideas about Christmas and winter and then asking for suggestions about emotions and thoughts that the words conjured up. Each group of children then chose a word and successfully worked together to select the instruments they would use to improvise. The response shows that the children have good ability at producing imaginative sound pictures and, with the help of the teacher, are beginning to learn to how to refine their work.
- 147 By the time children are in Year 6 they are able to appraise music. In playing and singing a Christmas song the teacher plays the main tune and explains modulation to 'A minor' adjusting

her explanations well to the abilities of the children. Many of the children are instrumentalists and are taught at school by the peripatetic music teachers. They are well motivated and play well in their groups. They play in time, listen and respond to the conductor and each other. A wide range of instruments is used. Many children are capable of following a score, sometimes conventionally notated and sometimes schematic.

- 148 The children's attitudes to music are very good. They enjoy lessons where they sing and compose and show that they have a good knowledge of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. During assemblies the children sing well and tunefully. They enjoy performing for others and are well motivated to do their best. Children with special educational needs participate fully in lessons and the teacher's good use of praise ensures that they feel confident and perform well.
- 149 The teaching is of a high quality being very good overall. The teachers show patience and understanding for the needs of the children and plan work that is designed to motivate and stimulate their learning. The specialist teacher is also the co-ordinator and plans work to ensure that it progressively develops the children's skills, knowledge and understanding. Resources are good and include guitars, keyboards, violins and a large range of tuned and untuned percussion. The good range of music that children listen to helps to promote their cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 150 Standards in dance, which is the main feature of the physical education work seen, are good. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. Although only four lessons (one for each class) was observed it was clear that children are used to working to a good level, particularly in dance. The majority of children are able to swim 25 metres before they move onto secondary education. The majority of the school's swimming programme is appropriately aimed at children in Years 3 and 4.
- 151 The children's good knowledge of music is put to good use to help them develop effective movements that show elements of balance, rolling and twisting. Children in Class 2 (Years 1 and 2) work exceptionally hard to produce sequences that are inspired by the story of the ugly duckling. There is a good link made between this lesson and the science work that they are currently undertaking. Their movements show good imagination and their creative effort is commendable. The teacher working with this group is effective in using the story to consolidate some sequences and then changes the focus of the story to look for different types of movements. For example, the movements required when the ugly duckling is sad contrast the movement involved in simulating the duckling making their first journey to the pond. This good teaching therefore enhances children's learning.
- 152 Older children in Class 3 (Years 3 and 4) benefit from the use the teacher makes of music. A piece of music taken from the "Four Seasons" is used to help portray the coldness of winter. The good use of demonstration, evaluations and suggestions helps the children to improve the quality of their movements. The introduction of a piece of tissue paper by the teacher helps the children to consider the movement of a snowflake. This clever piece of simulation has the desired effect of improving the overall quality of work seen. The teacher has good subject knowledge, which helps her to direct the work that is taking place. For example, she makes good suggestions especially about high and low movements and the children are able to respond positively. She also helps children by thinking of descriptive language that can be used

alongside their movements. For example, the word 'swooping' is used to describe some of the movements and this helping the children be more precise about the way they move.

- 153 During a lesson with the oldest class girl in particular showed that they could hold their own when competing in a passing game with boys. The game involves children in passing, throwing and catching and has just the right amount of competition for motivating individuals. Good use is made of resources to allow children the maximum amount of time participating and not spectating. Children are encouraged to perfect different passing techniques and as the game proceeds the quality of passing is improved.
- 154 The teaching is good overall with very good teaching seen in one lesson (Class 3). It is helping children to improve their skills and is giving children enough opportunity to participate, demonstrate and evaluate. Children show that they can work well individually or in pairs and the oldest children show that they can join a team game and play effective roles.
- 155 The resources are adequate and there is satisfactory leadership of the subject. There are opportunities for children to be involved in sporting activities outside the main lessons when parents run football, netball and basketball clubs after school. There is a growing link with a local football club who are going to provide specific teaching of football skills for children in the near future. The school has been involved in initiatives undertaken by the 'heart foundation' group to improve children's fitness levels.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 156 Children aged 7 and 11 attain the levels expected for their age and meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
- 157 By the age of 7 and 11 children attain standards that are in line with the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is confirmed by the scrutiny of children's work, talking to them, observing lessons and a scrutiny of teachers' recent planning. The school satisfactorily develops children's knowledge and understanding of specific faiths, predominantly Christianity, but additionally, Judaism and Islam. In parallel with their encountering religion, older children are beginning to develop their personal response to religion by examining and reflecting on their own feelings, beliefs, values and experiences and understanding and respecting the views held by others.
- 158 In the reception class, the children understand the Christmas story and the preparations made by Mary and Joseph for Jesus' birth. A mother-to-be brought in some of the things she was gathering in preparation for the birth of her own child and the children are able to compare and contrast the difference. The children in Class 2 (Year 1 and 2) then discussed the concepts of giving and receiving - again using the Wise Men in the Christmas story to highlight this aspect. The teachers in both lessons prepared the children well. Good questioning enables them to understand how Jesus was born in a lowly stable and yet 'Kings' came to give him rich gifts. The children in Class 3 (Year 3 and 4) then compare a variety of resources and texts to consider the story of the visit of the Wise Men and to distinguish fact from fiction. One child suggests that the important visitors made other people believe that the birth of Jesus was special and not that of just another child. There is good use made of children's literacy skills to support work in this subject. This is seen in the writing completed by Class 2 (Years 1 and 2) entitled 'What I know about a Muslim family'.

- 159 The teachers have good subject knowledge, which is evident in the way they present lessons and assemblies. Whole school planning of topics ensures that the children receive a curriculum that builds on what children were taught previously. The celebration of festivals is the main feature for the study of other major religions and provides opportunities for the children to compare and contrast aspects of other faiths. This will enable them to respect and understand other people's beliefs in the multi-cultural society that we live in.
- 160 The subject is co-ordinated well and links closely to the whole school assemblies. Resources are adequate.